

Conneaut School District

PUBLIC WORK SESSION

Minutes

Wednesday, August 2, 2017

7:00 PM

The Conneaut School Board of Directors met Wednesday, August 2, 2017 at the Alice Schafer Annex Building cafeteria.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Board President Mrs. Jody Sperry.

The following members answered to roll call:

Mr. Burnham	Mr. Ellis	Mr. Hornstein
Mrs. Luckock	Mrs. Klink	Mr. McQuiston
Mr. Schaef	Mrs. Sperry	

It is noted Mrs. Krachkowski was absent.

Administrators Present-

Superintendent: Jarrin Sperry

Director of Special Education – Susy Walters

Business Manager: Greg Mayle

Director of Buildings and Grounds- Frank Kimmel

Technology Coordinator – Rick Kelly

Curriculum Director – Brenda Kantz

Principals: Doug Parks and John Hines

Visitor Recognition

Mrs. Sperry provided a Visitor Recognition on Agenda Items referencing Policy 903 – Public Participation in Board Meetings. He announced all visitors who are recognized during the Visitor Recognition are allotted a maximum of five (5) minutes to address matters of their concern, unless otherwise determined by the Board President. Visitor recognition is to be limited to thirty (30) minutes unless otherwise decided by the Board.

No one approached the podium to address the school board.

Discussion Items-

- a. Project Alliance – Mrs. Sperry welcomed Mr. Jim Becker, the new Executive Director for the Economic Progress Alliance of Crawford County. Mr. Becker is here tonight to introduce himself as the new Executive Director and to discuss the property in Greenwood Township which the District approved a tax exempt Keystone Opportunity property a number of years ago. The tax exempt status is expiring soon and he, Mr. Becker is asking for renewal. He discussed what the Progress Alliance has done to promote and make the industrial park more marketable as well as what has not happened. He noted some obvious points as to why the Keystone Project has been stalled and their validity. The

zoning in particular put out by the state that have been assigned to the property has affected taxes statewide. It is an abatement program, and the true purpose is to attract and use the tax exempt status as an incentive for businesses and developers to build on.

The Deerfield Farms has put a great deal of money into the property but unfortunately were not able to resolve the situation and had to set the idea aside for now. The second interested party was the tires to energy who also put in over \$12 million to prepare and discovered horizontal drilling on the location which drastically affected the price of natural gas and conversion.

Mr. Becker could not answer the Board's question as to how much has been spent in marketing due to only being in this new position for seven days.

With this property set as a Keystone Opportunity zone it sits at the top of the priority list with benefits. The state is contacted by businesses around the world for a specific set of criteria. A property having tax exemption puts them on the short list, with this specific property having 40 inquiries this year so far.

Mr. Becker expressed how grateful the Alliance is for this property's tax exemption these past seven years. The extension timeline is coming to a close and he is asking for another extension, up to an additional ten years. He reminded the Board that during the past extension there was a great deal of time involved for engineering, which can take up to 2 or 3 years before they really get into the designation. The first designation was in 2000 where we discovered the wetlands. This was a major stumbling block for development. Twelve million was invested between this and two other projects and then another twelve million in soft costs. Also, between 2000 and 2015 were not the best economic times in Pennsylvania with very few manufacturing sites. Commercial and retail sites were the targets.

The Board asked if the climate was different now. Mr. Becker replied they have received inquiries and have pulled the plans off of the shelf. There are more investments and inquiries for loans which is a good sign. The Alliance does not fund 100 percent so owners are feeling good enough to stick their toes in the water. He admits the property has been neglected and it will take some time to dress it up.

Mr. Schaef commented; he has been on the Board for quite a while, we have had the Alliance come in and ask for extensions with promises for 17 years, not one business has been located there. By giving this exemption it puts more pressure on local tax payers. In looking at your draft resolution, he has a difficult time supporting it at this time with no indication of anyone knocking on the door. He also feels that over the years the property has seen reduced real estate tax values and it is hard to support your requests.

Mr. Burnham asked if the District had not granted the exemption, how much would we have received in property taxes. Mr. Mayle replied it decreased 89/90 percent from the old assessment of \$4 million to now \$600,000 thus it would have been \$275,000 a year and now \$30,000 a year.

Mr. Becker explained the state process when an exemption is opened up. They open the door for tax deferment with an extensions period. The window is controlled by the state with some KOZ's given an extension on the date they are scheduled to expire. Pennsylvania corporate taxes do not side with companies moving into this state. This current exemption terminates the end of December. If an extension is not granted before it expires it becomes a completely new request. Legislation permits 7, 8, 9 or 10 year timeframes.

Mr. Schaef stressed the District has granted a 17 year exemption with nothing. There is a pipe distribution down by Grove City, not up here. Again remember we are asking our tax payers to subsidize this when there has been no advantage to us in the past. Mr. Burnham added that the District has lost 1.86 million dollars in tax monies or \$510,000 using the lower assessment.

Mr. Becker asked to be on the agenda soon as they must submit it to the state the end of September. The Board indicated they would place it on the September board for vote.

b. *Coaches meeting update...*

This year's coaches meeting was one of the largest attended with 40+ coaches. Coaches were provided the new PIAA requirements, including the two courses needed by the end of June 30, 2018. CPR trainings were provided the same evening and the following night. This too was well attended with 17 participating.

The coaches are required to take a 16 part course, with the smallest portion to take 13 minutes and some extending as long as 50 minutes. We are tracking all who have completed the requirement. Handbook review was included in the coaches meeting and Bree, the athletic trainer spoke. Boosters spoke as well and included the need for parent support. Overall it was a good meeting, very informative.

c. *Bus Tour...*

The Board scheduled their yearly tour of the school buildings for Monday, August 28, 2017.

d. *Maintenance Department Updates...Mr. Kimmel*

Welding Shop update- the electrical has been completed today, they are powered up and ready to go. Almost all of the equipment is here with one on back order. This item does is not critical to the start of the school year. The Career and Technical Center has hired an instructor. They received 8 applicants, and conducted 2 rounds of interviews with four coming back to teach a lesson. The final applicant that was selected is highly qualified. There will be ten stations with eight per morning and eight in the afternoon sessions, with a need for an aide.

Intercom Upgrades- the initial major components have been installed at CASH and ASA. The programming is completed and staff has been trained. Feedback includes ease in operating the new system. There are a few items left to complete, a few are on back order.

Miscellaneous items-

CLMS life skills classroom- the new flooring has been installed.

Auction- which ran the end of July ran comparable to last years \$11,568 and \$9,388 net. We estimated around 150 in attendance this year. Mr. Kimmel understands the attendance was smaller at the previous auction in 2013 where we sold \$10,920 and took \$8,350 with 23.5 percent commission.

Facebook hit 32, 000 views this year and he believes this social media avenue was a big part in the success/numbers attending this time.

The purpose of the auction was to clear out a classroom and discard of unused items taking up usable space.

Camera- camera additions are already cabled and should be done before school starts.

Sidewalks and Bollards- the sidewalk addition behind the high school and the bollards will be completed before school starts.

Soccer netting- the soccer netting has been ordered.

Work orders- the maintenance department has completed 300 work orders from June 9th to the present.

e. *Meeting location reminders...*

Mr. Sperry reminded those attending that the August board meeting will be at CASH and the September meetings at Alice Schaefer Annex. It is the November meetings we are at CLMS.

f. *Board Goals...*

Mrs. Sperry she has received some feedback from her fellow board members and a copy of the draft is on Canvas. Mrs. Krachkowski asked to include an annual staff climate survey which would provide more detail rather than a generalization.

g. *Superintendents Report...*

Mr. Sperry reported the following to the Board of Education;

- I attended a two day A.L.I.C.E training in Girard on June 26th and 27th. A.L.I.C.E. stands for (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, and Evacuate) (Not necessarily in that order). We now have three trained people in the district to be trainers. Kurt, Daniele Varner, and I are all Trainers now. We have trained staff and students and continue to train, reinforce and practice this best practice in dealing with school and workplace violence.
- Kevin Sprong, Mike Costa, Frank Kimmel and I have met numerous times to make sure everything is on schedule for the satellite welding program to be up and running for the first student day. From electrical work to the equipment to supplies, everything is ordered and we are talking almost daily to make sure it will be as smooth as possible. Brad Custead (current welding instructor at the CCCTC) came in this summer and fabricated the welding booths that will be used in the shop. The new instructor for the welding class is Evan Moutsos.
- Jody, Greg and I met with Doug Anderson to discuss bussing and transportation in the school district. Different options were discussed moving forward and more data is needed before we make decisions on bell schedules, combined runs, etc. Of note, we are

running a pilot this fall with WIFI on two busses. Rick had the purchase of the hardware in his budget and unlimited data from ATT is \$89 a month for both busses. We will bring back our results of the pilot (use, activity, etc.) in early 2018.

- I went to the final day at "Career Camp" at the CCCTC on Thursday, July 13th. Eileen Mullen ran another very successful camp and many students from all three school districts became "Makers and Doers" in a variety of shops. The students aided in the end of the camp presentation and there was a lot of excitement.
- I met with representatives from Jamestown SD, Titusville SD, and Crawford Central SD to go over and coordinate our truancy letters and T.E.P's (Truancy Elimination Plans). There are new mandates from the state and Brian Shoop from Crawford County Human Services wants to get all of us consistent across the districts.
- At the August Systems of Care Meeting, it was decided that the Systems of Care would contribute \$5,000 toward our Link Crew Team (and the teams of Titusville and Crawford Central) to attend a continuation session in Ontario on September 20th. The only cost to the districts would be for sub costs for two days. The Systems of Care would pay for travel, meals and lodging. There is no cost from the Boomerang Group for the follow up training.
- As I was walking through Alice Shafer this week, I stopped for a few minutes to listen to the band. They sound very good and there are currently about 75 showing up for band camp.
- I have also been in several negotiation sessions at both the Conneaut School District and the CCCTC.

h. *PSBA Update...*

Mr. Ellis provided an update on this Fall's conference- the early bird discount deadline is coming soon, the PSBA candidates information is now available, Pennsylvania Education initiative grant has been made available and we have applied, and our legislative platform proposal went through.

Mrs. Luckock, Mr. Hornstein, Mrs. Sperry and Mr. Ellis are interested in attending the PASA/PSBA Fall Leadership Conference in October, potentially Mrs. Klink as well.

i. *Agenda Review...*


The Board reviewed the draft agenda.

Mrs. Sperry announced the Board would be going into an **EXECUTIVE SESSION** immediately following the meeting to review and discuss agency business which, if conducted in public, might lead to disclosure of information protected by law, issues which might include personnel concerns.

Meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.



Jody Sperry, Board President



Greg Mayle, Board Secretary