

**SPECIAL MEETING OF BOARD OF EDUCATION  
MONTVILLE HIGH SCHOOL LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER  
July 31, 2018 at 6:00 p.m.**

**2017-2018 Board of Education Goal:**

**To engage in a cycle of continuous improvement to ensure all students are educated with high standards and achieve at the highest levels of learning in the Montville Public Schools.**

**Item 1. Call to order/ Pledge of Allegiance**

Board Chair Robert Mitchell called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., all stood and pledged the flag. Board members present were; James Woods, Sandra Berardy, Colleen Rix, Steven Loiler, Monica Pomazon, Daniel Boisvert, Joseph Aquitante and Dana Ladyga.

Also present were Acting Superintendent of Schools Laurie Pallin, Director of Special Education Paula LaChance, Legal Counsel Kevin Roy and Board Liaison Wills Pike.

**Item 2. Discussion and action on strategies to incentivize applicants for bus driver positions.**

**Presented Ideas:**

Currently need to hire 6 drivers to fill open routes and 3 to 5 drivers as subs.

**Possible Strategies for Recruiting Bus Drivers**

**1. Allowing drivers to bring a pre-school-aged child to work:**

We do not currently allow a driver to bring his or her own child on the bus unless the child is school-aged. That is a district practice, but we can decide to allow younger children in car seats on the bus. Our new manager comes from Thompson where they did allow drivers to bring a child if the child meets criteria to use a forward facing car seat (two years old and over 30 pounds). We do have cameras on the bus to see if a driver's child is interfering with the driver's ability to monitor the bus and drive safely. We can clearly spell out expectations in the drivers' handbook.

Any Transportation Department employee who provides care for a child or grandchild, may request that the child ride the bus during normal route hours. All such requests must be approved by the Director and arrangements will be granted on a space available basis only. Employees must assume complete responsibility for the child whether at the bus facility or on the school bus and must abide by the following:

- a. Children may not be left unattended at the bus facility or on a bus for any reason.
- b. Children must be safely escorted to and from a bus.
- c. Children are not allowed in the maintenance area for any reason.
- d. Children may not be treated with favoritism by their parents or any other driver.
- e. Children are not allowed on the bus during fueling.

- f. Children must meet state requirements to sit in a front facing car seat
- g. The Director has the right to revoke this privilege if, in the director's opinion, the presence of the child is in any way distracting to the driver, or if the child's behavior does not meet the district's expectations for children's behavior on a bus.

This policy limits employees' children to riding only during normal route hours as approved, in advance, by the Director. Employees must not keep their children at the facility or on a bus while they perform auxiliary or additional duties, such as driving a field trip.

*Checked with Segur insurance and we will have increased exposure because there is another child on the bus. However there is no exclusion to this practice in the policy and Segur is seeing that this is becoming more and more common in other garages.*

*For next meeting, Laurie will provide information about other towns with this practice and any problems they have encountered.*

## **2. Offering a Signing Bonus**

In order to attract new drivers, we might consider offering a signing bonus to be paid out to the driver at the successful completion of their first six months with conditions regarding attendance and driving record. The sign on bonus might be paid out in several installments (e.g. a \$1000 bonus might be paid as \$300 on signing, \$300 after three months, and the final \$400 at the end of the school year.)

- **Must** have the Passenger and School Bus endorsements on your CDL

*Research shows this to be a very common practice with bonuses between \$500-\$2500. Board members expressed support for this option.*

## **3. Paying Drivers While They are Training**

Right now if we hire an unlicensed driver, all of the time they commit to training is unpaid. They don't start earning a salary until they are licensed. It takes a minimum of 3 months to become licensed. At LEARN they pay unlicensed drivers minimum wage and put them on buses as monitors for up to a designated number of hours while they train. We had one person last spring who was training to be a driver but ultimately took a job in the cafeteria because she needed the pay. We might try offering them a temporary spot in a vacant position (para, monitor, behaviorist, caf. worker) while they train

*Board members asked for specific detail around costs for training drivers v. costs to outsource 6-10 drivers.*

## **4. Referral bonus**

Do you want to offer current employees a referral bonus if they bring in a licensed driver? This bonus might be \$250 for bringing in a driver who drives for us for 6 months.

Next recruitment campaign –

- Open House with coffee and Danish
- Have existing drivers present
- Computers available and assistance applying
- Explanation of contract and benefits

Ads will have a link to the contract and specify pay rates, MERF defined pension plan, no cost health insurance for drivers working over 20 hours, etc.

A discussion took place regarding the benefits of providing incentives for recruiting drivers. Paid training, Signing bonuses. Discussion surrounding age limits for allowing children of drivers on buses – does this open ourselves up to increased liability? Asked Laurie to poll other towns which allow younger students and whether it creates any problems for them. Laurie will report at the next meeting.

**Motion:** To table this discussion until the next board meeting.

**Proposed by:** Steven Loiler  
**Seconded by:** Colleen Rix  
**Vote:** Carried (vote 8 -0)

**Item 3. Appointment of board representative(s) as member(s) of the District Security and Safety Committee.**

**Motion:** To appoint a board member to serve on the District Security and Safety Committee.

**Proposed by:** Dan Boisvert  
**Seconded by:** Steven Loiler  
**Vote:** Carried (vote 8 -0)

Laurie: The committee last met in 2014 and needs to be reconstituted.

**Item 4. Update on bus projects (water, Bus garage parking lot, oil tank removal)**

**Summer Projects**

**Water Project –**

- All pipes, including to the bus garage, are in place.
- This Saturday the water pipe from Tyl will be hooked up to the high school. It requires a full day as the existing tank needs to be depressurized.
- The line then needs to be chlorinated and the water tested. That will take about 1 ½ weeks.
- The controls have not yet been replaced, but don't need to be for us to use the new water at MHS.

- Water tests will determine whether the pipes need to be treated with polyphosphate.
- Replacement of fixtures is almost complete.
- I have approved several changes orders to project based upon issues encountered but we are still well within the budget with the contingency that was budgeted.

**Bus Garage Parking Lot**

- An oil separator required by the town wetlands committee will cost \$6,500
- We are currently working on a revised quote for the project based upon the need for the oil separator and the fact that the path of the water line was modified because of ledge encountered and therefore we could not achieve any savings by combining the parking lot work with the water project.
- It is not likely that the total cost will come in at the \$40,000 budgeted.

**Underground Oil Tank Removal and Replacement**

- The capital request of \$156,000 came from a quote from Service Station, a vendor who told us they were on the state bid list. The state has subsequently told us they have state contracts for other work they are not under state bid for tank removal and replacement.
- Steve has contacted two vendors on the state list: ETT (worked for us before) and Cisco (working for the town currently). We have given them the bid specs from Service Station and are awaiting quotes.
- We have been told we don't need to file for an extension on the tank removal as long as we have active paperwork underway to move forward with the project.
- If necessary we could request a bid waiver from the Board at the August meeting.
- This work can be completed during the school year, only a small generator at Oakdale would be affected.

**Tyl Carpet** – has been picked and orders, installation will take about 1 ½ weeks and will be completed before school starts.

**Bus Lease** – bid specs have been completed and are currently being reviewed. We have met with Bluebird which is part of our cooperative so we don't have to go out to bid. They are working with us on pricing. We anticipate the buses will come in Oct to Nov.

**Solar Contract** –has been reviewed by S+G. There are still several items they are working with ConnEd to verify. We are close to signing the final contract; have a conference call on Thursday. Due diligence to ensure we are protected.

Sandra – Following the completion of the water project, how much monitoring will we do moving forward to ensure we know if Mn levels creep up?

**Item 5. Executive session to discuss administrators' contracts and legal issues.**

**Motion:** To enter executive session and invite Laurie Pallin, and Attorney Kevin Roy to join the session.

**Proposed by:** Dana Ladyga  
**Seconded by:** Monica Pomazon  
**Vote:** Carried (vote 8 -0)

**Motion:** To exit executive session at 7:31 pm with no votes taken.

**Proposed by:** Steven Loiler  
**Seconded by:** Colleen Rix  
**Vote:** Carried (vote 8 -0)

**Item 6. Discussion and action to schedule a special meeting the week of August 6.**

**Motion:** To set August 7, 2018 at 6:15 as a special meeting of the board of education.

**Proposed by:** Steven Loiler  
**Seconded by:** Colleen Rix  
**Vote:** Carried (vote 8 -0)

**Item 7. Adjournment**

**Motion:** To adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 7:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Robert Mitchell, Chair  
Montville Board of Education

Colleen Rix, Secretary  
Montville Board of Education

**Minutes Approved:** \_\_\_\_\_