

COCALICO REGIONAL LEADERS MEETING MINUTES

April 27, 2021- 7:00 p.m.
Cocalico Middle School Cafeteria
650 South 6th Street, Denver, PA 17517

Present at the meeting:

Adamstown Borough

John Schmidt

Denver Borough

Michael Hession

Kalie Johnson

Blake Daub

Lee Ritz

Todd Stewart

East Cocalico Township

Craig Ebersole

Romao "RC" Carrasco

West Cocalico Township

Carolyn Hildebrand

James J. Stoner

Jeff Sauder

East Cocalico Police Department

Chief Darrick Keppley

Officer Eric Fisher

Adamstown Area Library

Carolyn Reiste

Cocalico School District

Dr. Ella H. Musser

Douglas Graybill

Dr. Beth Haldeman

Sherri Stull

Visitors

Sandy Flory

Aubree Fahringer, Ephrata Review

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Dr. Ella H. Musser, Superintendent, Cocalico School District.

Invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

The invocation was given by Dr. Musser, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Review and Approval of the Meeting Minutes

Minutes from the March 23, 2021 meeting were approved with a motion from Mr. James Stoner, seconded by Mr. Todd Stewart. Motion carried unanimously.

Adamstown Borough Comments

Mr. John Schmidt reported that the Stoudts complex in Adamstown Borough has sold. He shared that the three prospective buyers will be cleaning up the property, and although they have no intentions of opening the restaurant, they would entertain the possibility of someone else running it. The antiques market will continue, along with the biergarten.

Denver Borough Comments

Mr. Todd Stewart provided a handout and an update on the York Heritage Rail Trail project, having taken an excursion on the York rail trail that is along an active railway. He shared that according to studies, there appears to be room to implement a rail trail here along the right-of-way. A safety study would need to be completed. Mr. Mike Hession added that the Borough is currently working with the County on a grant for a feasibility study regarding the rail trail project.

Mr. Hession discussed collaborating with the Lancaster County Planning Commission to update the Cocalico Regional Comprehensive Plan. He stated the next step will be for each municipality and the School District to appoint key members to serve on a steering committee to disclose key issues/concerns within each region. He recommends setting up a meeting by the end of May or beginning of June.

Mr. Hession announced that the Denver Borough recently was awarded a \$3 million Multimodal Transportation grant. He explained that the funding is meant to encourage economic development and ensure that a safe and reliable system of transportation is available to the residents of the Borough. The funding will be used to construct an extension of Washington Street that will connect to a new alignment of the Weaver Road Bridge over the Cocalico Creek. Sidewalks, a bicycle lane, and an at-grade rail crossing also will be installed. The project would specifically provide trail access to Henry Schein, Denver Cold Storage and the school district's Denver campus. Mr. Hession stated that a total of \$6.5 million to replace the bridge and roadway has been procured so far.

Mr. Hession concluded by reporting on some upcoming events in the Borough: Denver Fire Company's Food Truck Street Fair on May 8th, the Unruh Insurance Car Show on May 21st, the Annual Memorial Day Parade and Ceremony, and the opening of the Denver Community Pool on Memorial Day weekend.

East Cocalico Township Police Department

Officer Eric Fisher, School Resource Officer, provided a brochure detailing the various responsibilities and functions of his position within the Cocalico School District. He spoke of the importance of building meaningful relationships with students in order to "get ahead" of possible future issues. Officer Fisher shared that every day at school is different, with a lot of moments and events being unscripted and requiring out-of-the-box thinking, especially with the pandemic. He added that students are able to reach him through social media.

East Cocalico Township Comments

Mr. Romao Carrasco (RC) asked everyone to welcome Mr. Craig Ebersole who is presently serving as interim Supervisor for East Cocalico Township through December 31, 2021. Mr. Ebersole stated that he is looking forward to advancing cooperation between the four municipalities and is currently working on filling the Township Manager position.

West Cocalico Township Comments

Mr. James Stoner announced that the West Cocalico Township has secured bonding to fund their new sewer treatment plant. He stated that the Township plans to solicit bids in August and break ground for the new plant in the fall. Mr. Stoner said that the Township has experienced an increase in the number of building permit applications and that things seem to be back to “business as usual.” He also announced that they would be hosting a meeting of the Lancaster County Planning Commission on May 11, 2021 at 7:30am. The meeting may also be attended virtually.

Adamstown Library Comments

Ms. Carolyn Reiste informed the group that the Library has increased its hours in all areas and is looking to expand the number of families allowed in the Library at the same time. Right now, they are operating from 10:0am to 7:00pm, with 25 individuals being allowed in the building at time. She added that they have also been hosting drive-by events.

Cocalico School District Comments

Dr. Beth Haldeman shared a presentation showing how the School District is “Thriving in the Pandemic.” She reported that although masks are still required, students are given mask breaks. She also spoke of the use of social distancing, plexiglass barriers, modification of classroom spaces, addition of extra learning areas such as the auditoriums and outside spaces, and utilization of Google Meet. Dr. Haldeman explained that lunch periods were set up to be socially distanced, special area teachers traveled to the students’ classes, and that students were able to work collaboratively both virtually and in-person. She described how struggling students had the ability to be brought in four days a week at the secondary level. She stated that although the elementary started the school year and remained in-person five days a week, the secondary level began in-person classes two days a week, then four, and eventually went to five days. Dr. Haldeman additionally shared that the District would be utilizing grant funds to provide student transportation for tutoring for remedial help, as well as for ESL, math and reading camps over the summer.

Dr. Haldeman spoke of various events planned for Cocalico’s graduating seniors, including yard signs, “Adopt a Senior” program, a Senior Gala, senior bus parade, and graduation ceremony in Eagle Stadium.

Dr. Ella Musser stated that district personnel would be looking at the younger students to determine what supports could be implemented for those who have missed out on experiencing a normal beginning for school due to the pandemic. She shared that she’s heard from some parents and students that they have learned lessons this past year they otherwise might not have learned, such as being able to ask for help, looking for answers more thoroughly before giving up, and becoming savvier on the computer.

Mr. Carrasco, as a parent, commended the District for the normalcy being restored to students.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Date for Next Meeting

The next Cocalico Regional Leaders Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 27, 2021 at 7:00pm and will be hosted by East Cocalico Township. The venue is to be determined.

Adjournment

There being no more business to conduct, the meeting was adjourned on a motion by Mr. Todd Stewart and a second by Mr. Lee Ritz. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Sherri L. Stull

Sherri L. Stull
Board Secretary
Cocalico School District