

BOT Meeting Thursday May 23, 2024 Minutes

Board Members in Attendance: Jim Sander, Lucas Doe, Robert Ansbro, Ted Hurwitz (Ex-Officio)

Absent: Sean Blackwell

Administrators in attendance: Norma Hurwitz, Eddie Kubina

Guests in Attendance: David Haller (Owner's Rep)

Meeting Called to Order by Christopher Brignola 6:42pm

I. Approval of minutes

- Lucas motioned to approve the minutes, Christopher seconds, all in favor

II. New Building Project Updates

- David reported that the issue with extra money being requested by the architect was settled for less than expected. They will now be more likely to sign off on items that were slowing down the completion of the project. It was an amicable conclusion.
- Signature is now slowing things down a bit, but progress is being made. Another 3 or 4 weeks may be needed for the DOB permits. Some items have been signed off.
- Norma requested a temporary use document for summer school. David informed an inspector will come to look at the building. It should be good to get the temporary use permit. It would be for the first four floors. An elevator permit is needed first. In order to get the elevator permit, negotiations need to take place.
- Signature is likely looking for extra money, they will probably want around \$30,000. This would help with the elevators being signed off and other items. We need to move on these items as there is not a lot of time left, especially to start summer school.
- Lucas inquired about the timeline and David responded that it is always changing. Right now it is the middle of June, but there is no guarantee. We should be able to get the temporary occupancy permit though.
- The engineer should also start to do a better job now that the issue with the architect was resolved. The architect has control over the engineer. The settlement with the architect was about \$110,000 less than first thought.
- The fire alarm inspection had about 9 defects. This is normal and will be worked on. David is working on getting it done more quickly. A professional engineer will work on the defects and then fix the issues. It is now moving forward.
- Plumbing inspection is done. Gas is still being worked on as some drawings were mislabeled. It will be fixed. Gas is already in the building, ConEd can then turn the gas on. We should have gas in about 2-3 weeks. Then kitchen staff can start coming into the building.
- The elevator is the main issue right now.

III. Education

- Math and science exams went well. The computer based testing went smoothly. Students likely did well on math and science. The science exam seemed fair. Students might have slightly lower grades than last year as there was no performance exam. They usually perform well on that part. Fifth grade were taking the test for the first time so it is difficult to tell how well they did. However, teachers and students seemed as if they felt good about the test.
- The math test was not difficult for any grade in middle school. Most classes likely did well. Seventh grade students looked as if they did well. Sixth grade students seemed like they did well. Fifth and eighth grade students had computer based testing and the interface was easy to use. Most felt confident about their exams. Fourth grade teachers expressed concern about day two of the math exam. They felt students did very well on day one, but day two seemed challenging. Third grade teacher felt students did okay on their math exam.
- Christopher added about growth modeling, the state is looking into growth as opposed to efficiency. CBT is working out. We need to look into using more than just in house testing. He stated we are doing a good job. We have begun using NWEA which provides testing that will help with computer based tests moving forward. We have to work on offering regents exams for 8th graders. We need to offer music, drama, and other after school programs.
- There are plans to have a music and drama program next year for after school. Having regents as an option for eighth graders is a good idea and will be implemented. We are also looking to have a soccer and possibly a football team. The football team will require a lot and may not be started until the 2025-2026 school year.
- Norma stated that Eddie and Adam Berg are familiarizing themselves with the elementary students and staff to help change the way students are learning. Want to move more toward project based learning and it has not been happening in the past. It is hopeful that they will start to move in the right direction and implement changes. Adam Berg has a good handle on literature. Adam Berg, Adam W, Eddie, and the fifth grade teachers (Ms. Ivelisse and Ms. Christy) will help to move the elementary staff forward and use project based learning. It will be a major change, but the goal is to get the third and fourth grade to move forward. There has been a lot of transition, especially in fourth grade, we are working on having more stability as we have in our middle school. We want to harness energy and try to compete with a very large group of schools. Eddie has been working closely with two organizations to revamp our website. There is a meeting with a videographer. We are looking to help get the word out about our school. The sign we had on 145th street is being taken over by another charter school. Will be doing more advertising, we are advertising in the cross county center. Staff is going out into the community to put out the word for our school. There is a lot of competition. It is possible that only half of new enrollment will attend. We will reduce kindergarten and first grade to one class each. There will be two classes in every other grade level. We may use a co-teaching model in 3rd and 4th. We are expecting sixty nine newly enrolled students and we have 53 students graduating and leaving us. Teachers have become used to low enrollment. They should understand that it is not sustainable.

IV. High School Proposal

- The way the original proposal was formatted did not give enough clarity and was difficult to navigate. The pacing was not well aligned. A lot was added to various parts of the proposal. A snapshot view of the curriculum was added. It was made clear that the curriculum was fully developed for each grade level. There is more clarity now about what is contained in the proposal and where it is located. Each document was improved visually as well. It was reviewed thoroughly for grammatical errors and formatting issues.

V. Finance

- Lucas was happy with the negotiation that took place. A lot of money was saved.
- There was nothing new to report.

VI. Real Estate

- Everything on the real estate end sounds good. David is doing a good job with the new building and helping things move along.

Board Members voted on nominations officers. Current candidates were nominated for the same positions on board.

Meeting adjourned 7:42pm