

OCTORARA AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Minutes of Special Board Meeting Held on February 28, 2024

A special meeting of the Octorara Area School Board was held in the Octorara Area Jr./Sr. High School Multi-Purpose Room on February 28, 2024.

A moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance preceded the meeting.

The Vice-President, Mr. Hurley, called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Other members present were Mr. Falgiatore, Mr. Koennecker, Mr. Lusby, Ms. Metzler, Mr. Norris, Ms. Williamson, and Mr. Zimmerman. Also present were Mrs. Hardy, Secretary; Dr. Leever, Superintendent; Ben Pratt, Saxton & Stump; and 20 citizens.

Under visitors' comments for agenda items only, Lisa Bowman, West Fallowfield Township, commented that she and Mr. Ganow shared a faith, a support of public education, a belief that the Board should work together, should look cohesive to the community and have the community's trust, be honorable, and be good stewards. She said her intent was to offer support and experience in the transition. It is clear there is a division based on miscommunication, misunderstanding, mistrust, fear, and apprehension. She believes that the Board wants the best for students and the community. She said she stepped up because she wasn't sure if anyone would and if they did if they would be supportive of the mission and vision of the district. She said after weeks of reflection, prayer, talks with others and Dan, and thoughts about Sam and what she should do in the best interest of the District, she withdrew her name from consideration for the seat in Region 2. She believes Dan shares the same ideals and support of public education and values his ability to work with others. She requested the Board support Dan to fill Sam's seat. She is confident that, under Dr. Leever's leadership, that the District is moving forward and asked the Board to allow him to lead. She expressed her support of Matt Hurley as Board president because of his calm demeanor, his levelheadedness, and his ability to provide the leadership the Board needs. She urged the Board to work together. She thanked everyone for their support.

Dan Jurich, West Fallowfield Township, said this has been a good learning experience. He realized no one on the Board knows him and he gave a brief history of his work experiences, volunteer work, and programs he has instituted. He has four children who attend the District and he is involved in sports and interacts with his children's teachers. He understands he does not have the experience Ms. Bowman had but he learns quickly and has confidence in his ability. In response to being related to a vendor, he said that is not going to be an issue and will not get in the way of his service on the Board. He expressed his willingness to work together with the Board and thanked everyone for the opportunity.

Jim Lantz, Highland Township, requested the taxpayers not be forgotten. He said there is more to the equation than just the kids, it is the whole community and said taxpayers are an important part.

Lynn Althouse, West Fallowfield Township, appreciates Ms. Bowman's experience and shared her support of Mr. Jurich. She requested the Board be unified again.

Chris Althouse, West Fallowfield Township, shared her support of Mr. Jurich. She partnered with him in community outreaches and said he is a man of integrity and honor and he is a Christian.

On motion of Mr. Lusby, second by Mr. Zimmerman and approval of all members present the Octorara Board of School Directors revisited agenda item "FF" from the February 20, 2024 Regular Board Meeting – *Nomination process to fill Board vacancy*.

Mr. Hurley said to be consistent with the process to date, a roll call vote will be taken. Board members have the option to make a statement before their vote.

Mr. Zimmerman – Mr. Jurich. He thanked Ms. Bowman for her service and said what she did was very like Sam.

Ms. Metzler – Mr. Jurich. She thanked Ms. Bowman for her conversations and that her heart was for the absolute best for the District and unity among the Board.

Mr. Koennecker – Mr. Jurich.

Mr. Falgiatore – Mr. Jurich. He said he made a statement last week that he would normally have abstained from the vote for reasons that related to the process. He said he cast his vote for Dan for change.

Mr. Norris – Mr. Jurich.

Ms. Williamson – Mr. Jurich. She thanked the community for coming out and expressed her desire to work together as a Board.

Mr. Lusby – Mr. Jurich. He echoed Ms. Williamson's comments and hopes the community continues to come out and give input. He thanked Ms. Bowman.

Mr. Hurley – Mr. Jurich. He said he already had the utmost respect for Ms. Bowman but tonight to it to another level. He is looking forward to working with Mr. Jurich.

Mr. Jurich received eight votes.

There being no further items of business the meeting adjourned at 6:24 p.m. on motion of Mr. Zimmerman, second by Mr. Lusby and approval of all members present.

This Board meeting can be viewed in its entirety at www.youtube.com/user/OctoraraAreaSD.

Respectfully submitted,

Jill L. Hardy, Secretary
Octorara Board of School Directors