

BANGOR TOWNSHIP SCHOOLS
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
October 17, 2016

The meeting was called to order by President Richard Kowalski at 5:30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Richard Kowalski, President; John Loop, Vice-President; Melissa Kaczmarek, Secretary; Brian Tobin, Treasurer; Lynne Moore, Trustee; Mark Seymour, Trustee; and Patrick Shaffer, Trustee

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO THE AGENDA Richard Kowalski added Committee Reports to Agenda

EXPRESSIONS/ COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC Mary Ward, Bangor Township taxpayer, and former Bangor teacher commented on the illegal placement of school board election signs. Signs are placed under state traffic signs, i.e., stop and yield signs, etc. Mr. Kowalski stated that he is sorry; her issue is a personal issue and has nothing to do with the board or school. Mr. Kowalski told Mrs. Ward to contact him; Mrs. Ward stated she tried contacting him. Mr. Kowalski stated he did receive an anonymous message but no specifics were mentioned other than a problem with his signs which have been in the same place for the last three elections and he has contacted his attorney. Mr. Kowalski told Mrs. Ward if she wanted to call him with a specific problem he would be more than happy to address them with her or she can put her concerns in writing. Mr. Kowalski stated this is not the place, it is a personal problem with his signs. Mrs. Ward stated it is not personal that she is a voter and he is representing her. Mr. Kowalski stated he understands that but it is personal with his signs - nothing to do with the board or school. Mrs. Ward questioned the legality issue. Mr. Kowalski stated that this is a problem that she has with him - not a problem with the board or school. Mrs. Ward stated she has contacted the board and so have many other people. Mr. Kowalski stated he is aware of that but he has placed the signs in the same locations for the past 27 years and it is a personal issue with him and his signs. Mr. Kowalski thanked Mrs. Ward for her time and stated if she wants to contact him to address it with him on a personal level but it is not a school or board item. Mrs. Ward disagreed; Mr. Kowalski stated she had the right to disagree but it is not a board issue or school issue - it is a personal issue with his signs.

Jeremy Werner expressed his concerns if the Board voted to join the Saginaw Valley League. As a parent – sounds great. Concerns with going to schools in areas of high crime. League needs to be a good fit for all sports. If we can't maintain success with our students it is going to be tough as a parent to keep doing it. If they do well we want them to compete. Needs to make sure league is a good fit for all sports – not one sport, all sports. We will fit in with bottom schools. SVL is the only league that does not divide by enrollment. Mr. Werner is defending what is right for his kids, he does not want to put his kids at a disadvantage. BTS needs to provide resources. There is a breakdown in communication. There are many questions and concerns that were not addressed. The coaches asked for a meeting and told it was too late. Why isn't the SVL divided up by enrollment numbers. Smaller schools taking on bigger schools is a disadvantage. Is the SVL helping the smaller schools? Mr. Werner is very disappointed in the way it was handled and does not support the move.

Matt Nemode – stated he was in favor of the league. It would also help with gate receipts, concessions, 50/50 sales. Discouraged with those that oppose the move to SVL. Financially, makes sense. For the kids it will challenge and make them better. He feels it will attract students and open doors.

Adam Rezmer, former JG athlete, is disappointed there was not a motion made last week. As a student he would have welcomed playing larger schools. "We were always the big fish in a little pond," in the NEMC. He stated he does not see any harm playing bigger schools.

Jason Forgash feels strongly about joining the league. It is unacceptable to travel 3 ½ hours one way to a game. Joining the SVL would reduce travel time, allowing more parents an opportunity to attend games. Mr. Forgash does not feel there is any safety issue with the exception of football. He feels it is a good opportunity for our student athletes. Kids like to feel competitive. We need to encourage our students.

Sarah Wesolek – proud JG graduate and schools of choice parent, shared her disappointment with last week's outcome. Joining the SVL would reduce travel and allow kids a challenge to compete. Our kids can rise to this level of competition but we need to build feeder programs. Mrs. Wesolek feels we failed our kids. The coaches and board do not believe in our students. Mrs. Wesolek asked for the board to vote yes, build programs, let the students shine as individuals, and make memories. Give the students what they need to succeed.

Bill Wesolek—grades matter more than wins. His child is up very late, falling asleep trying to do homework after coming home after a game. Traveling many hours is stressful for our students. In addition, the added cost of traveling and loss of revenues all need to be considered. Traveling more than 25-45 minute is stressful on working families. Safety while traveling is also an issue.

Brad Bach –Give the students an opportunity to compete.

Brett Hubert – Thanked BTS for giving his daughters a wonderful education to succeed at the next level. He shared his disappointed in the way it was all handled. Bangor Township Schools let the community down. He feels meetings should have been held before bringing it to board. This involves every student in BTS – not just athletes. The money we are spending to travel and lack of gate receipts and concessions is taking away from all students in Bangor. We are educating the future leaders of our community, state, and nation. Mr. Hubert asked the board to join the league in favor of the kids.

Darci Long – As a parent she worries but wants what is best for her son and he is in favor of joining the league. Her son is competitive and wants the challenge. Ms. Long is also disappointed the way it was handled, the kids were not asked for their opinion. She wants what her son wants. Her son knows he will have to work hard to compete at this level but is willing to do this and wants the challenge.

Amie Dockett – Came to Bangor for the schools. If the board worried about the kids safety, why are they are we traveling so far. When she was in high school, local schools liked to play each other because kids all got along and it did not matter the size on the field. No child wants to hear because you are smaller you can't do it. "Don't do that to our kids."

John Burley – Volunteer Football Coach, feels from the get go this was absolutely atrocious. He believes there is a hidden agenda with this and it will pass. He is against this move. There is a lot going behind the scenes. Mr. Burley doesn't feel they get support from the board, AD or athletic committee. Kids can compete but we are thin –. Mr. Burley told the board "If it is all about money then shame on you!" He stated he is done – very, very disappointed. Feels like the board snuck around their back to get this done.

REPORTS

ATHLETIC COMMITTEE met on Thursday, October 13 to discuss "where we go from here." In attendance were Pat Shaffer, Melissa Kaczmarek, Mark Seymour, Matt Schmidt, and Troy Lynch.

ACTION ITEM SVL

Recommendation to approve joining the Saginaw Valley League beginning with the 2017/18 school year - Matt Schmidt expressed his appreciation to everyone for their input. He stated it was a process and a tough decision to make. He feels it is better for the kids to be in a conference. Mr. Schmidt explained being turned down at the Tri Valley Conference, creating our own conference, and applying for the SVL with stipulations was unsuccessful. Mr. Schmidt explained this is the best opportunity we have, there are no other options and this offers a lot of opportunity for our students.

Patrick Shaffer made a motion, supported by ~~Mary~~ Mark Seymour to join the Saginaw Valley League starting with the 2017/18 school year.

John Loop wanted to share his reasons why he will be voting no during the roll call vote. Competitive disadvantage, we did not listen to our coaches, and are high number of schools of choice students. If this passes we need to support our students and coaches and provide resources to compete, not just words, a commitment.

Richard Kowalski stated he will be voting no during the roll call. Mr. Kowalski stated that he is very, very disappointed after the meeting last Monday. Our employee's trust us and the coaches came to us with concerns – the process was not followed. He is opposing the move because the process was not followed; that is what bothers him. Mr. Kowalski stated we need to work with employees; if there is no trust we will have a hard time in the future.

A roll call vote was taken: Melissa Kaczmarek, yes; John Loop, no; Lynne Moore, yes; Mark Seymour, yes; Patrick Shaffer, yes; Brian Tobin, yes; and Richard Kowalski, no. 5-2.

The audience applauded.

BOARD SELF-EVALUATION

Because of time, Mr. Kowalski moved the Board self-evaluation to another meeting that will be set at a later date.

OTHER DISCUSSION/EXPRESSIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Melissa Kaczmarek commented that not everyone will be happy with this vote but we need to do what we believe is best for kids. She asked that wherever you stand, to support the kids and teams. "Go Bobcats"!

Stacey Ewald asked Mr. Lynch how many students were asked for their opinion. He stated a "handful" She said she talked to about 30 and all were against the move to SVL. Mrs. Ewald stated that students that she was in contact with were afraid to speak out. Mrs. Ewald stated that students need to be involved when it involves them.

Darci Long – How can we rectify this - we need to make everyone feel appreciated and valuable. Mr. Loop stated that coaches love kids and treat them as their own. A pat on the back, and good words are worth more than money. He encouraged everyone to spread the word and to show appreciation to our coaches.

Matt Nemode - Who is taking charge with adding programs? Feeder system? What happens if SVL says no? We may have burned bridges. Mr. Schmidt explained that he and Troy Lynch will be making phone calls to superintendents and AD's. The Athletic committee, superintendent, and AD will meet to decide where to go from here and the process and will report back to board.

Mr. Wesolek asked for transparency from the board, ask parents for help that is what we are here for.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by John Loop, supported by Mark Seymour to adjourn the meeting. Meeting was adjourned at 6:34 p.m.

**RESPECTFULLY
SUBMITTED,**

Melissa
Kaczmarek,
Secretary