

TOWNSHIP OF MONTVILLE

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Virtual Meeting

Minutes

Special Meeting of the Board of Education

Tuesday, October 13, 2020

Twenty-One members of the public were present, virtually. President Grau called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. with a roll call.

Roll Call

Present: Dr. K. Cortellino, Mr. J. Daughtry, Mrs. C. Fano, Dr. D. Modrak, Mr. M. O'Brien, Mr. M. Rappaport, Ms. M. Zuckerman, Mr. M. Palma and Mr. C. Grau.

Absent: None.

Also, Present: Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Rene Rovtar
School Business Administrator, Ms. Katine Slunt
Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Casey Shorter
Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction, Ms. Andrea Woodring
Board Attorney, Stephen Edelstein

Diane Maggiore, Assistant to the Business Administrator, was also present.

President Grau welcomed the public and led the flag salute.

Open Public Meeting Notice

Ms. Slunt read the Open Public Meeting Notice, as listed below:

The New Jersey Open Public Meeting Law was enacted to ensure the right of the public to have advance notice of and to attend the meetings of public bodies, at which any business affecting their interests is discussed or acted upon. In accordance with the provisions of the act, Montville Township Board of Education provided a public notice of this meeting, which included time, date and location, that was posted at the Montville Township Municipal Building, all Montville public schools, the Montville Public Library, the Montville Township Board of Education Administrative Office Building, the district website and advertised in the Daily Record, the Board's official newspaper, on October 9, 2020.

Section F:

Superintendent's Report

Remarks: Dr. Rovtar discussed the district's intention to change medical providers from the State Educator Health Benefit Plan to AETNA, effective January 1, 2021. Dr. Rovtar indicated that a webinar will be offered at 3:30 p.m. on October 15, 2020 to describe the new plan and answer questions. Dr. Rovtar noted that the changes made by the State to the medical coverage for school employees resulted in significant cost increases; the movement to AETNA will control costs and preserve jobs for the district.

Section H:

Public Participation

(For items on the agenda only)

The Board of Education recognizes the value of public comment on educational issues and the importance of allowing members of the public to express themselves on school matters of community interest. Dr. Rovtar provided directions for public participation in the meeting. Ten members of the public spoke.

Four members of the public discussed the timing of the employee notification, highlighting the stress that this change caused the staff members on Mindful Monday. Dr. Rovtar responded, noting that the district provided information timely to the staff. Dr. Rovtar continued, indicating that the State only notified the district in late September of its coverage revisions.

Seven members of the public also discussed the stress caused by this change in medical coverage, particularly during the pandemic, and how unappreciated the action made them feel. President Grau responded, highlighting the Board's thanks and support of the teaching staff.

Two members of the public inquired about details of the new medical plan, particularly the doctors included in-network. Dr. Rovtar responded.

One member inquired as to the additional cost to the district, resulting from the change in the State's medical options. Dr. Rovtar responded, noting the benefits gained through the AETNA plan.

President Grau opened the meeting to Board questions. Six members of the Board spoke.

Mr. Palma discussed the budgetary constraints and the Board's efforts to save jobs, noting how highly the Board values its teachers.

Dr. Cortellino reinforced the Board's support for the teachers. Dr. Cortellino continued, noting that this action by the Board related to the financial impact of the State's changes to the medical coverage options. Dr. Cortellino spoke, suggesting that the Board delay its decision until October 27, 2020 in order to provide the staff the opportunity to ask questions at the webinar on October 15, 2020 Ms. Zuckerman agreed, supporting the delay of a decision. Dr. Rovtar responded, noting the time constraints set by each of the plans.

Mr. O'Brien discussed the timing of the employee notifications and his support to delay the Board's vote.

Mr. Palma questioned whether a delay will change the need for action. President Grau responded, noting that the delay will allow the staff to gather more information about the plan.

Dr. Modrak noted the increase in COVID-19 cases in the Township and State. He encouraged the community members to continue taking precautions. President Grau noted the cleanliness of the school buildings, suggesting that the buildings remain closed to outside groups.

The Board agreed to postpone the following resolution until the meeting on October 27, 2020. No action was taken.

Section L: Personnel *Chair, Mr. Modrak– Mrs. Fano, Mr. Rappaport*

RESOLVED, that the Montville Township Board of Education approves the following personnel items: (NOTE: Approval of this resolution authorizes the Superintendent to submit to the county superintendent applications for emergent hiring and the applicant's attestation that he/she has not been convicted of any disqualifying crime pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:6-7.1 et. seq., N.J.S.A. 18A:39-17 et. Seq., or N.J.S.A. 18A:6-4.13 et. seq. for those employees listed below. All appointments are contingent upon receipt of proper teaching certification, and all salary placements are pending receipt of college transcripts verifying degree status and letter stating years of service in other districts.)

L.6: Termination of Participation in the State Health Benefits Program

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Montville Township Board of Education hereby resolves to terminate its participation in the program (Medical Plan coverage) thereby canceling coverage provided by the School Employees' Health Benefits Program (N.J.S.A. 52:14-17.25 et seq.) for all of its active and retired employees.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Montville Township Board of Education will notify all active employees of the date of their termination of coverage under the program, December 31, 2020.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Montville Township Board of Education understands that the Division of Pensions and Benefits will notify retired employees of the cancellation of their coverage, and that all COBRA participants will be notified by the Division of Pensions and Benefits and advised to contact the Administrative Offices of the Board of Education concerning the alternative medical insurance plan.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Montville Township Board of Education understands that this resolution shall take effect the first of the month following a 60-day period beginning with the receipt of the resolution by the State Health Benefits Commission or School Employees' Health Benefits Commission.

L.7: Acceptance of Proposal for Health Benefits Coverage through AETNA Insurance Company

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Montville Township Board of Education hereby resolves to accept the proposal for medical plan coverage through AETNA Insurance Company for the period of January 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022, for all of its active and retired employees.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Montville Township Board of Education will notify all active employees of the date of the new medical coverage through AETNA Insurance Company, effective January 1, 2021.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Montville Township Board of Education understands that all retired and COBRA participants will contact the Administrative Offices of the Board of Education concerning the alternative health insurance plan offered through AETNA Insurance Company.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Montville Township Board of Education understands that this resolution shall take effect the first of the month following a 60-day period beginning with the receipt of the resolution by AETNA Insurance Company.

Section T: Adjournment

A motion was made by Ms. O'Brien and seconded by Mr. Palma to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed, all present members voting in favor of the motion. The meeting adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Katine Slunt
Board Secretary