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Lackawanna Trail Board of Education approves 2017-18 final budget

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FACTORYVILLE — Members of the Lackawanna Trail Board of Education voted, 7-2, to approve a final budget of \$20,945,000 for the 2017-2018 school year during a meeting June 26.

Adrian Bianchi, Ned Clarke, Michael Mould, Kevin Mulhern, Joseph Ross, Philip Stark and David Thorne voted in favor of the budget. Karl Beichler and Joseph Strauch voted against it.

According to Business Manager Keith Glynn, Lackawanna County's real estate tax rate will be 162.43 mills, a 2.44 percent increase from last year, and Wyoming County's real estate tax rate will be 91.61 mills, a 3.18 percent increase. A mill is a \$1 tax per each \$1,000 of assessed value.

Members of the board approved the software license and hosting agreement for Routefinder Pro at a cost of \$8,490 for July 2017 and \$3,050 for each of the following two years.

According to Maintenance and Transportation Supervisor Rick Kordish, the program should help make the district's bus routes more efficient.

"We're currently using software from 2004, which is basically a spreadsheet for our drivers," Kordish said. "This is turn-by-turn software and we're hoping to generate some savings in making our bus rosters more accurate."

Members of the board voted to appoint Kevin Mulhern as Lackawanna Trail School Board Secretary for a four-year term, effective July 1, 2017, through June 30, 2021, at a stipend of \$600 per year.

Members of the board voted to appoint Michael Mould as Lackawanna Trail School Board Treasurer for the 2017-2018 school year at a stipend of \$600.

Both Mulhern and Mould plan to donate the stipends back to the school district's general fund.

Members of the board approved Sarah Richard as a Special Education Elementary Life Skills teacher at a salary of \$55,200, effective at the beginning of the 2017-2018 school year.

Members of the board approved Jessica Bentley as a Special Education High School Math teacher at a salary of \$55,200, effective at the beginning of the 2017-2018 school year, pending completion of PA certification.

Superintendent Matthew Rakauskas announced a public meeting with the discipline review committee will be held at 6 p.m. July 5 in the district's board room, 179 College Ave.

"Before we ask the board to approve our student handbooks in the elementary center and high school, we like to give the public an opportunity to give some input to the our administration and board," Rakauskas said.

According to principal Brian Kearney, Lackawanna Trail Elementary Center was voted School of the Year by substitute teachers through Kelly Services, the staffing service utilized by the district.

"It makes me proud that they come in here and have such a good experience," Kearney said.

Director of Curriculum Tania Ross announced the district received an \$1,800 Meeting Health Needs Through Supportive Services grant from The Highmark Foundation to purchase seven cots for the elementary and high school buildings.

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