

**Minutes for the Board meeting of the Ambridge Area school District held virtually via ZOOM on Wednesday, September 16, 2020.**

**I. Call to Order: Mrs. Fischer called the meeting to order at approximately 7:10 p.m.**

The regular monthly Board Meeting of the Ambridge Area School District Board of Directors on Wednesday, September 16, 2020, is now called to order.

**II. Flag Salute-Please rise: Mrs. Fischer asked all present to rise for flag salute.**

**III. Notice: Mrs. Fischer read the following statement:** This meeting is being recorded for District purposes. It is or may be published in part or in its entirety on the District's website without the express permission of meeting participants.

**IV. Roll Call**

Mrs. Cathy Fischer, President  
Mr. Scott Angus, Vice President  
Mrs. Mary Jo Kehoe, Treasurer  
Mr. Chuck Campalong  
Mrs. Kathleen Curtis  
Mrs. Denise Manganello  
Mr. William Metz  
Ms. Valerie Pedigo  
Ms. Valerie Young

Others President  
Dr. Joseph W. Pasquerilla, Superintendent  
Mr. Barry J. King, Assistant to the Superintendent  
Mr. Keith Bielby, Director of Business and Operations  
Ms. Megan Turnbull, Solicitor  
Mrs. June Mueller, Board Secretary

**V. Sunshine Law: Mrs. Mueller read the following statement:**

The Board of School Directors held an Executive Session on Wednesday, September 16<sup>th</sup> to discuss:

- Personnel matter(s)
- Matters subject to attorney client privilege and other confidentiality laws
- Litigation or threatened litigation matters

**VI. Correspondence**

None

**VII. Motion to accept or correct the Minutes of:** August 12<sup>th</sup> Meet and Discuss Voting, August 12<sup>th</sup> Meet and Discuss, August 19<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting, August 24<sup>th</sup> Reconvened Board Meeting

Mr. Angus moved to accept the Minutes, seconded by Mrs. Curtis. All in favor.

**VIII. Motion to accept the Treasurer's Report dated:** August 2020

Mr. Angus moved to accept the Treasurer's Report, seconded by Mrs. Kehoe. All in favor.

**IX. Amendment/Addendum to Agenda/Approval of Agenda**

**X. Recognition/Presentation**

**XI. Public Comment (Regarding Agenda Items Only)**

In light of the state declared disaster emergency, the Board has adopted modified public meeting and public comment processes, consistent with the Sunshine Law. These modified rules have been published in a newspaper of general circulation and on the District's website. Public comments received in advance of this virtual meeting by the Board Secretary will now be read.

See Below

**XII. Committee Reports**

**Education and Technology**

**Mrs. Manganello**

1. BVIU 2020-2021 Special Education Programs and Services

It is recommended the Beaver Valley Intermediate Unit shall provide Special Education Programs and Services on behalf of the Ambridge Area School District for the 2020-2021 year. The cost for service will be based on enrollment of students in the BVIU Special Education Programs and Services, as presented.

2. Technology Purchase

It is recommended to authorize the purchase of new technology equipment and licenses (laptops) via state contracted pricing through direct purchase for the 2020-2021 school year at a total cost not to exceed \$60,000.00 for equipment and ancillary devices.

Mrs. Manganello moved to accept items 1-2, seconded by Mrs. Kehoe. Vote in favor was unanimous.

**Finance and Budget****Ms. Pedigo**1. School District Monthly Bills and Salaries

It is recommended that the monthly school district bills in the amount of \$1,723,260.69 and the monthly school district personnel salaries in the amount of \$1,080,637.28 be paid.

2. Cafeteria Monthly Bills and Salaries

It is recommended that the monthly cafeteria bills in the amount of \$11,137.08 and the monthly cafeteria personnel salaries in the amount of \$11,620.57 paid.

3. Capital Project Expenditures

It is recommended that \$38,377.32, be paid from the Capital Projects Fund 39.

4. Resolution 2020-2021-03 – Tax Exoneration

It is recommended to approve Resolution 2020-2021-03 approving the requested tax exoneration in the amount of \$1,092.05 for 284 13<sup>th</sup> Street, Ambridge, PA 15003, a property recently acquired by the Ambridge Historic District Economic Development Corporation, a 501(c)(3) entity, for the preservation of a historic Harmonist house structure.

5. BVIU 2020-2021 IDEA Allocation

It is recommended to accept the 2020-2021 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Allocation to the Ambridge Area School District, in the amount of \$379,876.00.

6. Repository

It is recommended the Board approve the Sale of Property from the Beaver County Repository of Unsold Property for the following properties:

- a) 540 Merchant Street, Ambridge, PA Tax Parcel 10-002-0910.000, for the bid amount of \$1,668.00 to Thomas and Adrianna Cephas.
- b) 325 Maplewood Avenue, Ambridge, PA Tax Parcel 09-002-0225.000, for the bid amount of \$1,687.00 to Thomas and Adrianna Cephas.

7. Resolution 2020-2021-04 Incurrence of General Obligation Debt

It is recommended to approve Resolution 2020-2021-04, prepared by bond counsel, authorizing the issuance of two series of General Obligation Bonds, to fund the redemption of all or portions of the School District's General Obligation Bonds Series of 2015 and General Obligation Bonds, Series A of 2017, in order to achieve debt service savings, all in accordance with the Local Government Unit Debt Act.

8. Gifts in Kind

It is recommended to accept the donation from Tenaris Global Services of \$2,000.00 for the purchase of mathematics for the Trades text books. The donor has received no goods or services in return for this gift. The item is valued at \$2,000.00.

\*Dr. Pasquerilla thanked Mrs. Jodi Musser for her role in this donation.

Ms. Pedigo moved to accept items 1-8, seconded by Mr. Angus. Vote in favor was unanimous.

**Buildings and Grounds**

**Mr. Angus**

1. Crossing Guards

It is recommended to ratify the approval of the crossing guards being placed at locations throughout the Ambridge Area School District for the 2020-2021 school year as listed below:

- 15<sup>th</sup> Street and Church Street
- High School / then 10<sup>th</sup> & Lenz Avenue
- 11<sup>th</sup> Street and Merchant Street
- 1<sup>st</sup> Street and Valley Road
- 5<sup>th</sup> Street and Duss Avenue
- High School / then 8<sup>th</sup> & Duss Avenue
- 6<sup>th</sup> Street and Duss Avenue
- Harmony Road and State Street-Baden

Mr. Angus moved to accept item 1, seconded by Mr. Angus. Vote in favor was unanimous.

**Athletics**

**Mr. Campalong**

Mr. Campalong thanked all who worked on Senior night. He thanked them for all the thought behind it and for making it the best as it could be.

**Public Relations**

**Mr. Metz**

**Steering and Rules**

**Mrs. Kehoe**

**Legislative**

**Ms. Young**

**Salary, Schedule and Labor Relations****Mrs. Curtis**1. PSBA Officer Elections

It is recommended the Board Secretary be directed to cast the vote of the Ambridge Area School Board for election of the following PSBA Slate of Candidates for 2020:

President-elect     David Hein, Parkland School District (Lehigh Co.)

Vice President     Daniel O’Keefe, Northgate School District (Allegheny Co.)

Treasurer           Michael Gossert, Cumberland Valley School District (Cumberland Co.)

Insurance Trust     Marsha Pleta, Washington School District (Washington Co.)

Mrs. Kehoe moved to accept item 1, seconded by Mr. Angus. Vote in favor was unanimous.

**Personnel****Mr. Angus**1. 2020-2021 Fall Coach

It is recommended the following individuals be approved to fill the designated fall coaching positions for the 2020-2021 school year at a salary as per the terms of the collective bargaining agreement, pending receipt of current clearances, satisfactory drug screening, TB testing and responses by current/former employers to Act 168 screening.

1) <u>Middle School Girls Basketball Coaches</u>	<u>Stipends</u>
a) Lisa Fox	\$1,750.00
b) Lethera Harrison	\$1,750.00
2) <u>Middle School Cheer Coach</u>	
a) Emily O’Malley	\$1,350.00

2. FMLA

It is recommended to ratify employee #526 taking a leave of absence under Board Policy 435, Family and Medical Leave beginning August 31, 2020, not to exceed 12 weeks.

3. FMLA

It is recommended to ratify employee #395 taking a leave of absence under Board Policy 435, Family and Medical Leave beginning August 31, 2020, not to exceed 12 weeks.

4. FMLA

It is recommend to ratify employee #2430 taking a leave of absence under Board Policy 535, Family and Medical Leave beginning September 4, 2020, not to exceed 12 weeks.

5. Intermittent FMLA

It is recommended to ratify employee #504 taking a leave of absence under Board Policy 435, Family and Medical Leave, not to exceed 12 weeks.

6. Resignation

It is recommended to ratify the resignation of Joanna Lastoria, a cafeteria worker, effective August 13, 2020, with regret.

7. Posted Positions Resignation

It is recommended to accept the resignation of the following, with regret:

- a) Joanne Gonzalez, Secondary Math Department Head
- b) Susan Manuppelli, Elementary Special Education Department Head
- c) Stacey Brock, 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Department Head
- d) Joanne Gonzalez, Sophomore Club Sponsor
- e) Shad Greco, PA Math League Club Sponsor

8. Posted Positions: Department Heads and Building Heads

It is recommended to ratify the following individuals who have applied for the specified posted positions for the 2019-2020 school year be approved at the salary designated in the negotiated agreement, pending receipt of current clearances and drug screening:

<u>DEPARTMENT HEADS</u>		<u>SALARY</u>
<u>K-12:</u>		
Applied Science and Technology	Ben Holmes	\$1,365.00
Business	Terry George	\$1,365.00

9. District Physician Agreement

It is recommended to approve an agreement between the Ambridge Area School District and Dr. Jeffrey Hein to provide school physician services for the 2020-2021 school year, at a total cost of \$3,500.00. Furthermore, it is recommended to retroactively approve the stipend to be paid to Dr. Jeffrey Hein for the 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 school year, as presented.

10. Homebound Instructor

It is recommended to approve Patricia Weale as a Homebound Instructor for an Ambridge Area Middle School Student, as per the collective bargaining agreement.

**11. Varsity Girls' Basketball Coach**

It is recommended to approve Nikki Santiago as the Varsity Girls' Basketball Head Coach for the 2020-2021 school year. She will receive a stipend of \$8,000.00, pending receipt of current clearances, satisfactory drug screening, TB testing and responses by current/former employers to Act 168 screening.

Mr. Angus moved to accept items 1-10, seconded by Mr. Campalong. Vote in favor was unanimous.

**XIII. Solicitor's Report****XIV. Superintendent's Report**

Dr. Pasquerilla thanks the School Board for all of their support. He also thanks the entire staff and community for their continued patience and support. He stated he was able to attend the virtual Open Houses and thought they went really well and was happy to hear some positive feedback.

**XV. Motion to Adjourn**

At 7:35 p.m. Mr. Angus moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Campalong. All in favor.

\*Public Comment

Rachel Albring  
803 5th Street Apt. C38  
Baden, PA

In light of the recent ruling in favor of Butler, Fayette, Greene, and Washington Counties finding that the Covid-19 restrictions put in place on gatherings and the orders to close all "non-life-sustaining" businesses by Governor Wolf & Secretary of Health Dr. Rachel Levine are unconstitutional, are there any plans to let at least the parents of the varsity football team, band, and volleyball players in to watch their children?

Moe Rubenstein stadium has a capacity of nearly 10,000! Even if you gave every single one of the 250 people - that are currently "allowed" in, under Gov. Wolf's UNCONSTITUTIONAL regulation - just 2 tickets, to allow both parents in, that would only make a total of 750 people inside a stadium that can hold 10,000! That's not even 10% capacity! There's PLENTY of room for family units to sit together, with masks on, and stay at LEAST 6 feet away from the next family unit. The other sport that Ambridge currently does not allow spectators is Volleyball, because of the (again) UNCONSTITUTIONAL restriction of only 25 people at indoor gatherings. While I am unsure of the exact capacity of the Gym, I am quite certain that if you gave all of the athletes on both teams just 2 tickets, to allow both parents in, that it would still just make a small percentage of the total capacity of the gym. Again, making it very easy for family units to sit & watch, with masks on, at least 6 feet away for the next family unit.

There IS a safe way to allow us to watch our children, if you would just be bothered enough, long enough, to put together a plan.

Micki Serak, Baden Boro

I was hopeful by the time volleyball season started, there would be some leniency on parents being allowed to mask and social distance in the gymnasium to watch our girls play volleyball. For senior parents, this is especially important being that this may be the last year we get to see them play. Also, I like to attend the games, not only to watch my daughter play, but also in case something happens to her during a game, I am there if needed.

Anyhow, in light of the recent ruling by a federal judge, finding that the COVID-19 restrictions put in place by our Governor were “unconstitutional,” does this reflect on the school’s decisions going forward about letting parents attend the games?

The gym is a big enough space to let at least 2 people per player come to the games and social distance. At the very least, one parent (or person in their household) per player should be permitted to come to the games, social distance, mask up so our girls have someone cheer them on and support them. What kind of high school experience is this for them?

The entire team practices every day for three hours together and they can’t even be in the gym at the same time – if someone is positive, they would already have been exposed due to the practices, then the kids come home and live with their parents, who then would be exposed also. We are getting exposed one way or another, not sure how coming to a game and sitting in the stands, social distancing and wearing a mask would change anything at that point??

I do realize sometimes the school’s “hands are tied”; however, I’m hoping this new ruling will let you make your own decisions (and the right decision) on letting the parents and teammates be able to come and watch the games and cheer our girls on and give a seniors at least a half decent season. I appreciate that the school is trying to put everyone’s safety first, but sometimes you can’t live in fear, you just have to live.

Rachel R Silberger  
Cheer booster board member

Ambridge Administrators and School Board Members,

I’m writing this letter asking for serious consideration on allowing spectators at the remaining 2 home varsity football games coming up. Our stadium can provide more than enough room for proper social distancing. Other sports in Ambridge right now are allowed to have spectators.

I keep hearing only 250 people are allowed outdoors and 25 capacity indoors. Well, why is it ok for half the students to be in school together ever other day. Those numbers are well above the 25 capacity indoor limit. It seems to me that they apply some of the rules but only when it’s convenient. Some don’t want to be bothered with looking for other means to benefit the students and give them some sort of normalcy in these abnormal times.

Can someone try to salvage what we have left this football season for the students? My daughter is a senior cheerleader this year. I think senior night could have been handled way better and made more accommodating to the parents of a senior and students. To give us a few minutes on the field for a quick picture, an announcement with nobody in the stands and then send us home. It was very sad and appeared like little thought or effort was given by administrations. I didn’t even see anyone around during the checking in process as if they were avoiding the situation. We pay school taxes that are the highest around. I think we deserved more.

So the spectators issue needs to be considered with more thought. Instead of the last minute scramble that is done consistently for who ever or what ever screams the loudest. Plus quick last minute decisions can't be safe or well planned out.

Let's try to salvage the remaining football season for our students. Please allow spectators in to watch their fellow student and/or children play/cheer the remaining 2 home football games. For some, this will be the last time they will ever do this in high school.

Thank you in advance for your consideration,

Marcie Bodzenski, Economy Boro

I am pleading for spectators to be allowed to attend the remaining home varsity football games. Of course with safety in place.

Thank you for your time?

Dawn Vucetich  
Baden Boro

I would like to request a consideration for spectators to be allowed at outdoor sport events. Following guidelines, and allowing each student athlete to have 2 tickets if feasible.

Dawn Baronio , Economy Boro

I would like to request that our cheer/football/and band parents be allowed to have parents in the stands to watch our kids. I am a parent of a senior Cheerleader and I would love to see her cheer. They have worked hard and have lost so much this year already. There is more than enough room to social distance in the stands. Please reconsider and allow parents to attend these activities. Thanks

Teresa Graziano, Baden Boro

With only two home games left, what are your plans if any regarding senior parents being able to watch their child play football, cheer or perform in the band in their final year of high school? With a stadium that holds 5000 people, social distancing should not be a problem. why are we not trying to make this year somewhat special for them, they deserve it we as senior parents deserve it. senior night had to be the saddest event i have every seen. Not only were we rushed in and out of the stadium we were unable to watch the game from outside the fence. Finding a solution to Senior parents going to the next 2 games should be a priority.

Kelly Romasco, Economy Boro

I first would like to say how amazing our teachers, guidance counselors, and administrators have been these first few weeks. I am very impressed by what they have accomplished in such a short time. What I would like to address tonight is the issue of parents not being allowed to attend varsity football games. I have researched quite a lot since last week and it seems as though there are very few school districts who are not allowing anyone into the games. Most districts have come up with an innovative solution, while still following within the mandated guidelines. Most schools are at least allowing 1 or 2 parents per athlete to attend. One district has even the band in an adjacent area where they will not affect the capacity of the stadium in order to stay within the 250 limit. Another district is looking into having the band perform at pregame only with their parents in the stadium to watch, and then having them exit the stadium before football and cheer athletes and parents enter. There is a very limited number of times that parents get to be there to watch their kids play in high school and that should not be taken away from them without any serious consideration of other options. Also, it is not safe to hold a game with minors involved, without allowing a parent to choose whether or not they want to be in attendance for safety reasons. I have seen many serious, and often career ending, injuries in my time coaching and attending sporting events. In that moment, that child needs their parent present and the parent absolutely deserves to be there for their child. This already happened to a senior football player during Friday's game. The parent was not allowed to attend what ended up being his last game due to his injury. That family will never have that moment back again. We have the ability at Ambridge to find a way to allow 1-2 parents at minimum per athlete to attend home football games, if not more. If we work together, we can find a unique and innovative way that will still follow the guidelines and give our athletes and community what is only right. Thank you for your consideration.

Vicky Freed - Economy

My daughter has Ms. Gonzalez for Statistics this year. There has been a substitute teacher in there since the start of the school year. Will there be a permanent replacement? Thank you.

Randy Dawson

At this time I want to go on record to make the administration and all school directors aware that there are issues within the fine arts music program at Ambridge Area School District. We plan to make our voices heard at future upcoming meetings.

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Mrs. June Mueller**  
**Board Secretary**