

# Lehighton Area School District

Lehighton, Pennsylvania

Special Meeting of School Board  
Monday, November 17, 2011 at 7:00PM  
Executive Session @ 6:00 p.m.

## Minutes

### Pledge of Allegiance

**Call to Order -** A special meeting of the Lehighton Area School Board was held in the Auditorium of the High School on the above date and called to order at 7:10 p.m.

### Roll Call -

|                                               | Present                  | Absent                   |
|-----------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Mrs. Tina Dowd, Member                        | X                        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mr. Duane Eidem, Member                       | X                        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mr. John T. Finnegan, Member                  | X                        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mr. William Hill, Jr., Member                 | X                        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mr. Hal Resh, Member                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | X -                      |
|                                               | Arrived at 8:10 p.m.     |                          |
| Mr. Larry Stern, Vice-President               | X                        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mr. Wayne Wentz, Member                       | X                        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mr. Andrew Yenser, Member                     | X                        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mr. Dave Krause, President                    | X                        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mr. Michael Malay Jr., Business Manager       | X                        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mr. James Kraky, Superintendent               | X                        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Attorney William Schwab, Solicitor            | <input type="checkbox"/> | X                        |
| Ms. Bonnie Cortese, Recording Board Secretary | X                        | <input type="checkbox"/> |

### \*\*Notice of Executive Session

### Procedure for this evening -

The procedures for the meeting were reviewed. (Attached)

**Presentations -**

1. **EI Associates (Mark Barnhardt / Leah Shiley) - Building Program Proposal**  
PowerPoint
2. **Public Financial Management (Scott Shearer)**

**Question & Answer Session / Courtesy to the Floor / Community Comments - 7:51 p.m.**

1. **Tom Fabian** – 2012 the pensions are due where is the money coming from. 5 year projection we have it built in. PFM provides this. We are confident we can meet these pension increases. Built into the model. Knew it was coming 2-3 years ago (Dave).
2. **Wallace Putkowski** – How justify 35 million on tax base? Value of homes going down. Massive reassessment down? Based on 4-5 years ago when houses were selling at higher rates. Reassessment to equalize. Have you considered this? Dave – I don't know if there are any assessments. 2.34% interest rate cannot stay this low. 10-12% inflation on currency. PFM is assuming 1% higher than today's rate.
3. **Bob Aaron** – bad economy.
4. **James Sandt** – can a strict cost over run limit be built into the contract? Limit our exposure to cost. When you accept a bid that is the bid for the project.

5. **Dan Rossino** – current or graduated (4). I understand need. Why tonight? We have a new board member joining in December. This process started in 2006. We didn't just decide last week. We started having problems with facilities (start taking a serious look). Replacement, etc. Brought in an architect. Add up all things that needed repair. Full scale assessment of buildings. We put monies into our buildings. Full feasibility study district wide 2008. 2009 PFM long-range financial cost. April 2009 first report by EI. 2010 presentation on repairs. Got community involved. Project for 5-6 years, not just last week. Included the community. Gotten to this point.
6. **David Bradley** – Why is the feasibility study not correct? Comprehensive study done by professional outfit. Business owner, taxpayer, children in district. ADA requirement 2005 after ADA 1995. \$38,000 to make it compliant. ½ million dollars of case work in science department. Why did you not review the feasibility assessment and correct the errors now. Why are you pushing it through when it is already flawed? Flawed feasibility information. Fix it until next week. Page 385, 158. Flaws in feasibility study – many – we go through each building and review on current codes. 20 years ago the ADA codes may have been different. Without looking at specific item. You can build a building today and requirements change. Building is grandfathered until work in the building is done. We site those things. Don't need to be fixed unless there is renovations. It's a shaft. Forum for your antics. I asked a questions and did not receive an answer. I have a right to get an answer to our question.
7. **Mary Bisbing** – Mr. Bradley – November 15. Hard act to follow. Increasing thin walls state of economy experiencing today. Long term effects on the community. Common sense are out the window with our hard earned money. How many more families lose houses, displaced? One more frivolous expenditure. Fewer problems and home than infant building. Haste in building high school. Take care of it tomorrow. Tomorrow has come. Have not handled responsibilities. Unwitting taxpayers. Not a wealthy or large school district. Nothing makes sense in this debacle. Across the state school programs are being axed due to Corbetts cuts. Sports music programs here we are spending. Demise of school district. Oxymoron way of doing things. Tax monies from people living out of district. Taxpayers will pay for it. Propose a referendum, not disconnected members of the board.

8. **Beth Beers** – Franklin with open mind. I'm against building a new joint structure. 2 schools tied together is not good for small children. No bullying tolerance – enabling this. On bus together. Not a good comparison. Self contained box in assigned seats. Not mingling with each other. If each is its own entity. Saving money with shared space. 1 mill per year. Research regarding free/reduced lunch. Irresponsible and wasteful to not have plan for the middle school.
9. **Bob Zellner** – concern – exaggeration to make this building project better. If that was exaggerated several times how many things are being exaggerated to validate this.
10. **Chris Bauer** – Franklin – 2 students – evaluation – was a performance or escrow – EPA by federal government – 4 bullet points – energy service company to evaluate building. Turnkey service – energy audit – comprehensive measure – fit needs of facility – renewable – water conservation. Project finances – long term financing. Guarantee – savings produced by project. Federal Government – 36 page article
11. **Eric Solt** – Lehighton – elementary schools old – upgrades were the same. All the elementary building how bad they were. High school and middle school. Tie up all the monies in the HS and MS what will happen to the elementary buildings. How do they get fixed? It's a process (Dave). Come up with money for elementary schools? All schools are approaching 20 years in renovation. Every 20 years they renovate building. Each building carries a reimbursement. Elementaries are eligible for state reimbursement. A lot of districts have buildings on 20 year cycle. Upgrade buildings every 20 years to get state reimbursement. In previous meeting MS became the priority. The next phase in the future will be elementary buildings.

12. **Tracy Newton** – JT School District – K-8 housed in one building – they try to keep children separate , but it doesn't happen. Taxes are a concern. Lehighton spoke to other districts to see how the combination is working? Administrators, cafeteria, busing, counselors how operation opens day-to-day? Proposal that is voted on please check out other buildings. Don't believe that big of age span is good. EI – these are separate facilities – kids not in same classes (Mr. Kraky). Sharing kitchen, but 2 separate cafeterias. Absolutely no kids together. Kids will be separate. I hope so because the drug/alcohol mental issue – county-wide issue. Develop in their own space at their own time.
13. **Lester Miller** – Treasurer – How much money the district has on hand? Millage and income district gets is there an excess/left over? Does the millage have to go up if there are funds at this time? Millage increase. We are constantly looking for cuts. We have \$2.3 million dollars 10 million as assigning to PSERS increase over next 5-10 years. Fund balance is needed. State figures out how to fix this we could use the monies toward the project. Staying below act 1-1.08 mills.
14. **Chris Saunders** – Numbers again. Looking at presentations – deficiencies in occupancy in elementary. This HS is building sinking? Is this in the feasibility study;. Can you logically build on to a building that is sinking?
15. **Ethan** – any way to be left in the people's hand -referendum. Taxpayers hands in final judgment. Ballot? Voters decision. Elect officials to represent you. Public meetings formed committee to expand representation.
16. **Betty Wolfe** – Franklin – 2 grandchild – very scared for 10 years down the road. We are forgetting our focus is our children – renovate the building – losing track – can't get 10 cents for the drug programs. Kids are our lives. Before you vote you stop and think how you want these children raised. Kids are most important asset. Scared for kids. Hate to be raising children now. In school out of site. Need education and structuring. Finnegan – drug/alcohol – teacher and aides problems when they want a raise. Once it is built we will still have

17. **Alan Heil** – Paper in last three years – depression – unemployment high – foreclosures at all time him. Barely able to pay taxes now. Stop paying real estate taxes completely. Best way to do is now. We are the state.

**Finance -**

**Act 1** MOTION by Mr. Eidem , SECONDED by Mr. Yenser, to approve the Act 1  
**Resolution** Resolution #11/12 - 02.  
**#11/12-02**  
**Approved** Roll Call Vote:

|                                 | Yes                      | No                       | Absent                   | Abstention               |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Mr. Larry Stern, Vice-President | X                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mrs. Tina Dowd, Member          | X                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mr. Duane Eidem, Member         | X                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mr. John Finnegan, Member       | X                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mr. William J. Hill, Member     | <input type="checkbox"/> | X                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mr. Hal Resh, Member            | <input type="checkbox"/> | X                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mr. Wayne Wentz, Member         | <input type="checkbox"/> | X                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mr. Andrew Yenser, Treasurer    | X                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mr. Dave Krause, President      | X                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

VOTE: YES - 6 NO - 3 ABSENT - \_\_\_\_\_ ABSTENTIONS - \_\_\_\_\_  
Motion carried.

**Resolution #11/12 -03** MOTION by Mr. Eidem, SECONDED by Mrs. Dowd, to approve Resolution #11/12 - 03 to authorize Architect, EI Associates, to prepare and submit PlanCon A (Project Justification) and PlanCon B (Schematic Design) to the Department of Education for the project known as Alterations and Additions to Lehigh Area Middle School - High School, the project listed as Option 5 in the District-Wide Feasibility Study, dated January 2011.

Roll Call Vote:

|                                 | Yes                      | No                       | Absent                   | Abstention               |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Mrs. Tina Dowd, Member          | X                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mr. Duane Eidem, Member         | X                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mr. John Finnegan, Member       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | X                        |
| Mr. William J. Hill, Member     | <input type="checkbox"/> | X                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mr. Hal Resh, Member            | <input type="checkbox"/> | X                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mr. Wayne Wentz, Member         | <input type="checkbox"/> | X                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mr. Andrew Yenser, Treasurer    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | X                        |
| Mr. Dave Krause, President      | X                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mr. Larry Stern, Vice-President | X                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

VOTE: YES - 4 NO - 3 ABSENT -        ABSTENTIONS - 2

Solicitor reminded the Board that in financial matters a majority "yes" vote of 5 is required to pass the motion.

Motion failed.

**Adjournment -**

**Next meeting is a regular meeting scheduled for Monday, November 21, 2011.**

MOTION by Mr. Eidem, SECONDED by Mrs. Dowd, to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 p.m.

VOTE: YES - 2 NO -        ABSENT -        ABSTENTIONS -       

Respectfully submitted

  
J. Michael Malay, Jr.  
Board Secretary

(Minutes of November 17, 2011 include Pages 1 through 7)

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# LEHIGHTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

James A. Kraky, Superintendent  
Bonnie M. Cortese, Administrative Assistant  
1000 Union Street, Lehigh, Pennsylvania 18235  
Telephone: 610-377-4490 Fax: 610-577-0035

*"Partnering with students, families, and community to provide opportunities for life-long success through academic excellence and individual growth in a safe and supportive environment."*

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## WRITTEN QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS

### GUIDELINES

1. Please limit to one (1) question or comment at a time. Please submit written question. Questions will be read publicly and answered in public setting.
2. Repeated questions will not be re-answered.
3. Personal attack questions will not be read.
4. Courtesy to the Floor - Please limit the amount of time to three (3) minutes so others get to speak as well.
5. No attacks on any individuals will be tolerated.
6. Unruly behaviors will be asked to leave the meeting.

Your cooperation is appreciated.

*"Educating together to prepare our students for life's journey."*

*"Together We Can"*