



**Board of Trustees
Minutes of Meeting
August 20, 2018**

A meeting of the Bear Creek Community Charter School Board of Trustees was held on Monday, August 20, 2018 at Bear Creek Community Charter School, 30 Charter School Way, Bear Creek Township. Board members Dave Blazejewski, Wendy Lutchko, Nicky Pachucki, Peter Austin, Sue Barry, Kim Popple and Stacey Scullion were present. Board member Brandy Lewis was absent. Also in attendance were Jim Smith, Kristen Young, Tammy Miller, Scott Sherwood, Kim Stevens and Bridget Deeble.

Dave Blazejewski called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. Peter Austin led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance. Wendy Lutchko conducted a roll call of the Board.

Dave Blazejewski opened the meeting to public comment. There was no public comment.

Peter Austin made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 20, 2018 Board of Trustees meeting, which was seconded by Nicky Pachucki and approved by majority roll-call vote of the Board members present.

Kim Popple made a motion to accept the resignation of Jeffrey Polanin as Music Teacher, which was seconded by Nicky Pachucki and approved by unanimous roll-call vote of the Board members present.

Peter Austin made a motion to approve the hiring of Jamie Bower as long-term substitute teacher through September 14, 2018 at a daily rate of \$200.00. The motion was seconded by Nicky Pachucki and approved by unanimous roll-call vote of the Board members present.

Kim Popple made a motion to approve the hiring of Shari Terran as a long-term substitute teacher through September 28, 2018 at a daily rate of \$100.00. The motion was seconded by Nicky Pachucki and approved by unanimous roll-call vote of the Board members present.

Kim Stevens provided the Board with the proposed Chapter 339 plan required by law, and reviewed it in detail. Nicky Pachucki made a motion to approve the plan as presented, which was seconded by Kim Popple and approved by unanimous roll-call vote of the Board members present.

Jim Smith requested the Board approve the purchase of a marked police vehicle, along with an equipment package, for use by the School Police Officer. This item was included in the school budget. Nicky Pachucki asked if a vehicle was necessary as the intention of hiring a School Police Officer was to have him/her present at the front entrance when students are arriving in the morning. Sue Barry had a similar question. Jim Smith stated that a daily issue facing the school community is vehicles speeding and passing in the school zone, a topic that is consistently questioned by parents and members of the community. The Pennsylvania State Police rarely have Trooper in the area, and the dangerous behavior of passing motorists is prevalent. Jim stated that protocols will be put into place where the School Police Officer will only spend 30-45 minutes a day stationed at the driveway as a deterrent to unsafe driving in the school zone, and will have other duties other than being stationed at the front entrance – which includes security tours of the school and school property. Dave Blazejewski reminded the Board that we have a 325 acre campus, and a vehicle is a necessary tool. Tammy Miller felt having an armed police officer thirty-second away at the bottom of the driveway is much better than having to wait 20 minutes for a response by the Pennsylvania State Police.

Peter Austin made a motion to authorize the purchase of a marked 2019 Ford Interceptor SUV, along with appropriate equipment, at a cost not to exceed \$50,000.00, which was the amount that was budgeted for this purchase. Jim Smith stated that the overall cost will be less than this amount, and the purchase will be made through a COSTARS statewide contract. Stacey Scullion seconded the motion, which was approved by unanimous roll-call vote of the Board members present.

Tammy Miller provided the Board an update on outstanding tuition from the 2017-2018 school year. She stated that approximately \$40,000.00 was outstanding. PDE refused to process the Unipay submission back in June because of the "lack of a cover letter", which is apparently a new requirement of PDE. This was the first time in the School's 14 year history that PDE refused to process tuition redirection for the school. The request for subsidy redirection, referred to as unipay, will be resubmitted to PDE later in the month along with the required cover letter in an attempt to convince PDE to redirect the subsidy rightfully due to Bear Creek Community Charter School.

Tammy Miller informed the Board of Trustees that the school received new tuition rates from the Wilkes-Barre Area School District and the rates for regular education are approximately five percent lower than the prior year, which at face value, appears to be odd since the District's overall budget has not decreased nor has PDE authorized any new deductions from the tuition calculation. Jim Smith expressed concern that the numbers are not accurate and that PDE is no longer going to review the rates for accuracy and hold districts accountable. The consensus of the Board was to have the school attempt to calculate the correct rates and to take all steps necessary, including through the Pennsylvania Open Records Law, to obtain the source documents needed to do so. The Board also agreed that legal counsel should be consulted, and that if the rates are believed to be inaccurate, the School needs to pursue legal recourse to ensure funding continues to flow as required by state law. Jim Smith and Tammy Miller will take the necessary steps in an attempt to obtain the financial information necessary to confirm the tuition rate and will consult with legal counsel. They will report back to the Board at a future meeting.

Kristen Young provided the Board a report on the first day of school. Overall things went very well despite Student Transportation of America changing multiple bus numbers at the last minute.

Bridget Deeble provided the Board with an update on the School's learning support program.

Jim Smith provided the Board with an update on charter reauthorization. Despite two formal requests and an initial commitment that the Wilkes-Barre Area School District Board of Education was scheduled to approve charter renewal, it has not occurred. Jim Smith stated he has reached out to Superintendent Brian Costello since then on two occasions, and has not received a response. Special Counsel Kevin McKenna will reach out to District Solicitor Ray Wendolowski to get an update. Otherwise, the process will remain open until after the new year, at which time the Board will consider initiating legal action in an attempt to get the District to fulfill their legal responsibilities regarding charter reauthorization.

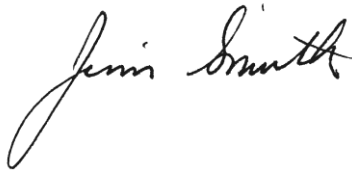
Scott Sherwood advised that he just returned from a meeting of the Bear Creek Township Planning Board, who met to consider the School's plan to enlarge a storm water pond and construct a running track. The Planning Board was not prepared to approve or deny the request, as the Township engineer has not yet finalized his review. The Planning Board was under the false assumption the School was going to withdraw the pending request, which is not the case. The Planning Board granted a 90 extension so that the Township engineer can issue his comments and the School's engineer can respond.

Dave Blazejewski opened the meeting to general public comment. There was no public comment.

Kim Popple made a motion to adjourn the public meeting, which was seconded by Wendy Lutchko and approved by unanimous roll-call vote of the Board members present.

The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim Smith". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J".

Jim Smith
Board Secretary

The next meeting of the Bear Creek Community Charter School Board of Trustees is **Thursday, September 6, 2018.**