

Board Adopts 2021 School Budget

The Mount Pulaski Board of Education met August 21st to conduct a budget hearing at 6:00 PM followed by the regular meeting in the Mount Pulaski Grade School Learning Center. All Board members were in attendance.

The evening started with the annual budget hearing. The public has time during this hearing to make comments about the budget. Mr. Jeff Beccue addressed the Board reaffirming the conversations the district had with the community concerning district finances and tax dollars when passing the construction referendum in the fall of 2018.

The Board began the regular meeting by approving the Consent Agenda which included payment of bills, approval of minutes from the August Board Meeting, the September 2nd special meeting and sales tax revenue report. Mr. Lamkey reported that while sales tax revenues were still down about 12%, they were on the rise from previous months. Mr. Wilham asked for clarification on a billing item which was explained by Mr. Lamkey. The Board passed the Consent Agenda 7-0.

Under Reports, Superintendent Lamkey entertained questions on his report to the Board. He provided a construction update, discussed recent donations and updated them on the high school principal search. Also in Reports, it was noted that Don Adams with Municipal & Scholastic Placements asked for our current insurance policy package issued by the school district through a FOIA request.

The Board recognized recent donors who have extended resources to the district during the last year. The Lincoln Elks Club, Lincoln Kiwanis, Johnson Hardware and CORE have all been very generous in supplementing the school district.

The meeting then progressed to Unfinished Business, where Superintendent Lamkey presented a budget summary for the upcoming school year. He noted that there were additional expenses related to the construction and renovation projects from this past year. Even with these expenses, he was confident that the district could maintain sufficient reserves for the start of next school year. The budget was adopted 7-0.

Mr. Lamkey then updated the Board on the construction and renovation project that was finishing up at the high school. The Board will discuss potential dates for an open house that would allow the public to tour the new building once the project nears 100% completion. Sometime in late October, the Board is planning for an open house once construction is complete.

Mr. Wilham asked Superintendent Lamkey about revisiting the agreement between the school district and the park district concerning use of the baseball field, soccer field and track. Mr. Lamkey replied by saying the Building and Grounds Committee would look over the unsigned agreement then reach out to the park district to arrive at a solution.

Board Adopts 2021 School Budget

Under New Business, Superintendent Lamkey discussed the interior design plans with the Board to get approval to move forward. The plans center on promoting the district Vision and Mission Statements as well as the district slogan, Empower – Engage – Inspire. The interior design project is being designed by Ace Sign Company. After discussion, the Board advised Mr. Lamkey to move forward with the plans.

The next item was an informative discussion with administration to discuss in-person and remote instruction through the first two weeks of school. Mr. Morgan and Mrs. Lora offered insights to the teacher's efforts and student's successes. Students and teachers alike are becoming more and more comfortable with the new normal. The teachers worked through more professional development last Friday to support their instructional classroom efforts. The BLT's in each building will keep their finger on the pulse of students and teachers so adjustments can be made and students can be supported. The Board adamantly expressed their desire and the communities desire to get our students back to a longer school day. Superintendent Lamkey reassured the Board that this was the desire of teachers and administrators alike. He reiterated that if this transition is to be successful, it has to be well-planned and systemic. Discussions of what an extended day would look like have already begun among teachers and administrators. It will next be discussed among building leadership teams.

The Board then approved (7-0) the second reading of updated Board Policy before discussing proposed changes. The major change came with the designation of Superintendent Lamkey as the district's Title IX Coordinator. The policy changes were focused on maintaining people's rights and developing systems to protect them. The Board adopted the policy update 7-0.

The Building and Grounds Committee presented the Capital Projects List of 2021. This list is designed to offer direction to the district's infrastructure planning. While the list is prioritized, it is still fluid. This means that the items on the list can change as variables change. Variables can include cost, need, timing, safety, etc... There will be a Health Life Safety Survey conducted with architects this fall with to determine what the district needs are. The Capital Projects List was approved 7-0.

Next the Board approved the Personnel report 7-0. The following actions were approved by the Board:

- Resignations were accepted from Clayton Lindley, Marla Blair and Ashton Blower as paraprofessionals.
- Sarah Lones and Esther Farmer were hired as para-professionals.
- Ron McCarty was hired as MPHS Head Custodian and Kevin Kirk was hired as a part-time custodian.
- Chris Doherty was hired as MPGS Scholastic Bowl Sponsor.

Board Adopts 2021 School Budget

- Lucy Woodworth was hired as a MPGS Scholastic Bowl Volunteer Sponsor.
- Janet Cooper was hired as the MPHS Yearbook Sponsor.
- Mark Graue was hired as the MPHS Scholastic Bowl Sponsor

The Board then entered Executive Session at 7:55 PM to discuss personnel matters. The meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM.