

Lehighton Area School District

Lehighton, Pennsylvania

Building Committee Workshop Meeting

Monday, August 11, 2014

7:00 PM

Administration Board Room

Minutes

Pledge of Allegiance

Call to Order - A workshop meeting of the Lehighton 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	☐
Mr. William J. Hill, Jr., Member	X	☐
Mr. Stephen L. Holland, Member	X	☐
Mrs. Lori Nothstein, Member	X	☐
Mr. Hal Resh, Vice-President	X	☐
Mr. Larry Stern, Member	X	☐
Mr. Wayne Wentz, Member	X	☐
Mr. Andrew Yenser, Treasurer	X	☐
Mrs. Gloria Bowman, President	X	☐
Mr. Brian Feick, Business Manager	X	☐
Mr. Jonathan Cleaver, Superintendent	X	☐
Attorney William Schwab, Solicitor	X	☐
Mrs. Melissa Wagner, Recording Bd Secretary	X	☐

**** Executive Session was held at 6:30 p.m. for personnel issues.**

Mrs. Bowman - Read a Statement to the Audience and Board Members:

- *\$134,200 spent on fuel for four elementary buildings / \$25,000 spent on fuel at the HS*
- *\$275,179.16 spent on mechanical repairs at the HS without addressing major issues.*
- *.5 mill increase will sustain needs / Grant monies = positive financial position*
- *K-12 project - accurate information - Listen to the facts*

Presentations - EI Associates - District-wide Building Project Update (Elementary / MS / HS)

- Mr. Cleaver - Introduction - PowerPoint
- Mark Barnhardt (EI Assoc) -
 - *Design Ideas*
 - 9-12 Months for design process
 - Submitted PlanCon A & B
 - Guidelines by PDE
 - Project Schedules until 2017 until complete
 - Long-range plan
 - Start August 2014 - Complete 2017
 - Energy savings
 - Site A - by the HS - share bus parking
 - Site B - by the district office
 - Cost effective location is leaning toward the HS location
 - Budget for project discussed
 - *Middle School - ESCO Project*
 - Energy or design company is used
 - Maximize project cost to funding available from state
 - Applied for ACE
 - Grade 5 transferred to elementary lowers maximum
 - Mechanical & roof reimbursement
 - Need to do a detailed energy audit
 - Location of front office and cafeteria in question
 - Bring café up to first floor
 - New secure entrance
 - Trane would need to be involved with the MS Design team
 - *High School*
 - Mechanical and façade need to be fixed
 - All three buildings should have the same energy control system
- Larry Stern – asked about TRANE being involved with HS. Has only been involved with MS so far. Also asked about security aspect at high school.
- Jonathan Cleaver responded with thoughts on receptionist area in vestibule.
- Bill Hill – Elementary Location – 144,000 sq. feet on 3.5 acres – how will it fit
- Mark Barnhardt answered with it will be 2 stories.

Mr. Cleaver, Mr. Barnhardt & Mr. Feick were on-site with a civil engineer today.

- Bill Hill asked about the water problem especially when the high school was built.
- Jonathan Cleaver said the design plan would take care of any water issues (run off, etc.)
- Bill Hill – 25% mark up with Option #6
- Mark Barnhardt – 6% to EI, 19% for fixtures & equipment, construction manager, contingencies, change order contingencies, etc. Standard school construction, nothing extravagant.

- Bill Hill – we are basing this on 1300 students. We don't have that many elementary students. Enrollment has decreased since 2005-2006 school year.
- Mark Barnhart – PDE uses live birth census. Reimbursement is driven by highest enrollment projections for the next 10 years. Maximized size of building by these projections.
- Rocky Ahner – Shared services with HS? What are they?
- Mark Barnhart – Busing only.
- Rocky Ahner – ACE grants are only 10% of total construction cost. New building is not any better than the 4 buildings. What about the 3 gyms? We've only visited buildings that had 700 students.
- Mark Barnhardt addressed the gym. The proposed gym is 12,000 sq. feet with folding wall down the middle. This is 2 full courts. Need to determine what the community wants.
- Jonathan Cleaver – we are not locked into feasibility study. It is based on what the board approves.
- Rocky Ahner – we have 4 schools now. It would be cheaper to renovate. Where is this elementary center helping the community? HS was proposed at 16 million and we spent 12 million and the taxpayers have been paying ever since for the cuts.
- Hal Resh – Elementary building next to a high school. Doesn't anyone see a problem with this? Is the only savings on busing?

The audience requested to speak after the presentation. Gloria Bowman stated that we were doing courtesy to the floor. Audience was not happy.

Gloria Bowman made a statement that according to District policies no signs are permitted in the board room. Signs were removed.

Larry Stern left (8:00 p.m.)

Communications - None

Approval of Minutes - None

Financial Matter - None

Personnel - None

Miscellaneous - None

Programs - None

Old Business for Discussion - None

New Business for Discussion - None

Courtesy of the floor / Public Comment -

1. **Frank Tamburri** – “Discuss cost of \$39M vs \$27M. How Does this =?”

- *El governed by law to received 4-5%, now it's 6%*
- *Getting different answers from different people*
- *Numbers are plus or minus 26-27 million for renovations – new school for price of old?*
- *Has anyone read bond issue? Mr. Bradley and I have.*
- *All demographics spelled out in bond.*
- *Who is deceiving who?*

Mark Barnhardt answered with study was evaluation of existing facility – not with all the additions (full-size gym, etc.) Options add to cost.

2. **David Bradley** - “Agenda Item - All”

- *How many board members have read the feasibility study?*
- *How many changes from 2010 to 2014?*

Gloria Bowman – I’ve read the updated feasibility study.

David Bradley - Did repairs for elementary go down from 2014-2010?

Gloria Bowman – I know the cost of the asbestos abatement.

David Bradley -

- *(change of subject) please put up #8 on slide from EI.*
- *LASD has 16 million in surplus*
- *Live births – total for state. Look at Lehigh Area School District*
- *Mr. Krause raised taxes and no maintenance to buildings*
- *Mr. Ahner approved PlanCon*
- *Where is the population?*
- *Fix schools with the money we have.*
- *How much will go to Mark Barnhardt? 6%?*
- *30% change in PSERs too.*

3. Glenn Claypoole - "Truth"

- *Owned a mom and pop operation for years on 1st street that had to close.*
- *Separation of church and state.*
- *Ruling body has been challenged.*
- *Lehigh cannot afford*
- *Where does all the grant monies come from? Taxpayers?*
- *Need vs. want*
- *Must live within our means.*

4. Emily Onichinoski - "Building Project Agenda Project"

- *Everything has been presented to board.*
- *All are on fixed incomes. We cannot afford this.*

5. Gil Walters - "Agenda Item #7"

- *70 years as a resident and familiar with area*
- *Dollars and cents – how is this going to affect elementary students?*
- *Is there a transportation study? What is the cost?*
- *Are all grants guaranteed?*
- *How can the board go ahead in good conscience?*

6. Irene Bezak - "Agenda - Building Project"

- *Is new school necessary?*
- *Senior citizens are paying more and more.*

Gloria Bowman – this is a negative impact.

Irene Bezak -

- *More taxes every year. When will it stop?*
- *We cannot afford it.*

7. Dave Krause - "Building Project - Follow Right Decision"

- *The board has been very forward.*
- *Process started in 2007.*
- *A lot of information out there.*
- *Concerned about taxes too.*
- *Constant intimidation, slander and posters is a bullying mentality*
- *Work towards a common cause.*
- *Citizens should run for a board seat*

8. Wilmer Everetts - "Agenda"

- *Disgusted Mahoning Township taxpayer*
- *Cannot trust the board.*
- *We are constantly fixing the high school.*
- *Architect firm was fired by Boyertown School District.*
- *We trusted the district to maintain existing buildings.*
- *Work together? We are ignored. Handed in a survey with over 900 signatures.*
- *\$52 million will increase. We will be 75-85 million in the hole.*
- *By the time we see savings, the buildings will be obsolete.*
- *All live in Lehighton except Mr. Cleaver.*
- *Taxpayers need to stick together.*
-

Jonathan Cleaver – we are not using funds – grants, rental of buildings, getting numbers from PFM

9. Terry Watto - "Class Size"

- *It's about the children.*
- *I empathize with taxpayers.*
- *Class sizes*
- *Was a teacher for 40 years, 9-21 students is better*
- *Bigger is not always better*
- *Major opponent of Common core*
-

Gloria Bowman – PA Core standards have been adopted. K-2/3 not to exceed 21 students per class.

Bill Hill – feasibility study at Parts A & B at this point

Jonathan Cleaver – design committees will be sitting down to discuss this. Will meet and get package together for each level. Notes will be filtered to board

Bill Hill – wants all minutes from the Design Committee in hard copy one week ahead of time. Needs facts and figures to make intelligent decision.

Jonathan Cleaver – we will keep board and community up-to-date. PFM presentation in October. Previous was based on JR/SR high concept. PFM will present at Finance meeting tomorrow night at 5:00 pm

Rocky Ahner addressed Mr. Bradley - There were people on the board who did not vote for the millage increase. There are 300 school district in Plan Con. LASD – are we submitted?

Jonathan Cleaver – yes, only submitted. PlanCon is not approved.

Bill Hill – knows people in Harrisburg. Heard that moratorium is a small window. PlanCon is a political ploy by Governor Corbett.

Adjournment -

Next regular scheduled meeting is the regular meeting on Monday, August 25, 2014.

MOTION by Mr. Wentz, SECONDED by Mr. Ahner to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

Roll Call Vote:

	Yes	No	Absent	Abstention
Mr. Wayne Wentz, Member	X	☐	☐	☐
Mr. Andrew Yenser, Member	X	☐	☐	☐
Mr. Rocky Ahner, Member	☐	X	☐	☐
Mr. William J. Hill, Jr., Member	☐	X	☐	☐
Mr. Stephen Holland, Member	X	☐	☐	☐
Mrs. Lori Nothstein, Member	☐	X	☐	☐
Mr. Hal Resh, Vice-President	☐	X	☐	☐
Mr. Larry Stern, Member	☐	☐	X	☐
Mrs. Gloria Bowman, President	☐	X	☐	☐

VOTE: YES - 3 NO - 5 ABSENT - 1 ABSTENTIONS - _____ Motion Denied.

At approximately 8:50 p.m., after several warnings, Mr. David Bradley was asked to leave. He was escorted out by the Lehighon Police Department.

Bill Hill – we need to hear questions from the floor. We are not following Robert's Rules

Questions from the Floor Permitted.

1) **Thomas Merkel**

- a. *Encourages everyone to come back to meetings.*
- b. *Vast majority does not want this.*
- c. *Report of meeting cancelled tonight? Not sure if it was true.*
- d. *Hell to pay down the road.*
- e. *People stand together. All about democracy.*

2) **Frank (could not understand last name)**

- a. *From the Independent Gazette*
- b. *Have we looked at the Jericho plan?*
- c. *Has architect been paid?*

Jonathan Cleaver - It will be 2017-18 when taxpayers see savings. Millage impact is only in relation to debt service. We have not entertained the Jericho plan.

3) **Rick Blocker**

- a. *Local business man for 30 years.*
- b. *If Corbett pulls the plug, who pays?*
- c. *I've paid enough taxes.*

4) **Nathan Andreas**

- a. *What will happen to the 4 buildings?*
- b. *How many old buildings do we need in Lehighon?*

Jonathan Cleaver – We can have a straight lease with the IU that would cover all costs. Also a possibility of selling old buildings.

Nathan Andreas -

- c. *Energy efficiency in each building?*

Jonathan Cleaver – 3 of the buildings do not have natural gas. Mechanical systems need to be repaired.

Nathan Andreas -

- d. 5 children (4 in the district) – they are getting a great education even with the class size.

Jonathan Cleaver – some students transition to all 4 building because of their needs.

5) **Wilmer Everetts** – *hold meetings elsewhere.*

Hal Resh – when public exceeds seating, add more seats or move venue

Motion by Resh, second by Ahner to supply more seats for community.

VOTE: YES - 8 NO - _____ ABSENT - 1 ABSTENTIONS - _____

Motion carried.

6) **Robert Dagos**

- a. *Owens a building in Lehigh*
- b. *Taxes up by \$1,000.*
- c. *Will parents have more influence over what children are being taught?*
- d. *Homeschools his children.*
- e. *Will new model be better?*

Hal Resh - board had a presentation from ESU and they said how great our small elementary buildings were.

7) **Roksolana Lucy**

- a. *Bill Hill should make a motion to have everything in writing 1 week ahead.*

8) **William Glawe**

- a. *Lehigh resident*
- b. *Raise my taxes 30%? Cannot afford.*
- c. *People do not want this...listen to the public.*
- d. *Put it to a vote.*

Jonathan Cleaver – not looking to put it to a referendum.

Gloria Bowman – there is reinforcement that we are going in the right direction.

9) **Frank Tamburri**

a. *Buildings with direct leases...do they pay taxes?*

Bill Schwab – it depends who is renting. If a non-profit, no taxes.

10) **Glenn Claypoole**

a. *Went to a 1-room school house, now there are 20-room school houses.*

b. *Put to public vote.*

Rocky Ahner – there are people who want to get involved in this.

Renovate vs. building new. We've skipped a step. I thought geo-thermal was next to nothing (cost)?

Feasibility study says April 2014, we just received it last week.

Adjournment -

MOTION by Mr. Wentz, SECONDED by Mr. Holland to adjourn the meeting at 9:23 p.m.

VOTE: YES - 8 NO - _____ ABSENT - 1 ABSTENTIONS - _____

Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted



Brian Feick
Board Secretary

(Minutes of August 11, 2014 include Pages 1 through 10)