

## Trail refunding tax money

Robert Baker / Published: November 14, 2018

The Lackawanna Trail School Board took a hit Monday night when it voted to accept a settlement with Norfolk Southern Railway over tax revenues received three years ago.

The school district had received \$165,000 in real estate transfer tax when NSR acquired the former Canadian Pacific line which included the mammoth Nicholson Bridge.

According to Trail business manager Keith Glynn, Norfolk Southern claimed that there should not have been a real estate transfer tax as the line is a public utility, a fact the school district partly disputed.

Rather than incur litigation costs the two parties agreed that the school district would return \$121,924 or 75 percent of the face amount.

The school board said the money would come out of a \$3.2 million fund balance (as of June 30), which the board also authorized Monday night to be distributed as follows: \$2 million for a future capital project; \$500,000 for future pension increases; \$400,000 for future charter school tuition costs; and \$268,287 for future technology costs; and \$121,942 for a railroad realty transfer tax refund.

The board also authorized the Creditech collection agency to go after past cafeteria debts, assuming, business manager Keith Glynn said, the board actually adopts a school policy allowing for the management of lunchroom debt.

Pressed on when such a policy might or could be on the table for the board to vote on, Superintendent Matt Rakauskas said possibly in February.

The board had been expected to name a boys junior high basketball coach Monday, but the matter was pulled off the agenda, and President Phil Stark said the board was still looking.

A woman in the audience said she had been a soccer travel team coach and would be willing on a temporary basis to coach the boys until a permanent candidate is found.

She said it was important for somebody to step in so the boys can get their conditioning in for a season that is just weeks away from starting.

In other action, the Trail School Board:

\*approved Christel Pond as a long-term special education substitute to begin on or before January 2;

\*approved Jessica Norris as a long-term secondary science teacher substitute to begin Nov. 13;

\*approved Max Roche as Spring Musical Director and Jackie Nat as Spring Musical Choreographer at stipends of \$1,000 each with the district to be staging 'Kiss Me, Kate;'

\*approved Jill Kaminski as a volunteer assistant wrestling coach for the 2018-19 season;

\*approved Chaz Ross as a volunteer assistant wrestling coach for the 2018-19 season; and,

\*approved Corinne Theil as a volunteer assistant girls basketball coach for the 2018-19 season..