

# AG school director questions board president, superintendent over lease

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YORK RUN — An Albert Gallatin school director called for the resignation of the district school board president Wednesday after the latter's signature on a lease not approved by board vote was used to grant a construction firm access to district property.

School director Charity Grimm Krupa said board President Jeff Myers committed malfeasance when he pre-signed a lease agreement with Snyder Environmental Services Inc. of Kearneysville, W.Va., earlier this month before the board had a chance to vote on the lease.

The agreement would have allowed Snyder Environmental to temporarily use a modular building located behind the former D. Ferd Swaney Elementary School as a field office while the company performs work on a sewer project for the Fairchance-Georges Joint Municipal Authority.

"I have serious concerns about the fact that our board president would enter into and sign something that would, on its face, look like it binds us to a contract," said Krupa.

"The president does not have authority to sign documents on behalf of the board unless the board specifically approves and directs him to do so," she said before asking for Myers' immediate resignation.

Myers declined to tender a resignation and maintained he did not do anything illegal by pre-signing the document.

“As board president, you are given documents to sign all the time. I signed the document with the understanding it would be ready to go with the approval of the board,” Myers said.

Upon Myers signing the document, which is dated March 9, district administration granted Snyder Environmental access to the modular building, as well as to the school building, last Thursday without the approval or knowledge of the board.

“I did not know access (had been granted) because I did not give anybody access,” said Myers. “I signed the lease pending board approval.”

A representative from Snyder Environmental told the board Wednesday that the company was provided access to the property by district facilities operations director Bill Chesslo, who co-signed the agreement as a witness. The Snyder representative stated that the company was under the impression that the district officials who were granting them use of the facilities had the legal authority to do so.

Chesslo said he was unaware the board hadn't voted on the matter, stating he believed the lease to be a “done deal” between all parties.

Superintendent Chris Pegg told the board he was aware of the agreement signed by Myers and Chesslo, and of Snyder Environmental having access to D. Ferd Swaney Elementary.

“I did have Mr. Chesslo go to see Mr. Myers to see if this was something the district would be agreeable to, that we could let (Snyder) in and get started and

get things set up,” said Pegg. “By no means was anything done to keep the board uninformed.”

Krupa said the board discussed the potential lease in a work session Monday for 45 to 60 minutes without any district personnel relaying to the board that Snyder Environmental had already been granted access to the property.

Pegg said he thought the board was aware of Snyder Environmental having access to the facility due to a letter placed in board members’ packets at the Monday work session stating the agreement was in place pending board approval at Wednesday’s meeting.

Pegg said once he discovered the board was unaware of Snyder Environmental’s presence at D. Ferd Swaney, he immediately contacted the firm to collect their keys and inform them they do not have access to the property until authorized by the board.

“If I erred I take responsibility for erring,” said Pegg. “I wholeheartedly thought everyone was aware that they were getting things set up to gear up and it was all pending school board approval.”

Krupa called for the board to conduct a special investigation into the matter. The board took no action Wednesday.

“I’m disappointed that it doesn’t appear as though the majority of the board wants to take any real action, because I think that there was definitely some inappropriate conduct,” said Krupa.

“I am offended that people in the district make decisions that the school board should be making and that there are no repercussions,” she added.

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The board Wednesday officially approved a lease of the modular building at D. Ferd Swaney with Snyder Environmental Services for a term not to exceed 24 months at a monthly cost of \$1,000.

The agreement includes the use of Wi-Fi, telephone and electric services and parking for passenger vehicles only. Per the lease, no construction equipment or supplies are permitted on the premises, and the company would not have access to the main school building.

The agreement is contingent upon approval by Snyder Environmental.

The motion passed on a 6-3 vote, with Krupa, Michael Dunham and Ryan Porupski casting dissenting votes.