

**LAKE-LEHMAN SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

**January 22, 2024**

The combined Committee-of-the-Whole and regular monthly meeting for voting purposes of the Lake-Lehman Board of School Directors was held on Monday, January 22, 2024, in the auditorium of the Lake-Lehman Junior-Senior High School.

The meeting was called to order by President, Bob Wright, at 7:04 p.m., and opened with Roll Call, Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence.

<u>DIRECTORS</u>	<u>Roll Call</u>
Robert Baran	Present
Kevin Carey	Present
Al DeAngelis	Absent
David Paulauskas	Absent
Drew Salko	Present
Mark Wallace	Present
Scott Walsh	Absent
Rob Wojtowicz	Present
Robert Wright	Present

**Others Present:**

Tracey Liparela, Assistant to the Superintendent  
Avery E. Smith, Esquire, King, Spry, Herman, Freund & Faul LLC  
Joe Caputo, Business Consultant  
Mary Jo Casaldi, Superintendent's Administrative Asst./Board Secretary  
Tabitha Miscavago Spagnuolo, Personnel/Benefits Manager  
Mike Kostrobala, Assistant Principal, Junior-Senior High School  
Matthew Nonnenberg, Ross Elementary Principal  
Donald James, Lehman-Jackson Elementary Principal  
Brian Murphy, Technology Director/Director of Buildings & Grounds  
Nancy Edkins, Lake-Noxen Elementary Principal  
Jeff Shook, Dean of Students/Athletic Director  
Tina Antonello-Portee, Special Education Director  
Erica Orock, School Psychologist

Crystal Jo Savage	Christine N.	Isabelle DeCesaris	Callie Dieffenbacher
Jean Lipski	Brad Dieffenbacher	Susan Traver	Jamie Walsh
Chris Teetsel	Logan Womach	Brian Womach	Jamiee Janosov
Rick J.	Riann DeCesaris	Brenda Morris	Adrienne Dieffenbacher
Connie W.	Cheryl Koval	Benjamin Brelsford	Zach Koval
Lucia DeCesaris	Gail Honeywell	Lucy Honeywell	M. Major
David Fedor	Tammy Schnable	Angelo DeCesaris	Jeremy Janosov
Mike Sholtis	Hayden Evans	Mike Evans	Tammy Evans
Robert Gregor	Kathleen Selner	Craig Selner	Donna Richards

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

An Executive Session of the Board was held on January 22, 2024, to discuss staff resignations, employment opportunities - support staff/administration, coaching/extra-curricular appointments/openings, Act 93 Agreement, and litigation.

**READING OF MISSION**

Mrs. Liparela read the following "Mission" of the Lake-Lehman School District.

"The Mission of the Lake-Lehman School District is to inspire students to achieve personal fulfillment through the context of community, independence, generosity and mastery within a safe learning environment."

**SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

The superintendent's report included the following:

**Field Hockey Recognition** - Coach Jean Lipski acknowledged members of the field hockey team for their academic and athletic achievements and presented certificates to Callie Dieffenbacher and Isabella DeCesaris for being selected to 2023 First Team All-State Field Hockey.

**United Way Nurse's Pantry**- Each elementary school received a \$1,000 donation to fill their pantries with supplies for students who may be in need. Such items may include clothing, personal hygiene, etc.

**Children's Christmas Party**- On December 13th the Annual Children's Christmas Party was held at the Lake-Lehman Junior-Senior High School. Under the supervision of Sandy Boyle, students and staff coordinated an incredible evening for families in need. Dinner was provided, and Santa arrived bringing gifts to each family. The beautifully wrapped gifts were generously purchased by students, staff and community members of the district. This event made the holidays brighter for everyone involved. Thank you to all who help make this magical night happen each year.

**Great Knight Program**- Mrs. Liparela had the privilege of accompanying Mr. James and his Great Knight crew as they made a visit to 3 students' homes on a recent early dismissal day to present "The Great Knight" award. The Great Knight award can be given for a variety of reasons such as overall improvement, growth, academics, citizenship, behavior, etc. The award includes the nomination form, a certificate, t-shirt, yard sign, balloons, sticker, photo and a special visit from the Lake-Lehman Knight mascot! It is a creative and motivational way to recognize students for their excellent work and achievements! In addition, it's a unique opportunity to foster positive relationships between school and home. Students are nominated during the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th marking periods. At least three students will be selected each marking period. A parade was led by the School Resource Officer from Lehman-Jackson and each student was surprised with this very special recognition. It was an outstanding afternoon. Thank you to everyone who was a part of this.

**School Board Recognition**- January is School Director Recognition Month. Mrs. Liparela recognized current school board members for their commitment to our students and all members of the Lake-Lehman community. Mrs. Liparela stated that members of the board are elected officials who volunteer hours of their time, addressing responsibilities with respect to all school business, including but not limited to budgets, policies and planning for the future of our district. She also stated that board members must make complex decisions that enable all students to find a pathway to success, while maintaining fiscal responsibility to the school community. She concluded stating, "this is a challenging role indeed and we are very appreciative of their service."

**BUSINESS MANAGER'S REPORT**

Mr. Caputo provided some background on the Municipal Tax Services Resolution which is an annual agreement that the district enters into with the Redevelopment Authority of Luzerne County for the purchase of the district's anticipated qualified real estate tax claims. The district is paid a lump-sum for the tax claims.

Mr. Caputo also provided information in regard to the contract between Lake-Lehman School District and UGI Energy Services, LLC., for the purchase of natural gas at a rate which is locked-in for the 2024 calendar year. The timing of the purchase generates a savings of \$10,000, over the course of the year. Mr. Caputo also noted that the district also has a similar savings with electric.

**WEST SIDE AREA CAREER AND TECHNICAL CENTER REPORT**

No Report.

**LUZERNE COUNTY INTERMEDIATE UNIT REPORT**

No Report.

**STUDENT COUNCIL REPORT**

Student Council representative, Lucy Honeywell provided the following report:

The Lake-Lehman Student Council has had a very eventful month of December. We held a successful Holiday assembly on December 22nd where students participated in fun games such as a Lip Sync Battle and guessing well-known Christmas carols, and we even had a visit from Santa and Mrs. Claus. In addition, the band, chorus and cheerleaders added to the holiday themed 12 Days of Lehman. Our mission has been and continues to be to encourage student and staff involvement. Each student received a raffle ticket upon entering the auditorium for gift giveaways. The entire senior high felt valued and included. The Student Council sponsored two children for Lehman's Children's Christmas Party. This is a wonderful community tradition that provides Christmas for those in need. We also spearheaded a holiday spirit week. Students and staff were encouraged to dress in holiday themed apparel and accessories.

**FOOD SERVICE REPORT**

No Report.

On behalf of the Lake-Lehman School Board, Mr. Wright thanked Sara Walsh, Food Service Director, Metz Culinary Management, for providing dinner for board members in honor of School Director Recognition month.

**OLD BUSINESS**

None.

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Mrs. Liparela reviewed and read the agenda and addendum items.

Mr. Wright noted the agenda is approved as read and amended.

**VISITORS** – Comments relative to approval of Minutes, treasurer's report, payment of bills, and ACTION ITEMS.

No visitor's comments.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion was made by Drew Salko, seconded by Rob Baran, to approve the following minutes.

December 11, 2023 - regular monthly meeting

**Vote: Upon roll call, all members present voted yes; motion carried.**

**PAYMENT OF BILLS**

Motion was made by Robert Wojtowicz, seconded by Drew Salko, to approve the Fund Accounting Payment Summary with payment date listed as January 23, 2024, in the amount of \$544,625.44, and interim payments dated January 12, 2024, in the amount of \$219,306.77, December 15, 2023, in the amount of \$202,714.84 and December 29, 2023, in the amount of \$146,182.14; subject to audit.

**Vote: Upon roll call, all directors present voted yes; motion carried.**

**TREASURER'S REPORT**

Motion was made by Robert Baran, seconded by Al DeAngelis, to approve the treasurer's report as of December 31, 2023.

**Vote: Upon roll call, all directors present voted yes; motion carried.**

**ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF FINANCIAL REPORTS AND FILE FOR AUDIT**

**(Attached to Treasurer's Report)**

**Balances as of November 30, 2023**

- Athletic Fund
- Food Service
- Lehman-Jackson Elementary Building Fund

**Balances as of December 31, 2023**

- Athletic Fund
- Food Service Fund
- Jr/Sr High Student Activity Fund
- Jr/Sr High Principal's Fund
- Lehman-Jackson Elementary Building Fund
- Ross Elementary Building Fund

**ACTION ITEMS**

**CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

No items.

**BUILDINGS & GROUNDS**

No items.

**ATHLETICS & ACTIVITIES**

Motion was made by Kevin Carey, seconded by Drew Salko, to move on the following items:

1. Approve the following as School & Booster Volunteers for the 2023-2024 school year; all clearances on file:

A.	Sarah Matusick	D.	Lisa Mulhern
B.	Matthew Matusick	E.	Jillian Russoniello
C.	Romayne Montross	F.	Rochelle Windsor

**Vote: Upon roll call, all members present voted yes; motion carried.**

2. Appoint the following Head Coaches/ Extra-Curricular Advisors for the 2023-2024 school year, all clearances on file; provided that the season is not cancelled due to Covid-19 related purposes.

A.	John Sobocinski	Indoor Track	Volunteer
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**Vote: Upon roll call, all members present voted yes; motion carried.**

3. Appoint the following Assistant Coaches/ Extra-Curricular Advisors for the 2023-2024 school year, all clearances on file; provided that the season is not cancelled due to Covid-19 related purposes.

A.	Lisa Finnegan	Softball	Volunteer
B.	Alaisha Sherwood	Softball	Volunteer
C.	MaryAnn Maxfield	Varsity Track & Field	\$2,993.22
D.	Katie Supey	Varsity Track & Field	\$2,993.22
E.	Robert Carr Jr.	JH Track & Field	\$2,993.22
F.	Robert Mitkus	JH Track & Field	\$2,993.22
G.	Jeffrey Peiffer	Track & Field	Volunteer
H.	Michael Evans	Boys Lacrosse	\$2,993.22
I.	Ronald Strohl	Boys Lacrosse	Volunteer

**Vote: Upon roll call, all members present voted yes; motion carried.**

4. Rescind the following motion appointing Assistant Coaches/ Extra-Curricular Advisors for the 2023-2024 school year:

A.	June 19, 2023	5 – M.	Michael Tereska	Wrestling	Volunteer
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**Vote: Upon roll call, all members present voted yes; motion carried.**

5. Appoint the following Head Coaches/ Extra-Curricular Advisors for the 2024-2025 school year, all clearances on file; provided that the season is not cancelled due to Covid-19 related purposes.

A.	Kelly Adamshick	Girls Soccer	\$4,317.37
B.	Enrico Bartolini	Boys Soccer	\$4,317.37
C.	Gerald Gilsky	Football	\$8,394.69
D.	Christopher Kukosky	Girls Volleyball	\$4,888.28
E.	Cheryl Kulikowski	Band Director	\$6,756.41
F.	Cheryl Kulikowski	Band Director - Concert	\$1,977.73
G.	Jean Lipski	Field Hockey	\$6,344.82
H.	Crystal Savage	Cheerleading	\$4,159.37
I.	John Sobocinski	Cross Country	\$2,571.56

**Vote: Upon roll call, all members present voted yes; motion carried.**

**TRANSPORTATION**

No items.

**SUPPORT SERVICES**

Motion was made by Mark Wallace, seconded by Kevin Carey to move on the following item:

1. Accept, with regret, the letter of resignation from Gail Kozich, Payroll Clerk, effective January 31, 2024, and authorize administration to advertise for the position.

**Vote: Upon roll call, all members present voted yes; motion carried.**

**SCHOOL BOARD**

Motion was made by Rob Baran, seconded by Drew Salko, to move on the following items:

1. Adopt the following Municipal Tax Services Resolution:

**WHEREAS**, it is anticipated that the Board of School Directors of Lake-Lehman School District (the “District”) (i) is owed outstanding taxes that will be secured by real estate tax claims for the fiscal years ending June 30, 2024 and prior years (the “2024 Tax Claims”); and

**WHEREAS**, the Redevelopment Authority of Luzerne County (“RALC”) has a program in place to purchase the anticipated qualified 2024 Tax Claims on or after January 1, 2024; and

**WHEREAS**, an addendum to the September 30, 2007 Agreement of Sale and Purchase (the “Agreement”), which will include therein a mandatory repurchase obligation by the District, together with any other documents or instruments necessary to complete the transaction, will be entered into by the District and RALC for the purchase, sale and assignment of the anticipated 2024 Tax Claims.

**NOW THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY**

**RESOLVED**, that the District agrees to sell, on or after January 1, 2024, its anticipated qualified 2024 Tax Claims to RALC pursuant to the Agreement, which will include therein a mandatory repurchase obligation by the District under certain circumstances, and other supporting documents and amendments that shall be in a form approved by the Board President and District Solicitor; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the District be and is hereby authorized to, on or after January 1, 2024, sell the anticipated qualified 2024 Tax Claims to RALC on such terms and conditions as approved by the Board President and District Solicitor; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED**, that upon sale, the District will assign such sold tax claims to RALC and RALC will in turn assign these tax claims to its lender; and be it

**FINALLY RESOLVED**, that the proper District officials be and are hereby authorized and directed to take any and all actions necessary and required to complete the transactions herein, including, but not limited to, the execution of all documents subject to the approval as to form of said documents by legal counsel for the District.

**FURTHER RESOLVED**, that, as necessary, the District shall execute such documents with the RALC and other appropriate entities as shall be reasonably necessary to facilitate the continued collection and servicing of the qualified 2024 Tax Claims; and be it

Duly adopted this 22<sup>nd</sup> day of January, 2024, by the Board of School Directors of Lake-Lehman School District in lawful session duly assembled.

**Vote: Upon roll call, all members present voted yes; motion carried.**

2. Ratify the approval the Service Agreement with BerkOne of Bethlehem, PA, to prepare and mail the Act 1, Homestead/Farmstead applications, as per terms of Quote# Q-00991-1-Option A., which includes return envelope at a cost of \$0.4326. per application.

**Vote: Upon roll call, all members present voted yes; motion carried.**

3. Ratify the approval of the contract between Lake-Lehman School District and UGI Energy Services, LLC ("UGGIES") for the purchase of natural gas, for the period January 2024 through December 2024.

**Vote: Upon roll call, all members present voted yes; motion carried.**

4. Authorize a refund of paid real estate taxes for the years 2021 and 2022 for Michael Kashnicki of Jackson Township, as determined by the Luzerne County Board of Assessment Appeals in the following amounts:

- A. 2021 - \$426.16
- B. 2022 - \$426.26

**Vote: Upon roll call, all members present voted yes; motion carried.**



- 5. Authorize administration to lease instruments for the band program from COSTARS vendor, Robert M. Sides Family Music Center; 201 Mulberry Street, Williamsport PA. Instruments include piccolo, flute, oboe, bassoon, clarinet, saxophone, horn, trombone, baritone/euphonium, tuba, and percussion kits. The cost of the lease-to-own program is \$43,658.09 annually for five years (total cost \$218,290.47).

**Vote: Upon roll call, all members present voted yes; motion carried.**

- 6. Approve a leave of absence for Employee #1120, effective February 5, 2024 – January 31, 2025. It is understood the leave will consist of sick, vacation & personal days in accordance with the Family Medical Leave Act; leave will exceed 60 days.

**Vote: Upon roll call, all members present voted yes; motion carried.**

- 7. Authorize Administration to approve the addition of the following All-State student athlete portrait to the "Wall of Fame" located in the junior-senior high school lobby.

A. Callie Dieffenbacher - 1st Team All-State Field Hockey.

**Vote: Upon roll call, all members present voted yes; motion carried.**

- 8. Approve the following reimbursement(s) due to increased prescription co-pays, effective July 1, 2017, as outlined in the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Lake-Lehman School District and the Lake-Lehman Educational Support Personnel Association:

A. Employee #1403    \$20.00

**Vote: Upon roll call, all members present voted yes; motion carried.**

**INFORMATION AND RECOGNITION**

Mr. Wright noted that all informational items are as listed.

**BOARD DISCUSSION FOR FUTURE BUSINESS**

None.

**SET MEETING DATES**

Mr. Wright read the following meeting information:

The combined Committee-of-the-Whole and regular monthly meeting for voting purposes has been scheduled for February 12, 2024, at 7:00 p.m., and will be held in the auditorium of the Lake-Lehman Junior-Senior High School.

**VISITORS**

No Comments.



**ADJOURNMENT**

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Drew Salko, seconded by Mark Wallace.

Mr. Wright adjourned the meeting at 7:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted



Non-Member, Board Secretary  
Mary Jo Casaldi

