

Trail OKs \$21.6 prelim budget

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The Lackawanna Trail School Board unanimously approved a preliminary budget for 2016-2017 in the amount of \$21.6 million.

Business manager Keith Glynn said the preliminary figures were needed this early in the budget cycle if it looks like the district is needing to raise taxes outside of a 3 percent index imposed by the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

He said the budget could see taxes go up anywhere between three and six percent, "but I can't tell you a definite number until the details are hammered out."

He said the next step is to send the preliminary budget to PDE which will be back to him by March 7 to work through the remaining steps in a budget cycle that has to be nailed down by June 30.

The preliminary budget is about \$1.3 million more than what was approved last June, when taxes went up 3.2 mills in Wyoming County and 8.95 mills in Lackawanna County.

A mill represents \$1 for every \$1,000 a property is valued at.

Even with the dollar increase, board president David Thorne noted that the budget would continue to see a cut in personnel.

Among the other business at the public meeting, Monday, the board approved the following individuals to be added to the substitute list: Heather Ross of South Abington, elementary; Lisa Graves of Dalton, maintenance, secretary, paraprofessional; Janice Scango, Factoryville, maintenance; Christopher Lopez, West Abington, maintenance; Jeff Puterbaugh, Meshoppen, maintenance; and Kim Vasky of West Abington, maintenance.

The board had a first reading on an update to the student wellness policy, and recommend for approval elementary and high school curriculum guides for 2016-2017.

A draft of the updated wellness policy reflecting federally mandated standards is available on the school's website at www.ltsd.or

The board recommend that a Memorandum of Understanding (regarding Teacher Evaluations) between the Lackawanna Trail School District and the Lackawanna Trail Education Association be approved, as well as a Memorandum of Understanding between Carol Conway, food service director, and the Lackawanna Trail School District.

It also recommended that the school district approve the Request for Proposals for the position of Food Service Director.

It accepted Jeremy Popiel's resignation as head track coach, with regret, and recommended the appointment of Jonathan Lynn as a volunteer wrestling coach, with all clearances on file.

The board also recommend that Jodi Rinehimer's request to take the senior class to Six Flags in Jackson, N.J., on Friday, May 27.

In the public comment section Jason Brotzman asked to share with the board that he believes a soccer program could get off the ground with no expense to the school district, and could be parent-funded as a sports club.

He said boys lacrosse started that way at Tunkhannock Area, and seventh and eighth grade basketball is set up that way at Abington Heights. Superintendent Matt Rakauskas said he would like to follow up after making some inquiries with the named schools.

Monday night was also board member appreciation night. Senior Jacob Furneaux led a student delegation which thanked the board. Others donated books to their respective school libraries .