

**CENTENNIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Warminster, Pennsylvania**

**MINUTES OF SPECIAL BOARD MEETING  
HELD OCTOBER 1, 2003**

**CALL TO ORDER**

A Special Meeting of the Centennial School Board was held on October 1, 2003, in the Administration Building. The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Jankowsky at 6:50 p.m. The following people registered their attendance:

Board Members:

Sina Baranski  
Joseph Faust  
Eugene Grossi  
Al Hertenberger  
Betty Huf \*  
Joan Jankowsky  
Jerry Locke  
Harve Strouse

Administration:

David Blatt

CEA/Teachers:

None

Public:

None

\* Mrs. Huf was absent from the meeting but participated by speakerphone.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mrs. Jankowsky led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mrs. Jankowsky advised that Mrs. Huf could not be physically present at the meeting since she was out of town on a family matter, but would be participating in the meeting by speakerphone. This arrangement had been agreed to by the other Board members.

**INTERVIEWS OF CANDIDATES**

William L. Bauer, III

Mrs. Jankowsky welcomed Mr. Bauer to the meeting and explained the process that would be used, as follows. Each Board member would ask the candidate one question, and would ask each candidate the same question. Only one candidate would be present in the room at a time.

Approximately thirty minutes would be allowed for each candidate. If time permitted, a second round of questions, or resumé questions, would be asked by Board members. The candidates would each be asked if there were any clarifications they wished to make on their resumé. Each candidate would also have an opportunity for questions. The vote would be held this evening after the completion of the four interviews. Mrs. Jankowsky also advised that this meeting would be going out on the character generator.

Mr. Faust asked the following question: Do you believe you are able to make unpopular decisions and withstand pressure from special interest groups?

Mr. Bauer responded affirmatively. He felt that there were usually special interest groups on either side of most questions. Ultimately, a Board member must make a decision that is best for the District.

Mrs. Baranski asked the following question: What is your concept of the role of a Board member?

Mr. Bauer stated that a Board member must realize that they are one of nine members so individual actions are not appropriate. The only official actions are taken by a majority making a decision on an action. You must be diligent in your attendance and in your studies. From time to time you must go beyond what is given in the packet and get additional input. You must attend the meetings. He explained that in his eight years as a Board member in the past, he did not miss a single public Board meeting and missed only one committee meeting that he could recall. A Board member must realize that committee work is part of the job also. At times Board members are asked to represent the Board on other boards, such as the I.U. These duties should be taken very seriously.

Mrs. Huf asked the following question: Please describe your decision-making process and how you would apply it to issues facing the School District.

Mr. Bauer indicated that a formal decision-making process involves a lot of work. First, you must formulate the question and make sure you understand what it is you need to decide. Next, you must find out whatever information you can, and determine the pros and cons. You must weigh the advantages and disadvantages.

Mr. Grossi asked the following question: If appointed, will you run for a full term on the Board of School Directors?

Mr. Bauer stated that it was likely. One of the reasons he was presenting himself as a candidate was because there has been a lot of turnover in Region 3 and that he hoped to bring stability to the Board. He indicated that he would anticipate running for re-election.

Mr. Locke asked the following question: Are there any priorities which you think the Board should be addressing?

Mr. Bauer felt that a priority was the affordability of education to the taxpayers and the community. Although he was not sure of the current statistics, he felt that probably only about 25% of the households had a child in the public school system. Therefore, we must convince the other 75% that they are getting their money's worth. He felt that bringing the community into the partnership was very important. A close second priority for the Board members is to provide as good an education as the community can afford.

Mr. Strouse asked the following question: Why do you wish to serve on the Centennial Board of School Directors, what special skills or talents would you contribute to the Board, and why should we appoint you?

Mr. Bauer advised that he was retired and could make time available to serve on the Board. He felt that service on the Board could require about 40 hours per week. He indicated that he enjoys Board work and is a member of several boards related to contract bridge playing, which is his hobby. He is also on several boards at church. He felt he could make time available and that Board would is very rewarding, although it can sometimes be stressful.

Mr. Bauer indicated that he has a lot of contact with the professional community from the citizen's side. He also spent a lot of time as a student with his undergraduate work and two graduate programs. He felt he had good analytical skills, business skills and experience in industry.

He indicated that his two daughters went through the Centennial School District and that he had attended many functions here; thus, he has the familiarity needed. He felt he could get off to a fairly quick start and that he is a fast learner. He thought that, based on his credentials, he would make an excellent appointment.

Mr. Hertenberger asked the following question: Do you have a realistic idea of the time commitment involved in serving on the School Board?

Mr. Bauer stated that since he spent eight years on the Board in the past and also five as a delegate to the I.U., he had a very good idea of what was required. He indicated that during that time, the District also went through a Superintendent search. He felt a Board member must be prepared to spend 40 hours or more, and that there was a learning curve for a new Board member. He felt an average of 20 hours would be realistic but that it could be more.

Mrs. Jankowsky asked the following question: What experience from your resumé or elsewhere would reflect your ability to work with people of diverse opinions. Please provide your strategies to secure support from those of diverse opinions.

Mr. Bauer felt that his Board experience was most relevant, both on the School Board and related to his personal hobbies, since it involves working with other people to achieve a goal. As far as working with other people, you must be able to present your positions well, you must be able to reason and listen to the opinions of others; your must be flexible and be able to modify your opinions; and you must have the ability to compromise. He did not like dissenting opinions

when he was on the School Board. He liked to find a compromise so that all can agree. He felt that was important.

Mrs. Jankowsky asked Mr. Bauer if he had any clarifications to his resumé, or any final statements he would like to make. Mr. Bauer clarified that his work experience left off in 2000 since he retired and pointed out that most of the Board was familiar with his Board service.

Mrs. Jankowsky thanked Mr. Bauer for taking the time to come out and for his interest in the Centennial community. She informed him that he could wait in Room 16 until the interviews were completed and a vote taken, or he would be informed of the Board's decision by phone. Mr. Bauer asked to be contacted by phone with the Board's decision.

#### William M. Gardner

Mr. Blatt introduced Mr. Gardner to the Board. Mrs. Jankowsky welcomed him and thanked him for submitting his resumé. She explained to him that Mrs. Huf was participating in the interview by speakerphone and explained the process that would be used.

Mrs. Jankowsky asked if there was anything on his resumé that he would like to clarify. Mr. Gardner indicated that it was accurate except that he still needed a few credits for his degree. He was not certain if that would be this year or next year.

Mrs. Baranski asked the following question: What is your concept of the role of a Board member?

Mr. Gardner felt that a Board member should do everything in their power to promote the education of the students and to try to provide the best environment for education. He stated that he had come from Centennial School District and felt that it was the best education he could have received. He felt that Board members should be able to give their time and effort and to provide it as a high priority; they should be able to work with Administration to make it the best it can be for the District.

Mr. Locke asked the following question: Are there any priorities which you think the Board should be addressing?

Mr. Gardner thought that the issues were being very well taken care of but that he had worries with education in general, such as the various strikes going on. He indicated that he would try to avoid strikes in our District since they hurt the students. He felt that with September 11<sup>th</sup>, security should be taken seriously. He referred to the new school resource officer and felt the District was operating at a high level. He noted the budget as a concern and felt that finding ways to get it increased would be helpful.

Mr. Hertenberger asked the following question: Do you have a realistic idea of the time commitment involved in serving on the School Board?

Mr. Gardner felt that being a Board member would take a lot of time and work and noted the possibility for a lot of hours. He stated that he was willing to do that because he felt it was important. He indicated that he would like to hear from Board members how long they spend on it, but would be willing to give what it takes.

Mr. Faust asked the following question: Do you believe you are able to make unpopular decisions and withstand pressure from special interest groups?

Mr. Gardner felt that he would be able to do so. He didn't think this would affect his decisions at all and that he wanted what is best for the District. He felt that people always have complaints about how things are run. If the Board members have opposing opinions, he would be willing to compromise.

Mr. Grossi asked the following question: If appointed, will you run for a full term on the Board of School Directors?

Mr. Gardner stated that he would make that decision when the time came. He felt he would be qualified but would see how well he could do the job. He hoped that he would run for the Board again and feel that he accomplished things but would decide at the proper time.

Mrs. Huf asked the following question: Please describe your decision-making process and how you would apply it to issues facing the School District.

Mr. Gardner indicated that he tries to look at the long-term outcome and to analyze things for now and the future. He felt he reasons quickly and tries to make the right decision by looking at all sides.

Mr. Strouse asked the following question: Why do you wish to serve on the Centennial Board of School Directors, what special skills or talents would you contribute to the Board, and why should we appoint you?

Mr. Gardner indicated that he wished to serve because he has a strong belief in the public school system from being part of it, especially at Centennial School District. He feels that education is the most important aspect of one's life and that he could help to improve it.

He indicated that he was a citizen advisor on the Warminster Township Golf Committee and that he learned professionalism and communication. He has seen how boards work together to achieve a common goal.

Mr. Gardner felt that he should be appointed because, although some of the other candidates may have more life experience, he is not too far removed from being a student and could lend a different perspective.

Mrs. Jankowsky asked the following question: What experience from your resumé or elsewhere would reflect your ability to work with people of diverse opinions. Please provide your strategies to secure support from those of diverse opinions.

Mr. Gardner stated that he had already spoken about his experience on the Golf Committee. He indicated that he has always worked in a professional environment, sometimes in teams. He has worked in a big company, as well as a small one. Working with executives gives you ideas about how to work with different people with different opinions. He indicated that he has been a leader and organizer and felt that this helps in getting things done.

Mr. Gardner felt decision making and critical thinking are strategies he would use and that the things he has done have helped to sharpen these skills. He would try to provide resources, facts and figures to get his point across but would be willing to listen to the other side.

Mrs. Jankowsky asked if there were any resumé questions from Board members. There were none. She asked Mr. Gardner if he had any questions. Mr. Gardner stated that he would be interested to hear the Board's feelings regarding time commitments.

Mr. Hertenberger stated that he felt there was a minimum of 20 hours per week, plus getting involved in other things in the evenings. There are a lot of school functions a Board member can attend to show they are involved.

Mr. Gardner stated that he has tried to do as much research on the Board as possible and that he researched the Strategic Plan and other things at the library.

Mrs. Jankowsky thanked Mr. Gardner and indicated that he could either wait in Room 16 or be called about the results of the voting. Mr. Gardner thanked everyone for the opportunity to interview for the position. He stated that, whatever the decision, he was sure it would be the right decision for the future.

Mr. Grossi stated that it had been a delightful interview.

At this time, Mrs. Jankowsky indicated that there would be a five-minute break. The meeting recessed at 7:30 p.m.

#### Martha L. Frank

Mrs. Jankowsky called the meeting back to order at 7:40 p.m.

She thanked Mrs. Frank for coming out and for submitting her letter of interest. She explained the procedure that would be used, and the fact that Mrs. Huf would be participating by speakerphone. Mrs. Frank indicated that she would like to stay after the interview to find out the results of the voting.

Mrs. Jankowsky asked if there was anything on her resumé that Mrs. Frank would like to clarify or highlight. Mrs. Frank summarized her 18 years of formal teaching experience, as well as operating a reading study center and working for the Pennsylvania Department of Education on a pilot program.

Mr. Hertenberger asked the following question: Do you have a realistic idea of the time commitment involved in serving on the School Board?

Mrs. Frank stated that while she was in Harrisburg she met several people who were on school boards and who provided her with details, so she felt she did understand the time involved. She felt that since she was retired, she was able to make the commitment.

Mr. Grossi asked the following question: If appointed, will you run for a full term on the Board of School Directors?

Mrs. Frank stated that she did not know at this time. She felt that Mr. Avery was a good person on the Board and was sorry that he had left. She was not ruling out the possibility of running but was not making a decision at this time.

Mr. Locke asked the following question: Are there any priorities which you think the Board should be addressing?

Mrs. Frank indicated that she fell a little out of touch with the School Board over the last year because she had surgery, but that now she was in good health. But she felt she needed to catch up on the School Board's activities. She felt that perhaps she would like to see a slightly different emphasis on block scheduling, although she was 100% behind it.

Mr. Faust asked the following question: Do you believe you are able to make unpopular decisions and withstand pressure from special interest groups?

Mrs. Frank answered with a resounding yes! She stated that she is a person who sticks up for her principles and doesn't bow too easily. She indicated that she listens, reads, talks to others and makes her decisions. If her decision is unpopular, it is on her shoulders.

Mrs. Baranski asked the following question: What is your concept of the role of a Board member?

Mrs. Frank felt that the role of a Board member was to be a guider. She sees the Board as a group of people who study education and who do their best for the students, the citizens and the teachers, in that order. The students must come first. The citizens have a big role, so they must come second. And, we can't do it without good teachers.

Mrs. Huf asked the following question: Please describe your decision-making process and how you would apply it to issues facing the School District.

Mrs. Frank explained that when she sees a problem or is told of a problem, she digs in to find out who and what is behind it and what the hidden agenda may be. Then she studies as much as she can. Once she comes to a conclusion, she shares it. If she is knocked down, she climbs back up.

Mr. Strouse asked the following question: Why do you wish to serve on the Centennial Board of School Directors, what special skills or talents would you contribute to the Board, and why should we appoint you?

Mrs. Frank responded that she wishes to serve because she feels she is well qualified and because she thinks she can be of benefit to this Board and, therefore, to the children, the citizens and the teachers.

She felt her talents are listening, thinking, evaluating, reading, thinking, evaluating, etc. She is also good with people.

She felt that she should be appointed because she has so much to bring to this District. Also, she knows the people here; she has been living in the same place in Region 3 since 1957. Her heart is with the people and with the students most of all.

Mrs. Jankowsky asked the following question: What experience from your resumé or elsewhere would reflect your ability to work with people of diverse opinions. Please provide your strategies to secure support from those of diverse opinions.

Mrs. Frank indicated that her seven years with the Department of Education in Harrisburg would most reflect her ability to work with people of diverse opinions. That position involved writing requests for proposals, going out across the state and explaining things, reviewing proposals and providing explanations to administrators, making recommendations for 150 programs and going out into all kinds of situations. She indicated that she had worked with people in institutions, in community centers, libraries, jails and factories.

She felt that a good strategy to utilize was to sit and talk with people and taking the time to listen and communicate.

Mrs. Jankowsky asked if there were any questions from Board members about Mrs. Frank's resumé. There were none.

Mrs. Jankowsky asked Mrs. Frank if she had any questions for the Board. Mrs. Frank asked what Board members perceived as being the biggest concern right now.

Mr. Grossi responded that at the moment we have no state funding; we have additional mandates; we have retirement costs and healthcare costs spiraling out of control; special education mandates and related costs are out of control. He felt this was probably the worst he had seen things in his 30 years of service.

Mrs. Jankowsky asked if the other Board members agreed. They indicated that they did.

Mrs. Frank stated that one of the problems with special education was that the federal and state governments all have great ideas but neglect to see that the ideas cost money.

Mrs. Jankowsky asked if Mrs. Frank had any final comments.

Mrs. Frank stated that she believed she was the kind of person and had the kind of background that Board members would like to have on this Board. She indicated that her primary concern was the students, citizens and teachers. She stated that she truly would like to serve on the Board.

Jane Schrader Lynch

Mrs. Jankowsky began Mrs. Lynch's interview at 8:10 p.m. by welcoming Mrs. Lynch and explaining the procedure to be used. She also indicated that Mrs. Huf would be participating by speakerphone.

Mrs. Jankowsky asked if Mrs. Lynch had any clarifications of her resumé to discuss. Mrs. Lynch stated that she tried to make her resumé as clear as possible.

Mrs. Huf asked the following question: Please describe your decision-making process and how you would apply it to issues facing the School District.

Mrs. Lynch stated that her decision-making process would be: find out about the subject; study the subject; ask questions about the subject; become totally familiar with the subject; obtain viewpoints of other people; after due deliberation, draw a conclusion. After this, if someone else had a better idea, she would be open minded enough to listen and review the decision-making process.

Mr. Faust asked the following question: Do you believe you are able to make unpopular decisions and withstand pressure from special interest groups? (He indicated that since Mrs. Lynch was on the Zoning Hearing Board, this might be an easy question.)

Mrs. Lynch responded affirmatively, indicating that when you are making a decision on any issue that has controversy, you will have one side think you are wonderful and one side think you are horrible. You have to review the issue, study it and feel you can live with what you have done, whether it is popular or unpopular. She indicated that she had made unpopular decisions but has lived with them.

Mrs. Baranski asked the following question: What is your concept of the role of a Board member?

Mrs. Lynch responded that she believed that, right or wrong, Centennial School District is a very large corporation. The School Board members are the Board of Directors; the Superintendent is the CEO; and the children are the products. She felt the Centennial product was the most important thing. When she read the Mission Statement on the website, she thought it was unbelievable.

Mrs. Lynch stated that she has three sons who graduated from Centennial and each of them pursued a college education. They got the tools they needed here. Her grandson just started at Log College, and next year she will have two more in Kindergarten.

Mr. Grossi asked the following question: If appointed, will you run for a full term on the Board of School Directors?

Mrs. Lynch responded that she would. She felt that if she was lucky enough to be chosen tonight, she has made a commitment and would like to fulfill that commitment and carry it forward for another term.

Mr. Locke asked the following question: Are there any priorities which you think the Board should be addressing?

Mrs. Lynch indicated that when she looked at the statements of the Board “hopefuls”, taxes seemed to be an important issue. But there are also fixed expenditures. She felt that the pension was an issue – how are you ever going to get the money unless we have a tax increase? If income isn’t that great, something has to give. She felt that cutting programs was not the way to go.

Mrs. Lynch stated that her other priority is communication. She acknowledged that the Board had taken the budget presentation on the road and felt that was incredible. She indicated that she has been told that there hasn’t been a great attendance at the budget meetings. She felt that somehow it has to be explained to the citizens and the taxpayers. People really beat up on the School Board. She felt that there needs to be communication with the average citizen.

Mr. Strouse asked the following question: Why do you wish to serve on the Centennial Board of School Directors, what special skills or talents would you contribute to the Board, and why should we appoint you?

Mrs. Lynch stated that she felt being on the School Board would be one of the most challenging things she has ever done. She felt the rewards would be great and that she would like to be part of the decision-making process for education and the tax structure.

Mrs. Lynch felt that, probably like all of the Board members, her greatest skill was her analytical ability to digest information. She is acutely aware of finance and any job she takes, she gives 101% of her energies.

She felt that she should be appointed because she has a vast knowledge of the community; she has been tremendously involved in the community; she is willing to learn; will give 101%; and will listen, study and draw conclusions.

Mr. Hertenberger asked the following question: Do you have a realistic idea of the time commitment involved in serving on the School Board?

Mrs. Lynch stated that when she told one of her friends she was going to apply for the School Board, they told her she was crazy and that it takes too much time. Mrs. Lynch stated that she is retired and has a lot of time and endless energy. She felt she did know the commitment and that it is a challenge and she wants to face it and meet it.

Mrs. Jankowsky asked the following question: What experience from your resumé or elsewhere would reflect your ability to work with people of diverse opinions. Please provide your strategies to secure support from those of diverse opinions.

Mrs. Lynch stated that everything she was on, she has had people that have not agreed. She indicated that she really didn't know how to answer this. She felt that if you know what you are talking about, if you study what you are talking about, somehow/sometimes you can change someone's mind. She indicated that she is currently on the Zoning Board and they make decisions twice per month. They deliberate and discuss and it narrows the scope down. If you see something someone else doesn't, perhaps you can sway them. You have to sometimes compromise or just point things out a little stronger and perhaps you can sway them.

Mrs. Jankowsky asked if there were any questions from Board members on Mrs. Lynch's resumé. There were none.

Mrs. Jankowsky asked if Mrs. Lynch had any questions. Mrs. Lynch stated that the only thing she could say was that if the Board was looking for someone who will work hard, work 101% and has the ability to work with the public, then perhaps they would consider her.

Mrs. Jankowsky thanked Mrs. Lynch for her interest and informed her that she could wait in Room 16 if she wished; otherwise, she would be notified by phone of the Board's decision. Mrs. Lynch stated that she would stay.

## **COMMUNITY COMMENTS**

Mrs. Jankowsky stated that there was now an opportunity for the public to comment; however, there were no members of the public present.

Mrs. Jankowsky advised that the School Board members had been polled regarding Mrs. Huf's participation by speakerphone; the Board unanimously agreed to it.

Mrs. Jankowsky announced that there would be a recess in the meeting until 9:00 p.m. since that was the time advertised for the voting portion of the meeting.

The meeting recessed at 8:35 p.m.

## **APPOINTMENT OF BOARD MEMBER**

Mrs. Jankowsky called the meeting back to order at 9:00 p.m. and asked for nominations for an appointment to fill the vacancy in Region 3.

*A motion was made by Mr. Grossi and seconded by Mr. Faust to nominate Jane Lynch for the position of Board Member to fill the vacancy in Region 3.*

Mr. Grossi thanked everyone who expressed interest in filling the vacancy. He indicated that he truly enjoyed the interviews and felt it was exciting that these four people expressed interest in the School Board. The quality of the candidates made him proud to be part of the community.

Mrs. Jankowsky was grateful to the members of the community that had come forward.

*A motion was made by Mr. Strouse and seconded by Mr. Faust to close the nominations.*

*The motion to close the nominations passed 8-0.*

*Mrs. Jankowsky called for a roll call vote on the motion, as follows:*

<i>Mrs. Baranski</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Locke</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Hertenberger</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Faust</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Grossi</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Mr. Strouse</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Mrs. Huf</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Mrs. Jankowsky</i>	<i>Yes</i>

*The motion passed 8-0.*

Mrs. Jankowsky congratulated Mrs. Lynch . she thanked Mrs. Frank for coming out and staying. She also thanked Mr. Bauer and Mr. Gardner, who had left the meeting.

Mrs. Baranski stated this was a tough decision to make. She felt this was the toughest thing she ever had to do. She was impressed with all of the resumés and felt that it was a shame we can't put all of the candidates on the Board.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

*A motion was made by Mr. Grossi and seconded by Mr. Hertenberger to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed 8-0. The meeting was adjourned at 9:07 p.m.*

Respectfully submitted,

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Vickie A. Detwiler  
Board Secretary