

**SCHOOL DISTRICT OF BOROUGH OF MORRISVILLE
Morrisville, Pennsylvania**

A special meeting of the Morrisville Board of School Directors was held in the Large Group Instruction room located in the Morrisville Middle/Senior High School, 550 West Palmer Street, Morrisville, Pennsylvania on Tuesday, July 15, 2008, after due notice of the meeting had been given as required by law. Mr. William Hellmann, President, called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm with the following members present on roll call:

Mrs. Heater; Mr. Hellmann; Mr. Farrell; Mrs. Reithmeyer; Mr. Radosti, Mr. Buckman; Mrs. Worob and Mrs. Mihok. Mr. Kemp was not in attendance.

Quorum Present.

Also attending this evening's meeting was Dr. Elizabeth Hammond Yonson, Superintendent; Mrs. Reba Dunford, Business Administrator and Michael Fitzpatrick, Esq., Solicitor.

Mr. Hellmann requested the board adjourn for an executive session to discuss a personnel issue.

Mrs. Reithmeyer questioned why there was no 24-hour prior notice. Mr. Hellmann commented that sometimes things come up and have to be addressed quickly. Dr. Yonson advised she also did not know about this executive session. As Superintendent she would appreciate being informed about executive sessions. Mr. Hellmann stated the executive session would be deferred until after the meeting and if it could not be held tonight it was no big deal.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Yonson advised that Mrs. Gehrens, high school principal, has submitted a letter of resignation. She is going to Bristol Twp. to serve as Supervisor of Curriculum and Instruction. She asked that the HR Committee set up a meeting to discuss how this vacancy will be addressed. Members of the committee will advise Dr. Yonson of possible meeting dates early next week.

PUBLIC SESSION

Johanny Manning, 449 Stockham Ave.

Since the RFP for boilers was changed from 3 to 2 schools Mrs. Manning asked if we are looking at the needs at M. R. Reiter. Do we have a plan? Wick Fisher White stated we should have a plan before decisions are made on what is going to be fixed or not fixed. The other engineers at the meeting hinted at this also. Fixing the burners is a great start to addressing building needs but it does not address other issues that may be unknown without a plan. Why now? Every engineer at the meeting said it could not be done by the start of school; that it would take about 7 months. We should continue to research and make a better educated decision.

Kevin Leather, 480 Hamilton Blvd.

Mr. Leather commented that once again Mr. Hellmann was acting alone and others were following him like sheep. *He was asked to refrain from personal attacks.* You are rushing another vote that doesn't need rushing. You didn't tell the public or other board members about the \$2.4 million cost of defeasance. Ten years ago heating and odor problems existed at Reiter. How do you explain not addressing this now?

Have you opened this community to lawsuits since you unilaterally changed the 12 bids received to two schools? Do these other bidders know that you made this change? If they do not then you accepted their bids under false pretense. Did you tell the bidders you accepted that this was changed to two schools?

The transparent board, the community plan – it's not happening.

Jon Perry, 43 Fairview Ave.

I find it ironic that the same people who complained about the previous board rushing to judgment and ramming things down people's throats now seem to be on the verge of the same things in decisions about our schools. You complained about not being listened to; now you're not listening when asked to slow down. Please prove me wrong and show some independence in your actions.

John Cenaviva, 467 Stockham

“On June 25 the board approved an RFP to have engineering firms replace heating systems in 3 buildings. Somewhere around July 2 Mr. Hellmann single-handedly decided that the board approved RFP was not what the firms should be bidding on. Mr. Hellmann decided that MR Reiter did not deserve fixing. He doesn't care about the children that go to that school. Why does he hate those kids? What doesn't he care of their heating system fails? Why is he saving taxpayer money at the expense of freezing children? We don't know; we'll never know. Mr. Hellmann doesn't answer such questions. He is above such questions. He doesn't answer to anyone. He's not responsible to anyone; not to the taxpayers; not to the lawyers; not to the fellow board members – no one. His response at the meeting on Tuesday was – if you can get the votes for M. R. Reiter, then get them. It tells me that the puppets on a string will vote as he wants but the children be damned. All the engineering firms agreed on two things: (1) it's impossible to get a new heating system by September; (2) it takes about 30 weeks to get a new heating system. If school ends in the middle of June then 30 weeks is somewhere near November. What's the rush? I thought this school board was going to be smart about our tax dollars. What's the hurry? Here's my guess – there's a boat ~~vote~~ somewhere. The only good suggestion came from the firm of Wick Fisher White who suggested that an architect come up with a plan for the future – not a band-aid. But Mr. Hellmann knows that all architects do is build new; that's all architects do. Architects can't be trusted. But someone who changes what has been agreed upon by the board can be? Trust me, I'm a CPA, I'm the smartest guy in the room. Now watch my puppets dance.”

Damon Miller, 249 W. Franklin St.

I agree with what others have said this evening. I question the rush for a decision. Two or three months ago administration advised that if you wanted to act on the boilers it needed to be done soon otherwise it won't be done in time. The board was dragging its feet at that time and now it is too late. We will now go through another season without boiler work. Since there has been a change it doesn't seem fair to not let the bidders submit another proposal. We have vendors that have been weeded out by one member of the board and now we are making a rush decision for this job.

Sharon Hughes

“Accusations, accusations, Morrisville is filled with accusations. For the last 7 months I've heard everybody on this side of the audience (indicating with her hand the individuals seated to her right) do something – now they are saying stop. That doesn't seem to hold together for me. This is the beginning; there's nothing wrong a beginning. It's a good idea to begin; it's not finalized; this isn't the end; it's the beginning of something. For 50 years those boilers have pumped heat into those buildings. We're told the life of the boilers is 25 years. Well, for the last 25 years not one other school board has addressed this issue. This board is beginning to address this issue. I personally think it is a very good idea. They are trying to find solutions. Oh, that's right, the last school board did find a solution and the idea was to tear down 3 sound buildings, but then, you see, you got rid of the heaters at the same time. So that was a good idea. Charge the people of Morrisville about \$45 million and then when you add interest maybe \$50 - \$60 million but you know what we get new heaters out of it. But do you know what your heaters wouldn't be replaced yet. Those kids would still be in those buildings with these heaters. This is a beginning. It's not prudent to go speeding ahead. Fix this, fix this, do that, do that. You don't have a final plan. You guys didn't come in here knowing everything 7 months ago. You are working at it. It gets tiring hearing, when people come up here and boo at you but that's okay. This problem should have been solved 10 years ago and it wasn't. You are beginning to address it; so I do applaud that. Just because you are putting boilers in 2 buildings does not preclude you doing anything else. You might put a boiler in another building. You might not. That's going to have to be your decision when you plan a little bit further ahead and get some finalized plans. It's prudent to go slowly before you know where you are headed. I keep saying it's a beginning, but it's a beginning. Please should applaud the beginning of this. I know that we do need heaters in the schools but I really think if the schools were cold, and I know if the schools were dangerous, the teachers' union, the strongest union in the country, would not be teaching in those cold, unsafe schools. So we do know the schools, like any large building, some rooms are warm, some rooms are colder. We were told last year that the heats wouldn't go through the year and they did. I wish they had been fixed 5 years ago. But this board is making a beginning and I do applaud it.”

Ron Stout, 129 S. Delmorr Ave.

“First I would like to commend Mr. Hellmann on his personal time. He doesn't get paid for this job. He lends his personal time to go in and investigate.”

Shout out from the audience (this recorder did not recognize voice/not shown on camera)

“(inaudible) kickbacks.” **At the meeting of August 27, 2008 the Board approved the addition of Addendum A to these minutes.**

Mrs. Worob

“Did you just say kickback?”

Shout out from audience (this recorder recognizing voice as Sharon Hughes/not shown on camera)

“He just said kickbacks. I want that on the record. I want that registered that that’s what he said.”

Mr. Stout

“Yeah, he’s filthy rich and gets kickbacks.”

Mr. Farrell

“Excuse me. Let Mr. Stout speak. This is a problem. We have these little inserts. This is a merry-go-round. It goes round and round. Let the gentleman speak.”

Mr. Hellmann

(Pointing at the audience) “Quiet, you’re going.”

Mr. Stout

“You heard a statement here tonight – 10 years ago they had trouble with the heating systems in the schools. How long do they want to postpone this to get it going, ya know? To get a visual perceptive of where we’re going with these heating systems. They have a bunch of lay people here in the audience (indicating with his hand individuals sitting on his right). They know nothing about heating systems. I seen most of them at the meeting. They know nothing about heating systems but they have architects and engineers sitting there telling them”

Mrs. Worob

“I’m sorry, can we have some point of order. (Pointing at the audience on her left) I saw what you just did to Ms. Hughes, okay. You are sitting there with your middle finger at her camera, okay. I do not appreciate that and I don’t think any student who is watching this meeting would appreciate that. Okay, if you want to act in that fashion, please leave the room.”

Mr. Stout

(Head turned and addressing the audience to his right) “If anybody wants to raise their middle finger to me, go ahead because I’ll break your arm.” *Mrs. Mihok questioned this comment – the tape was replayed and the comment confirmed.*

Mrs. Worob

“There are rules, Ron. There are rules, okay.”

Mr. Hellmann

(Striking the gavel) "One more time and you're gone. Go ahead, Ron, finish up."

Mr. Stout

(Pointing toward the audience to his right) "Apparently he ran for school board and he didn't get elected so he's a disgruntled school board member. Most of the people on this side, voting for them, they didn't get in."

(Pointing toward the audience to his left) "On this side here, there's nobody here; this is basically the taxpayer's area. We have nobody here because they have no complaints. They're happy with what you're doing. I would say, keep up the good work. You know, right here, well, anyhow keep up the good work and (pointing to the audience on his right) don't listen to anybody on this side."

Gayle Haug, Harper Ave.

Ms. Haug reiterates what others have said tonight. She does not think it is right that Mr. Hellmann changed the action decided by a vote of the board without telling anyone. Members of the board should be upset that things are being done without their knowledge. You will continue to be criticized until the other members of the board step up and think for themselves and take a stance. It is ridiculous what goes on; voting and changing things. Sooner or later the legal issue will catch up with you.

Since this is not going to happen immediately I suggest taking Wick Fisher White's advice and get a plan. At least Mr. Hellmann has a plan although I don't personally agree with it. Research it and come back and let us know in an open manner. The kids at Reiter are going to be cold and it is difficult to be productive when you are cold.

Response to Public Comment:

Mr. Farrell

I have 40 years experience around equipment and I was the one who suggested we go out to bid. Once you have your engineering specs we will know what is needed. Unfortunately, it won't be done this winter but get it in place so that everything is ready to go once the change over begins. Mr. Farrell is in favor of gas heat.

Mr. Buckman

Mr. Buckman expressed concerns about Reiter's heating issues. There was a discussion about modular heating at Tuesday's meeting; we need to keep this in mind. He thanked Mrs. Heater for information she distributed tonight.

Mrs. Reithmeyer

EI Assoc. submitted a proposal. When Mr. Hellmann changed it they removed their proposal. Will this affect us in the future? Probably, this is the 2nd time they have given us a proposal.

Mrs. Mihok

- At the meeting it was noted that the HVAC would be the next step.
- I've been coming to these meetings since 1983 and I never saw Mr. Leather at the microphone complaining about his children being cold.
- The suggestion of modular emergency heating units sounded interesting.
- I don't think this is a rush to judgment; this is a beginning. For the last 6 months we have pouring over the budget to see what funds are available to do these renovations. Now that we have an idea, we will move forward.
- I wish we could have better behavior in this room. It is very disappointing.

Mrs. Heater

Advised that she has been extremely frustrated with the planning process. She has agreed from day one that a short term planned was needed. She has mentioned that we are going to be caught blind sided. The engineers did state that a plan is needed and it could not be done by the beginning of the school year. I struggled with some of the costs submitted. I asked the engineers to commit in writing that change orders would not go wild. Two responded. We haven't finished with our CAP meetings which have revealed that people want two schools. They don't want Mr. Hellmann's long term plan.

We have no choice but to go ahead with this now since boilers, etc. will need to be ordered and received in time to begin the work. However, I am concerned with Reiter. For now, the modular heater is a good alternative. We have a CAP meeting next week.

I won't be put in a position of being with a group of bullies. I research my position and say what I don't like. But it falls on deaf ears most times.

Mrs. Worob

In June the board did vote to go out for bids on 3 schools. I wanted to see Reiter included in that. I'd like to hear more about the modular heaters. It is sad that it will take so long to have this work completed. I do not want to see another winter to go by with a heating problem. This is the reason for tonight's meeting.

We are moving ahead with the CAP meetings. Mr. Hellmann presented his plan. We can use whole, part or none of his plan. This is why are meeting with members of the community. I hear criticisms that we are rushing – we are so we can get heat in the buildings. If this is the process and how long it takes I am sorry. I don't know how to go about getting this done sooner. We are trying to have a plan with the community we are moving slower. We are reaching out; we are trying. I truly listen to what you are saying. July 22 is our next CAP meeting.

Tim Lastichen

Our biggest problem is Reiter. I don't think it is worth putting a lot of money into. The floors are in bad shape and there are structural concerns. Even though it is not dangerous, I personally think it should be bulldozed. We can probably keep the heater going one more year. A modular unit is only a temporary fix.

Mr. Hellmann

As far as professional services are concerned, we do not have to have interviews. We can appoint anyone we want. We don't have to have facility meetings. We are just doing that to facilitate open disclosure.

Mr. Fitzpatrick

The procurement of professional services for any public agency is subject to public bidding requirement threshold of \$10,000. The board is required to choose the lowest responsible bidder. The matter before the board this evening is for the engagement of an engineering firm. This is considered a professional service and is an exception to the public bidding requirement. The board is permitted to hire the company it thinks will best serve the interest of the school district and its taxpayers. The board is free to choose whomever they want. It is best practice to issue an RFP. That happened here several months ago. A dozen firms or so responded. This is good practice over and above what the school code requires. I attended a portion of this meeting and it was an opportunity for the board and the public to talk to the professional they are going to engage, to negotiate price, to negotiate terms, to get a sense of the qualifications, background and experience. My advice would be to choose the best firm at the most reasonable price.

Mr. Hellmann & Mrs. Dunford

If the \$4 million bond money is not spent by November 2009 it will have to be defeased. Therefore, Mr. Hellmann stated we are running out of time. One engineering firm stated we would save 40% on heating costs.

Mrs. Heater stated that upgrading the heating systems will add value to the buildings if a decision to sell them is made in the future.

Mrs. Reithmeyer asked what happened to the 12 proposals. Mr. Hellmann replied that she could have looked at them.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Approval, Engineering Services for New Boilers

- 1.1. The Board approved a motion to accept and approve Vitetta to provide engineering services for the installation of new boilers in the Middle/High school, new outdoor reset controls and mixing valves for the middle/high school and Grandview elementary school and

for the installation of two new burners for the rear burners at Grandview elementary school in accordance with their letter proposal dated July 9, 2008

Moved by Hellmann, seconded by Mr. Radosti; passed by a roll call vote of 7 ayes; 1 nay. Member voting nay was Mrs. Reithmeyer.

Mr. Fitzpatrick advised that the proposal letter was for \$29,000 with reimbursable expenses. If the board chooses to expand the scope of work, it would be brought to the board for approval.

Mrs. Worob requested that Reiter be considered in this motion.

Mrs. Reithmeyer stated that at the May meeting a motion was passed to have WFW prepare specs for \$30,000 so we could advertise to have work done. This is more than we have ever paid for specs. Shortly after that a motion was passed to have Mrs. Dunford put out an RFP on the boilers for all 3 schools and change from oil to gas systems. The 2nd motion would make this motion obsolete, outdated and subsequently useless. At the July 9 facility meeting Mr. Joel of WFW talked about the "cursory" report they had provided in January. He then said "you need a plan." Not only do we not have a plan (Feasibility Study) we remove the possibility of getting any money from the state for work we do or have done on the buildings. On June 23 Mrs. Dunford supplied a list of 12 companies that submitted proposals for all 3 schools. Mr. Hellmann had the opportunity to review all of the proposals. And then, Mr. Hellmann made the decision on his own from information that he did not share with the rest of the board. He then chose 5 companies to present to the facilities committee. He then took it upon himself to change the proposal to include only the work at the high school and a little bit of work at Grandview. Mr. Hellmann isn't supposed to act alone. Mr. Hellmann isn't supposed to do anything absent board action. Yet, not unlike the previous times Mr. Hellmann has acted on his own – I'm sure we'll get an apology at some point. But until this board gets tired of him overriding our decisions I believe that's all you're going to get. I ask that the board not move forward with this at this time. Mr. Hellmann was very clear in May that he did not want to improve the elementary schools because he has a plan. He was also very clear at the facilities meeting. I feel if we accept this proposal now with the promise of an RFP going out for just the elementary schools that it will be forgotten and pushed aside because Mr. Hellmann has a plan – not necessarily the board's plan, but his plan.

Mrs. Dunford explained that she sent out an RFP to replace boilers in all 3 schools, as instructed. When you got the proposals some of them gave me dollars and some gave me percentages of construction. I could not compare apples to apples because they didn't agree. I suggested to Mr. Hellmann to contact these people and ask them to submit their proposal one way or another so that we could compare. We didn't do that.

- 1.2. The Board approved a motion to request Vitetta to assess the M. R. Reiter school building for the boiler/heater system and to get back to the board with their findings.

Moved by Mrs. Worob; seconded by Mr. Buckman; passed by a unanimous roll call vote of 8 ayes.

2.0. Adjournment

The Board approved a motion to adjourn this meeting around 8:30 pm.

William R. Hellmann, President

Marlys Mihok

See Addendum A incorporated into these minutes by approval of the School Board at the at the August 27, 2008 meeting of the Board of School Directors.

Transcribed by Jeanne Corrigan

August 27th, 2008

We, the undersigned, attended the July 15th, 2008 Morrisville Borough School District Special School Board Meeting. When Mr. Ronald Stout addressed the board during the public session portion of the meeting he began his statement saying "First I would like to commend Mr. Hellmann on his personal time. He doesn't get paid for this job. He lends his personal time"...Mr. Stout was interrupted by Mr. John Ceneviva shouting out of turn from the audience. Mr. Ceneviva said "not until he gets his kickback".

As witnesses to this statement by Mr. John Ceneviva we request that his slanderous remark be reflected as heard in the official minutes of the Morrisville School Board July 15th, 2008 Special School Board Meeting.

Respectfully submitted this day by;

Print Name

Signature

Ronald M. STOUT

Ronald M. Stout

John B. BUCKMAN

John B. Buckman

MARLYS MIHOK

Marlys Mihok

via

ADDENDUM #

A

over

Print Name

Brenda Woods

Bill & Alton

William Hellmuth

Alfred A. Radosti

Sharon Hughes

Signature

Brenda Woods

Bill & Alton

William Hellmuth

Alfred A. Radosti

Sharon Hughes