

# Lehigh Area School District

Lehigh, Pennsylvania

## Building Committee Workshop Meeting

Monday, February 10, 2014

7:00 PM

Administration Board Room

### Minutes

#### Pledge of Allegiance

**Call to Order** - A workshop meeting of the Lehigh Area School Board was held in the Administration Building, Conference Room A, on the above date and called to order at 7 p.m.

#### Roll Call -

|                                                  | Present                  | Absent                   |
|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Mr. Rocky Ahner, Member                          | X                        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mr. William J. Hill, Jr., Member                 | X                        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mr. Stephen L. Holland, Member                   | X                        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mr. Hal Resh, Vice-President                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | X                        |
| Mr. Larry Stern, Member                          | X                        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mr. Wayne Wentz, Member                          | X                        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mr. Andrew Yenser, Treasurer                     | X                        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mr. Thomas Zimmerman, Member                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | X                        |
| Mrs. Gloria Bowman, President                    | X                        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Ms. Tina Holmes, Asst. Business Manager          | <input type="checkbox"/> | X                        |
| Mr. Jonathan Cleaver, Superintendent             | X                        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Attorney William Schwab, Solicitor               | X                        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Ms. Bonnie Cortese, Asst./Recording Bd Secretary | X                        | <input type="checkbox"/> |

#### Presentation on building proposals -

##### **EI Associations (Mark Barnhardt) and Mr. Cleaver (Superintendent) - PowerPoint - Elementary Center**

- Comparisons of project costs of renovations to four elementary buildings vs. one elementary center.
- Capacity of elementary center
- Concept Diagrams
- Proposed Elementary Center Schedule
- Square foot comparisons of four elementary buildings vs. one elementary center
- Cost comparisons

- *Picture samplings from existing elementary centers*
- *Projected savings with new building costs vs. high school*
- *Summary of estimated financing plans*
- *Millage impact*
- *Samples of assessed home values / Millage*
- *Mr. Cleaver cautioned that the millage listed would be spread over a 4-year time frame.*
- *Governor Corbett's budget may bring more money back to districts which would change these figures.*

## **Board Discussion –**

### **Wayne Wentz –**

- *I want to make sure that the only way staff would be eliminated would be through attrition.*

### **Jonathan Cleaver (Superintendent) –**

- *That is correct. We would prepare a MOU with both bargaining units to insure that we would not cut anyone unless through attrition.*

### **William Hill –**

- *Math projections seem to change from meeting to meeting.*
- *We have other obligations that need to be considered: health / pension / stadium.*
- *We are a 3<sup>rd</sup> class school district that cannot handle a \$60M project.*

### **Jonathan Cleaver (Superintendent) –**

- *And that is why we have left no stone unturned and tried to give you different options.*

### **Rocky Ahner –**

- *The elementary buildings have always been neglected.*
- *We cannot resubmit PlanCon A & B unless we request a waiver.*

### **Gloria Bowman –**

- *You are right; this is the step that needs to be done.*

### **Rocky Ahner –**

- *We cannot make actual comparisons without completing the renovations at MA/EP and have the geothermal heating to compare.*
- *I am not against the project, but we have to make sure we are doing the right thing.*

### **Mark Barnhardt (EI Assoc.) –**

- *You submitted Plan Con as a district-wide project. This hasn't change, but we would need the board to authorize the waiver.*

### **William Hill –**

- *We need to do something. The buildings are worn out.*
- *However, need to proceed in a smart way.*
- *Don't proceed with a center where you have it. High water table.*

### **Larry Stern –**

- *I appreciate all the effort Mr. Cleaver put into cost comparisons.*

**Jonathan Cleaver (Superintendent) –**

- *The credit goes to the Business Office.*

**William Hill –**

- *Addressed to Gloria Bowman: What kind of motion would be germinated?*

**Gloria Bowman –**

- *To seek a waiver through PDE to build an elementary center.*

**Jonathan Cleaver (Superintendent) –**

- *The existing Feasibility Study already addresses grade realignment.*
- *We would not ask for more money.*

**Public Comment (limited to three (3) minutes as per board policy) –**

**Sue Anthony –**

- *Would like to pass my 3 minutes to Frank Tamburri*

**Frank Tamburri – Taxpayer Group**

- *Thanks to Rocky for his article in the Times News*
- *Questioned the explanation of taxes / millage*
- *When do we pay-off the principle?*
- *No one will be able to afford to live here.*
- *We have offered to sit with the board in private and discuss.*

**Atty Schwab –**

- *The Board as a whole cannot meet with groups in private. This would violate the Sunshine Law.*

**Jonathan Cleaver (Superintendent) –**

- *PSERS may go up, but when we do not replace employees through attrition, we will need to pay less into PSERS and the amount may go down.*

**Kristin Simmons – Lifelong resident / parent / employee**

- *Thanks to Mr. Cleaver for looking into several different options. He has met with PTO groups and gone above and beyond to try to get information out there.*
- *The elementary buildings were built in the 1950's and renovated 20 years ago.*
- *Move forward into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.*
- *K-2 / 3-5 – one building is the best option.*
- *It takes a community to raise a child. Many issues affect students. School is often the only stability.*
- *One center would allow class size to be distributed evenly.*
- *Special ed. Programs now split siblings between buildings. One building would allow them to be in one building.*
- *Check with staff to see what works or doesn't work.*
- *I do not appreciate someone making a video and posting it on YouTube to ridicule a person who cares about the children / district / community.*

**Denise VanSickle –**

- Am I correct that we would be applying for \$52M for reimbursement?
- Seems like a big cost for this community. How will we make the payments?

**Jonathan Cleaver (Superintendent) –**

- Projected savings plays a big part in taxes.

**Denise VanSickle –**

- Are we here to discuss borrowing \$52M or what are we doing with it?

**Jonathan Cleaver (Superintendent) –**

- No, that has not been decided.

**Denise VanSickle –**

- Is there a way to put in real figures ... how does millage equal the dollar amount?

**Gloria Bowman –**

- Assessed value of house is \$75,000 x 2.31 mills. Millage can inflate over time.

**Betty Wolfe – Taxpayer / parent**

- Would like to dispute Kristin's comments. Kids are better off in a smaller school building. Big building would be too intimidating.
- Everyone here cares and wants to do the best.
- Want good, affordable education.
- A new building would have many benefits.
- K-12 in one radius, near the hospital, would create a safety issue. Roads would be tied-up with fire/emergency vehicles.
- There would be four times the traffic.
- How would you synchronize busing?
- We are one of the highest senior/unemployment areas.

**Brenda Eckley – Taxpayer / parent / employee**

- At the Franklin PTO meeting two options were supposed to be given and there was only one.
- I am against the elementary center.
- Small building is the best – we know the students and where they belong.
- Traffic a concern – We have an average of 75 cars in the morning. Times that by four and there would be approximately 300 cars.
- How many buses would there need to be at the center?

**Jonathan Cleaver (Superintendent) –**

- 20 buses.

**Brenda Eckley –**

- I work the Breakfast program. Many needy students. We get to spend time with those students.
- Bigger isn't always better. Students will slip through the cracks.

**Leon Homm -**

- *My subject was covered. Thank you for the opportunity to speak.*

**David Bradley -**

- *Thank you for opportunity to speak.*
- *These increases would be for every year for the rest of our lives.*
- *The tax group had a presentation from PDE.*
- *The board is responsible to keep taxes low.*
- *Feasibility Study handout - page 183.*
- *Would like the board to entertain a motion to terminate EI Associates.*

**Jonathan Cleaver (Superintendent) -**

- *PDE did review the Feasibility Study. Everything is complete / meets requirements.*

**Mark Barnhardt (EI Associates) -**

- *Reinforced Mr. Cleaver's comment.*

**David Bradley - Yelling out at Mr. Barnhardt**

**Gloria Bowman -**

- *Mr. Bradley, you are out of order.*

**Ruth Ann Schlecht -**

- *What will happen to all the old buildings.*
- *You won't need any buildings - everyone will be in cyber school.*
- *The elementary center will come because the leaders will want it that way.*
- *If you do not listen to history, it will repeat.*

**Adjournment -**

**Next regular scheduled meeting is Monday, February 24, 2014 at the Administration Building.**

MOTION by Mr. Stern, SECONDED by Mr. Wentz to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 p.m.

VOTE: YES - 7 NO -        ABSENT - 2 ABSTENTIONS -       

Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted



Bonnie M. Cortese  
Assistant Board Secretary

(Minutes of February 10, 2014 include Pages 1 through 5)