

A Special Meeting of the Board of Directors was held on Monday, October 1, 2012 at 6:30PM prevailing time in the basement of the Immaculate Conception Church, 501 Taylor Avenue, Scranton, PA 18510. The purpose of this Special Meeting was for the temporary closing of Prescott Elementary School.

President Lesh called the meeting to order at 6:30PM with a Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Roll Call: By the Secretary.

Present: Directors Barrett, Fox, Martinelli, O'Shea, Ruane, Sheridan, Shrive and President Lesh.

Absent: Director McGuigan. (Director McGuigan arrived shortly after roll call at 6:35PM)

President Lesh welcomed everyone and announced that Mr. Joseph Guzek of Guzek Associates and administrators of the Scranton School District are present to answer any questions regarding the mold issues at Prescott Elementary and offered another opportunity for speakers to sign in to address the board.

President Lesh continued to say that this board truly appreciates and respects their concerns and they will try to address those concerns and added that Attorney Minora will be conducting an independent investigation as to what has transpired regarding the mold issues and as soon as this board is informed of the results of Attorney Minora's investigation it will be passed on to the public.

President Lesh also added that "time is of the essence" to rectify the issue at Prescott and we don't want it to develop into an Audubon Elementary issue; we know how much the parents care about Prescott and the board appreciates that too. President Lesh asked for everyone's patience and said Mr. King will share ideas and plans along with a timeline in the event that Prescott Elementary would need to temporarily close.

At this time President Lesh now asked for the first speaker.

Mr. Matt Barrett, Prescott Elementary parent, indicated that he attended the recent PTA meeting and although he is not speaking for everyone in the room, he is hopeful that this meeting will be more informational and questioned the board and Mr. Joseph Guzek on the following:

- Mr. Guzek's qualifications and knowledge of air quality.
- The air quality of Prescott Elementary.
- Testing and results of outside and inside molds.
- Classifications of molds.
- Molds present in the cafeteria and bathrooms.
- Air quality since extensive clean up of bathrooms.
- Air quality of occupied areas of the school.
- Ceiling tiles and wall in the cafeteria.
- Growth of mold and remediation of the wall.
- Timeline of when the work can begin and whether the children can stay and be safe until spring or summer and begin the work at the end of the school year.

A lengthy discussion now took place between Mr. Guzek and Mr. Barrett with Mr. Guzek addressing each of Mr. Barrett's questions and concerns.

Mr. Barrett now asked if he may ask the board a few questions and President Lesh agreed and reminded Mr. Barrett that there are several more speakers.

Mr. Barrett asked questions regarding the following:

- Bidding process and timeframe.
- Potential of children staying at Prescott or moving temporarily to other sites.

Mr. King shared some of the other locations that were considered such as the former St. Mary's School, the former Bishop Hannon School and sites at the University of Scranton and the former Nativity School which he did not do in isolation and toured the former Nativity School with Mr. Al O'Donnell, Mr. Jeff Brazil and Mr. Joe Brazil.

Mr. Barrett continued and spoke of the following:

- Possible closing and open communication.
- Consensus of parents whether to stay or move Prescott students.

Mr. Michael McGrath, parent of children at Prescott Elementary, spoke of the air quality testing in February requested by then Facilities and Grounds Director at the time, Mr. Bill McDonough; the timing of when the report was received after Mr. McDonough retired and that the file was later misfiled and was not read.

A discussion now took place between Mr. McGrath, President Lesh, and Mr. Jeff Brazil, regarding the misfiling of the report, whether the report was ever read by administrators or the board and further questioned Mr. Guzek regarding who ordered the report, and

also asked Mr. O'Donnell who let Mr. Guzek into the building to conduct the air quality testing and who is supposed to inform the board of the report.

At this time Mr. King said that as the Superintendent of Schools expressed that he deeply apologizes and as the leader of this district he should have known about this report.

Further discussion and questioning now took place between Mr. Michael McGrath, Mr. Guzek, and President Lesh regarding the presence of mold and the safety of the children, water damaged materials and requests for its removal, whether there was the presence of mold in March, air quality at the time, microbial findings, hypersensitivities to molds and those with allergies or asthma.

Director Sheridan added that as Chairman of the Buildings and Grounds Committee he was unaware of the report and that the board had no knowledge of the report. He would have acted on it and the board was not notified until September.

President Lesh asked Mr. McGrath to please summarize his questions because there are other people waiting to speak.

Mr. McGrath continued with questioning of Mr. Guzek's requests for removal of water damaged materials and that it was on a summer to-do list yet no one knew of the report or the release of the report at the request of a parent.

A disagreeable discussion now took place between President Lesh and Mr. McGrath regarding the issues becoming personal and President Lesh asked Mr. McGrath to please step away from the podium so the meeting could move forward with the next speaker. President Lesh also asked for the attending police officer's assistance. Mr. McGrath left on his own.

President Lesh tried to adjourn the meeting due to its disruptiveness but at the request of the public, the meeting proceeded.

Kathleen Haikes, Prescott Elementary PTA President, spoke about discussions with Mr. Jeff Brazil regarding the misfiling of the report, and said that Principal O'Donnell was unaware of the mold report until she herself presented it to him. She obtained the report from the previous PTA President of Audubon.

Mrs. Haikes said she is highly ashamed of what went on here this evening and only wants to move forward.

President Lesh apologized for his behavior; said we are going to move forward; we are concerned for the kids; no one is trying to cover up anything, we are only human; we make mistakes.

A discussion took place between directors and Mrs. Haikes regarding lack of communication, children's health and why it has taken so long for one of the directors to visit the school and they should have taken quicker action.

Director Fox indicated that he did visit the school when he received the report and he apologizes from the bottom of his heart to the community that the board was not aware.

Director Sheridan said that tonight was the first night that he looked at the report.

Mrs. Haikes now asked that if the building needs to be shut down, can it wait until after the Halloween Parade.

Mr. King responded that he did not see a problem with that, if the board agrees and as long as the children are safe.

Steve Teaman, parent, asked Mr. Guzek to check records from October 2010 for testing and said that air quality was subpar at that time. Mr. Guzek addressed Mr. Teaman.

President Lesh indicated that they receive weekly packets on Fridays and they only have a minimal amount of time to review before a Monday meeting.

Mary Jean Moran, member of community asked if the board would be agreeable if a group were formed as a liaison and could meet on a weekly basis with updates. The board agreed.

Director Sheridan asked that the board be informed of the updates.

A number of parents who did not sign in complained of their children who have been ill and are students in Mrs. Erin Moore's Kindergarten class. Mrs. Moore also indicated that she too has been ill more often than usual and it was not her room that was tested; it was the classroom across the hall from her.

The following topics were discussed by parents who did not sign the Speaker Sign in sheet and addressed by some members of the Board of Directors, Mr. King, Mr. Brazil and Mr. Guzek:

- Mold removal.
- The safety of the children's health in school.
- Testing in all classrooms.
- Concern of Attorney Minora handling the investigation regarding the mold reports.
- Communication between the board and parents.
- Mold in cafeteria.
- Further testing.
- Expected time of results.
- Reading and understanding the reports.
- Unacceptable to move the Audubon students again.

President Lesh agrees that the communication needs to improve and the decisions are based on Mr. Guzek's recommendations.

Director Sheridan apologized again that the board did not know of the report; if he knew he would have acted on it.

Director O'Shea apologized and said we're trying to take care of the situation so the kids have a healthy environment; this is why we're here; he understands the frustration and we're trying to get answers.

Rosemary Boland, SFT President, spoke on the following:

- Timelines.
- When she heard of the situation she acted on it.
- If there is any money owed to Mr. Guzek or if he has received checks to him for services.
- Testing and facts need to be accurate.
- Second Floor teachers room ceiling tiles.
- Proper removal of ceiling tiles.
- Commended parents for their research.
- Concern for the health and integrity of the Scranton School District.

President Lesh apologized for his outburst and his behavior, spoke of his frustrations and that we need to move on and rectify this problem. President Lesh also personally apologized to Mr. McGrath and that he should not have asked Mr. McGrath to step away from the podium, but sometimes there is a need for a few minutes as cooler heads prevail.

President Lesh apologized to Mr. O'Donnell as well and understands he was only trying to calm the parents.

President Lesh said that anyone who needs to speak to him and wants his phone number may have it and directed the Board Secretary to provide it to anyone who asks for it.

President Lesh thanked everyone for coming even though the meeting was emotional at times but it is good to see parents who care and he wants everyone to know that this board also cares.

Director McGuigan now asked to speak and said she can sympathize with these parents and feels there's been back pedaling done and as Mr. King indicated to the newspaper that the situation was to be addressed during the summer on a to-do list because that's what he was told by the Director of Facilities and Grounds and there has been an attempt to blame secretaries, misfiling and the principal who never knew this report was done and she thinks it is very weak of this board and administration to attempt to do that.

Director McGuigan further said that as directors we can sit up here tonight and say that future reports will be copied (CC'd) to everybody but if they're not opened, read and brought to their attention then we're not going to see anything and this problem is going to continue; she would like to see this problem rectified and prevent it from happening again.

Director McGuigan spoke of a couple meetings ago when she asked about the work at the Neil Armstrong Elementary School where a deadline for work was August 15 and it is still not finished. When she asked the question as to why there was so much foam in the playground she was given an answer that she found to be completely untrue two days later.

Director McGuigan said we have people in positions in this administration that are not doing their jobs and for the superintendent to step up and take blame tonight is commendable because he is the chief here but we can't expect him to climb on roofs and go in to schools and examine reports that we are paying people to do.

Director McGuigan now spoke of a computer based maintenance program that she discussed with the former Director of Facilities and Grounds and she thinks it is long overdue that if different people take over, everything is on the computer and there will be no paper trail for anything.

Director Sheridan added that again back in February when people ordered the report and the prior director that had the report done followed up with the new Director of Facilities and Grounds that an active report was being done and reported to me that we had a problem at Prescott then we would have followed up with the board and administration. He feels Mr. Brazil came in blind folded, he seen the report, he did file it but again if the proper procedure was done and everyone was notified we wouldn't be here tonight.

At this time an audience member expressed concern over blame being put on Mr. Bill McDonough, the former Facilities and Grounds Director.

Director Sheridan said that he is not putting specific blame on Mr. McDonough, it is not one man taking the fall for this and he thinks we have several people that should have been communicating with the board.

Director McGuigan added that is exactly what she is saying that if you were informed back in March we would have known. Mrs. McGuigan also said that in this proposed timeline for Prescott mold removal we're supposed to vote on the temporary closing of Prescott and she feels it may be a rush to do something when we should have a Plan C to leave the school open if Mr. Guzek believes it is safe and perhaps capsulate the mold and look to see if that is a viable option to moving the children because she agrees with parents concerns of moving the children at this age because consistency is huge to these kids and if Mr. Guzek thinks it is a safe place then maybe that should be a plan that we can look at.

President Lesh responded that there still needs to be some discussion about where to send the kids and no one is going to send them to another bad school. Mr. Lesh added that there was a lesson learned here tonight and unfortunately things have to happen sometimes to learn lessons. He believes there is going to be an extreme amount of good that comes out of this tonight and hopefully the parents in this area will be pleased with the results.

President Lesh suggested to Mrs. McGuigan that perhaps she should tour the building with Mr. King to see for herself.

President Lesh added that we want to ensure the parents that all of your suggestions will be taken into consideration and that we cannot live in the past-what's done is done and we have to move forward.

Mr. Lesh again said that his phone number is available through the board secretary; feel free to contact him anytime and if something isn't being addressed he will make sure it gets addressed.

At this time, President Lesh asked Mr. O'Donnell his impression of Nativity and Mr. O'Donnell is pleased with Nativity but is concerned with the move.

President Lesh again apologized for his behavior and that it was truly unacceptable.

Mr. O'Donnell thanked Father Sica for opening up his facilities for us tonight and he knows Father Sica will do anything he can for the kids and our school.

Father Sica joked that the penance for Mr. Lesh's behavior was "three Hail Mary's tonight".

Mrs. Rita Romanowski now spoke up about concerns from other parents wondering if there are certified people inspecting the buildings once in a while to make sure that this is not a problem in other schools.

President Lesh said there has been some discussion about a preventative plan and a schedule for maintenance and that Mr. Brazil will be involved and every school will be air quality tested; Mr. Guzek's crew can identify and he thinks it should be left in their hands to identify and recommend what needs to be done.

Mrs. Romanowski also said that a parent brought to her attention a concern at Northeast Intermediate School.

President Lesh asked Mr. Guzek to address that concern.

Director Sheridan asked that air quality testing be completed at all of the older schools especially where we know there may be a problem.

An unknown parent now spoke of her daughter being sick and her concern that ceiling tiles were not removed correctly. She added that she has already talked with Ms. Jessica Leitzel about home schooling as she has no faith in the Scranton School District.

Mrs. Sandy Marino, teacher at Prescott asked about the timeline and when will they know if they have to move.

President Lesh said he cannot give an exact day but that Mr. King will be in touch with Mr. O'Donnell and he will inform his faculty.

Director Shrive now asked for a brief moment to thank everyone for coming here tonight and understands the outrage that they expressed and as a member of this board he is embarrassed by the way this was handled from the get go up to and including this meeting tonight. He added that you deserve better, your children deserve better and he is going to work to make sure this doesn't happen in the future because it can't go on like this and we should never have a board meeting that falls apart the way it did. We shouldn't have an issue come up where none of the board members knew about it, the chief executive doesn't know about it and we need to move forward and run this more professionally and do the service you elected us to do.

President Lesh responded that he is not looking for an excuse here but he resents that and again his behavior was unacceptable and he is sorry that this meeting did break down but emotions are high and he is only human and Mr. Shrive can say whatever he wants to say but it's a little late coming to the dance to make some of those comments but again he wants to be proactive and address the situation and move forward.

An unknown parent asked if they are able to direct their questions to Mr. O'Donnell and not have to contact Mr. King for answer but directly to Mr. O'Donnell.

President Lesh said Mr. King will be directed to keep Mr. O'Donnell informed and all he is asking for is a little patience as we move forward.

President Lesh asked for a brief recess and the Special Meeting was called back to order at 9:18pm; upon roll call all nine members present.

HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

The following resolution was submitted by Director Ruane.

The Health and Safety Committee hereby recommends the following resolution for your consideration:

WHEREAS, the Board of School Directors recognizes the need to follow the recommendation of the September 23, 2012 Guzek Associates Air Quality Evaluation Report which states the following:

Although this evaluation found the recent cleanup activities in this Basement Multi-purpose Room to be highly effective, we now know mold continues to exist, albeit trapped behind the surfaces of the exterior wall. Settlement of the sidewalk and ground surfaces along the facility's perimeter has allowed storm water infiltration to cause this condition.

Given this discovered knowledge of mold hidden behind the basement wall, we recommend the following tasks be undertaken when occupancy can be logistically discontinued:

1. Removal of the mold contaminated materials, including the all interior surfaces of the two (2) exterior walls in the Basement Multi-purpose Room.
2. Address the land settlement issue by adding berming and impervious pave to case storm water to run away from the facility.
3. When removal and cleanup activities have been completed, verify acceptance through clearance tests using appropriate techniques, air surface wipes, and bulk sampling.
4. Once lab reports indicate clearance, release other contractors to commence renovation work on the interior wall finishes to restore this area for routine use.

We believe it would be most prudent to undertake the above work scope when this facility is not occupied. From our past experience at other schools, it is not possible to prevent any and all migration of dusts and mold spores from a basement construction zone to the upper levels of the school. Therefore, we ask that you consider implementing this mold abatement work only when this facility is unoccupied.

Recognizing that this discovery of a hidden hazard may not be limited to this basement room, we ask that you have us or one of your other professionals evaluate the rest of the facility for other similar concerns. If any additional concerns are found, they should be addressed with similar abatements at the same time.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Scranton School Board approves the attached detailed plan to abate the mold trapped behind the sheet rock of the exterior walls of the cafeteria/multi-purpose room at William Prescott Elementary and to temporarily place the students and faculty of William Prescott Elementary School at Nativity of Our Lord Elementary School beginning on Monday, October 29, 2012.

The resolution was seconded by Director Sheridan and passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

At this time President Lesh announced that the scheduled work session for this evening has been postponed with approval from the district solicitor.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 9:22pm.

Secretary