

Lackawanna Trail to go with temp agency

by Robert Baker

Published: August 10, 2016

The Lackawanna School Board voted unanimously to have Kelly Services, a temporary worker service, to provide substitute teachers for the 2016-17 school year.

The vote was 7-0 with board members Ned Clarke and Philip Stark absent.

Superintendent Matthew Rakauskas noted under its previous arrangement where the district had a list of available substitutes who would get called when needed, there was still a modest shortage that occasionally needed to be addressed which also took up valuable time.

Now an agency will have all those worries.

Business manager Keith Glynn said that even though the district would be paying Kelly a little more than the \$90 a day it paid subs last year, there would be savings in other areas.

"The price is pretty much to the break even point with the present substitute arrangement," Glynn said but could be "quantifiably advantageous" for the district.

That said, he advised the board the change likely would mean something between an increased outlay of \$2,000 to a savings of \$2,000.

Asked "why now?" by a member of the audience, Rakauskas said that neighboring school districts were already using the system, which sometimes made it increasingly difficult to fill positions, and in a sense, "Trail was just now catching up."

During the meeting, however, the school board did approve the district's own substitute lists in other areas such as maintenance, teacher's aides, secretary substitutes and bus and private vehicle drivers.

The board also voted to hire Tiffany Carpenter as special education teacher at the elementary center at a salary of \$47,500 a year.

The school board also approved the resignation of Denise Hall as high school French teacher effective immediately, which Rakauskas said created a difficult situation this close to the opening of the school year three weeks away to fill a position.

"If there are any people out there, we would be interested in talking to them," Rakauskas said to the board and about two dozen people in the audience.

High school principal Mark Murphy clarified later that the district only offers French and Spanish as foreign language options, and Mrs. Hall would be sorely missed.

In other business, the board approved a bus subcontractors list. The board also voted to approve a recommended bus contractor rate at state formula for the 2016-17 school year.

The car and van drivers' rate will be approved at a rate of \$1.42 as per state formula for the 2016-17 school year.

The board also recommended an hourly rate for the subcontracted photographers for the 2016-17 school year at \$15 per hour with a cap of \$20 per hour for supplies related to the contracted event as supported by purchase documentation.

The board approved an agreement between the district and Wyoming County Juvenile Court for contracted services for the 2016-17 school year.

This position of law enforcement liaison is contracted for \$12,500.

Appointments made:

*Dina Berrios as yearbook adviser.

*Richard Pollock for appointment as a volunteer assistant for the marching band.

*Kelly Buck for appointment as a volunteer field hockey coach for the 2016-17 school year.

*Steve Jervis Sr. as volunteer varsity football assistant coach.

*Tomas Ward as volunteer assistant football coach.

*Carlee Laubach as a volunteer assistant girls' volleyball coach for the 2016-17 school year.

There was also a motion to accept Laubach's resignation from the position of assistant girls' volleyball coach, effective immediately.

The board also accepted the resignation of Amanda Yackobowitz as assistant girls' basketball coach as of July 19.

The board agreed to send one of its members, Joseph Strauch, to a PSBA conference at no cost to the board. About a half dozen members of the audience asked the board about why property taxes went up so much this year and whether the administration had done enough to hold costs down.

Glynn addressed cutting back around seven positions over the last two years as well as freezing administrators pay.

Rakauskas introduced Sarah DeBree to those in attendance as a confidential secretary in his office and noted she would be taking over official handling of board minutes, serving as board secretary.

Board member Kevin Mulhern had been handling that responsibility. Meeting June 27.