South Fayette Township School District

Committee Meeting of the Whole

Minutes

Tuesday, March 15, 2016
7:00 PM

The Committee Meeting of the South Fayette Township Board of School Directors was called to order at 7:08 PM in the Pride Room in the Administration Building by President Bill Newcomer with the Pledge of Allegiance. President Newcomer announced the Board held an Executive Session prior to the start of the meeting to discuss legal issues.

Present: Teresa Burroughs, Jen Iriti, Todd Petrillo, Alan Vezzi, Alex Czaplicki, Lena Hannah, Len Fornella, Paul Brinsky, Bill Newcomer

Others: Fred Wolfe, Tucker Arensberg, P.C.; Dr. Bille P. Rondinelli, Superintendent; Assistant Superintendent Dr. Michael Loughead; Director of Finance/HR Brian Tony; Assistant Director of Finance Maria Brewer Aguilar; Director of Pupil Personnel Dr. Mandi Davis Skerbetz; Director of Maintenance Dean Stewart; Director of Transportation Donna Harshman; Network Systems Administrator Gene Manzini; Teachers Emily Bigley, Noelle Gagliardino, Nicole Bobrzynski, and Wesley Chappel; Jeremy Beatty, Eckles Architecture; David Esposito, Eckles Architecture; Joe Brennan, PJ Dick; Jim Spezialetti, Joe Horowitz, Nick Rodi, Gwen Rodi, Lisa Malosh, Bill Sittig, Eishan Ashwat, Ryan Eggleston, and Cynthia Geisler, Superintendent’s Assistant/Board Secretary

Joe Brennan, PJ Dick provided the Board with an update on the High School Additions and Alterations Project. Areas reviewed included:

- Invoices billed to date totaling $449,544.06
- No change orders to date
- A possible cost savings due to the expansion of the ceiling bulkheads not needed
- Summary of awarded contracts
- Substantial completion scheduled for August 18, 2017
- Full and final completion scheduled for September 22, 2017
- General contractor – site work continues, caisson drilling will begin week of March 14
- Electrical contractor – continues installing main conduit above ceiling on 1st floor
- Plumbing contractor – mobilized the site, excavation started for relocation of existing water line, but going slowly due to rocks. Final tie-ins will be done over spring break
- Technology/Communication contractor – mobilized the site, started pulling telecommunication wiring throughout 1st floors

The Board discussed the possible noise issue, Paige Franjione added the students are adapting.

David Esposito and Jeremy Beatty, Eckles Architecture reviewed two options to consider for the reconfiguration of the Middle School North Lot:

- Option 1 – 84 spaces for straight parking with 5 handicap accessible spots
- Option 2 – 61 spaces for angle parking with 5 handicap accessible spots

The Board asked if the angle parking will accommodate the staff. Mr. Manzini responded staff parking will not be affected; only event parking would be affected. Mr. Beatty concluded if the Board could make the decision soon to get the information to Pashek.
Mr. Beatty also reviewed the options to purchase a larger router. He continued there is a basic 4’x8’ router at an additional cost of $387 or a more reliable and functional 4’x8’ router at an additional cost of $5,489, which Dr. Rondinelli added would be required to work with the MIT program and be considered MIT certified. Mr. Esposito explained the electrical requirements depending on which router the Board would chose. The Board inquired when the decision regarding the router needs to be made. Mr. Brennan added they have a little bit of time as they are only in the foundation stages.

Emily Bigley, Elementary Teacher presented the fundraising idea in honor of Deb Kuntz, Elementary Enrichment teacher who passed away in February. She added Mr. Kuntz would like to start a scholarship fund with the proceeds. Wesley Chappel, Elementary Physical Education Teacher explained the fundraiser would be a Battle of the Buildings dodge ball tournament with a Chinese auction and 50/50 raffle. He added this would help promote health and fitness in the entire district.

Dr. Rondinelli announced the AIU Program of Services Budget is on the agenda for Board approval.

The following 2016-2017 Budgets were presented to the Board:
- Pupil Personnel – Dr. Mandi Skerbetz
- Maintenance – Dean Stewart
- Grounds – Gene Manzini
- Transportation – Donna Harshman

The Board discussed the impact of increased enrollment on the transportation department budget, including the purchase of larger busses to replace smaller busses, and the hiring of substitute drivers.

Dr. Rondinelli and Dr. Loughead presented to the Board a proposal to purchase, using a fair market value lease, 1,200 HP Revolves for incoming grades 3, 10, 11 and 12 and high school staff at a cost of $1,157.20 per device which includes carrying cases, decals, a stylus and care plan. Configuration costs were also discussed.

President Newcomer informed the public the South Fayette Township Commissioners were invited to tonight’s meeting to discuss the proposed plans for the Mayview property. The Board’s concern is the rezoning of the Mayview property and the financial and capacity impact of the Charter Homes plan on the District. He added other concerns are other developments that are rapidly growing and possible developments in the future.

Joe Horowitz, South Fayette Township Commissioner President first commented as a commissioner for the past 4 ½ years the lack of communication and understanding between the Township Commissioners and School Board has been frustrating and not sure why or how it started, but I hope to start anew. He added an example is that until the Charter Homes plan came about, he had no idea there was a capacity issue in the high school. There was nothing I could have done as a commissioner to address that because I didn’t know about it. The Pinnacle Point plan which was approved right before that; has serious issues that could have been dealt with and they were given some breaks with open sewers and not sure about that development. He continued the township didn’t get as much out of that as potentially from the Charter Homes development. If we had known potentially that this was an issue maybe we could have had discussions with some of the other developments that were already discussed here tonight. Those things are in the past and we are hoping for and started yesterday is a working relationship between the Boards. We had a joint sub-committee meeting yesterday between the South Fayette Township Commissioners, which there were two of us and some of the South Fayette School Board. I couldn’t have been happier with the way the meeting went with honest and frank discussions and it gave me hope for those meetings to continue in the future and to be able to work together. An obvious issue from the School District’s point of view, which we would like to assist with, is to figure out ways to limit growth so the capacity issues can be better dealt with. There are many ways that can be done, but I don’t pretend to know the best way, but now that I know we need to do it, the best way is to sit down together to discuss it and the sooner the better. The meeting was positive and productive and was the first of many such meetings to come, hopefully with representatives from both Boards. We
greatly appreciate the efforts of the School Board to come to that meeting as we consider future scenarios for developments in South Fayette. We look forward to meeting with each other a regular basis to find ways to join forces to ensure our community continues to thrive. I want to personally address some things I said at that meeting where I may have been out of line in regards to the School District not cooperating fully with that study. That was because I got some information at the last minute and I took it the wrong way and I spoke out of line and I sincerely apologize and I do appreciate you helping with the study. Hopefully you accept my apology in that regard. The Board accepted the apology.

President Newcomer added the Board is happy moving forward with how to control growth and the difference between the Township numbers and the District numbers. He continued if the Charter Homes development goes as defined in the presentation, the negative impact it will have on the District, both financially and capacity. The information from developers on existing plans such as the Berkshires, indicating 3 bedroom townhomes will not generate children and in the district’s experience that was not true. The Board is hoping for diversified housing types in the new plans.

Mr. Horowitz added the hope is to review the Charter Homes plan in detail with the Board and take the District’s past experiences back to Charter Homes. He added Charter Homes has been helpful in working with the Township and trying to work with the District and hopefully the township will do their best to ensure if Charter Homes proceeds in a responsible way or if Charter Homes does proceed with the plan there would be other ways to limit the growth in the Township to compensate for what happened with Charter Homes. Charter Homes is a unique situation for the township in that there is so much benefit that we don’t get with the Berkshires, Pinnacle Point or other developments; not the least of which is half of Fairview Park, the sub-service rights, a new entrance to Fairview Park and possibly an indoor recreation facility. One other thing I don’t understand yet because of LERTA is exactly what the commercial tax base will be in 3 and or 5 years. We don’t know with the other projects how, when or how much money will come in to the District and planning growth according to seeing that financial picture is important.

Mrs. Burroughs thanked everyone who attended yesterday’s meeting, adding it was a good meeting, ideas were discussed that will benefit the District’s involvement and Township participation and looking forward to it. She also thanked Mr. Tony for working on the numbers and added working in a spirit of collaboration is essential to the community.

Mrs. Iriti added after the conversation at yesterday’s meeting, there are potential solutions and modifications to that specific proposal and that it may still work for the District, Township and developers. She added strategic plan for growth is needed.

Mr. Horowitz added there is an extreme rate of turn-over of homes in the township. If something could be done to entice home owners to stay beyond their children graduating might help.

President Newcomer concluded this is an example of the problems faced with both the township and the school district and this is a good beginning as elected officials to best serve the community.

Bill Sittig, representing Charter Homes, watched some of the proceedings at the township level and I am happy to see there is a different spirit and moving in the right direction; we’ve been at this for two years now. We are hoping this can happen. I see Charter is on there and it would have been nice to be invited just to hear what is going on because it’s likely something is going on with you and to not hear directly, it would be nice to know about it. We are in the community for all bodies and the township and obviously for the schools and working with the schools whether its bus service or access or recreational facilities or parking facilities. We have made attempts by Rob Bowen particularly the CO, request as part of the process you talk about other land owner’s property in the Township. If they are going to do things with their land they are also to be part of that process. It’s not the fact ……… not just public works, there are land owners and families that are existing and that have had farms and property. I represent the Aloe Brothers and registered the mining application on the same property, the fact that something is going to
happen on that property, the Aloe’s didn’t buy it to hold it. It is a joint problem and putting it off and spending all that time while you’re doing this isn’t always the best solution. This is fortunate that Charter has been able to hang in there and also to be able to move forward quickly because we are involved in a court case now and the ..... case is kind of driving us and other pressures that are involved. We’d appreciate being part of the future discussions involving this project.

President Newcomer commented if the commissioners decide to go forward with the Charter Homes will they be open to some suggestions to help control the rate of students that come out of that, bussing is one the many issues we face.

Mr. Sittig added they have been at this for two years and we would like to have had this discussion earlier, in fact part of tonight .......... and I think we are part of that process.

Dr. Rondinelli concluded respectfully the District would like to have been at the table from the beginning, but this is a new day for everyone to be involved.

**Minutes**

The Board considered approval of minutes from the following Board Meeting:

Regular Board Meeting Tuesday, February 23, 2016

**Financial Reports**

The Financial Reports were provided to the Board for review and will be included on the agenda for approval at the Regular Meeting.

**Superintendent’s Monthly Report – Dr. Bille P. Rondinelli**

Dr. Rondinelli proudly announced the Middle School received the “Schools To Watch” Award at the state conference at Penn State on February 28. She also announced the following:

- HS musical Anything Goes was a great success and congratulations to all
- Global Passport Project students participated with Calgon at Avonworth and was featured on WESA radio
- Students participated with Carlynton, Quaker Valley and Keystone Oaks through a project with Parkway West CTC to design the courtyard for the EIC Building
- March 17, 18, 19 – Middle School musical Bye Bye Birdie, Young Performers Edition
- March 19 – Evening of Jazz
- March 23 – Snow make-up day for students
- March 24 – Snow make-up day for staff
- March 25 – Spring Break begins
- March 15 – Administrators attended a PIL/Act 48 workshop presented by Joe Clapper and Paul Healy

**Business Office**

1. The Superintendent, Director of Finance Brian Tony, and Director of Maintenance Dean Steward recommend Board approval to authorize the administration to advertise for bids for removal, supply, and replacement of a minimum of 27, 3-panel single hung window units in the Middle School.

The Board agreed to vote on the above motion at the end of the agenda.
2. The Board considered the recommendation of the Superintendent and Director of Finance Brian Tony for Board approval of the proposed 2016-2017 Allegheny Intermediate Unit Program of Services Budget in the amount of $2,021,185.00. The South Fayette Township School District contribution to the Program of Services Budget is estimated to be $32,737.00 and will be determined by PDE according to District Aid Ratio and Weighted Average Daily Membership (WADM).

3. The Board consider the recommendation of the Superintendent, Director of Finance Brian Tony, and Tax Collector Anne Beck for Board approval of the attached list of Real Estate Refunds due to reduction in assessment and/or overpayment.

**Personnel**

Personnel items were discussed in Executive Session.

**Education**

1. The Superintendent and Director of Technology and Innovation Aileen Owens recommend Board approval to permit Ms. Stephanie Deluca, Intermediate School STEAM Coordinator to attend the Deeper Learning Conference in San Diego, California from Tuesday, March 22, 2016 through Thursday, March 24, 2016. The Grable Foundation will support the airfare, lodging and conference registration. District costs will include a substitute teacher for three days, ground transportation and some meals.

2. The Superintendent recommends Board approval to permit Aileen Owens, Director of Technology and Innovation to attend the CoSN 2016 Annual Conference, Accelerating Success: Powered by an eLearning Culture, in Washington DC from Monday, April 4, 2016 through Thursday, April 7, 2016, at a cost not to exceed $1,300 (which includes travel, lodging, and meals). The cost of the conference is included in the 2015-2016 budget.

The Board agreed to vote on the two above motions at the end of the agenda.

3. The Board considered the recommendation of the Superintendent and High School Principal Aaron Skrbin for Board approval to permit Mr. Brian Garlick and Ms. Maureen Pedzwater to accompany 20 students to Seven Springs Ski Resort from Wednesday, April 13, 2016 through Friday, April 15, 2016, for the Pennsylvania Technology Student Association (TSA) State Competition. Students would be responsible for making up all school work during their absence. Appropriate adult to student ratios for supervision will be assured by the administration. The cost of the trip includes lodging, meals, and the conference registration fees.

4. The Board considered the recommendation of the Superintendent and High School Principal Aaron Skrbin for Board approval for Felix Yerace, High School Social Studies teacher to attend the National Association of Student Council’s (NASC) Region 2 Conference in Manchester, Maryland from Friday, April 15, 2016 through Sunday, April 17, 2016. The cost of registration, travel, lodging, meals, and a substitute teacher will be covered in the 2015-2016 budget.

5. The Board considered the recommendation of the Superintendent for Board approval for Middle School Principal Dave Deramo and a team of five to attend the 12th Annual Schools To Watch Conference in Arlington, Virginia from Wednesday, June 22, 2016 through Saturday, June 25, 2016. The purpose of this conference is to formally accept the Schools To Watch Award and be recognized at the national level. The cost of the trip includes registration, travel, lodging and meals.
6. The Board considered the recommendation of Superintendent and High School Principal Aaron Skrbin for Board approval to permit Assistant High School Principal Laura Hartzel to be the Administrative Chaperone to travel with the band to New York City, New York from Thursday, March 31, 2016 through Sunday, April 3, 2016 for their annual Band Trip. The trip was previously approved at the September 22, 2015 meeting.

**Transportation**

There were no additional items discussed. Dr. Rondinelli announced the 2nd round interviews are scheduled for March 16, with approximately 28 applicants.

**Athletics**

Coaching personnel items were discussed in Executive Session. Dr. Rondinelli announced the hockey team lost the championship game being played this evening, but overall had a great season; the Girls Basketball team had an outstanding year, winning their first WPIAL Championship but falling short in the playoff game on Saturday, Mikey Carr winning another WPIAL Wrestling Championship and participating in the State Wrestling Championships, and Trevor Mahoney also winning the WPIAL diving Championship.

**Construction**

There were no additional items discussed.

**Miscellaneous**

1. The Superintendent and Director of Pupil Personnel Dr. Mandi Skerbetz recommend Board approval to establish a Track and Field team to compete in the Special Olympics of Allegheny County (SOAC) Summer Games on May 14, 2016 at the Baldwin High School Stadium. There will be no cost to the District.

   The Board agreed to vote on the above motion at the end of the agenda.

2. The Board considered the recommendation of the Superintendent and Administrators for Board approval of the final reading of Board Policy 216 Student Records.

3. The Board considered the recommendation of the Superintendent and Administrators for Board approval of the final reading of Board Policy 317 Conduct/Disciplinary Procedures.

4. The Board considered the recommendation of the Superintendent and Administrators for Board approval of the second reading of Board Policy 916 School Volunteers.

5. The Board considered the recommendation of the Superintendent and Administrators for Board approval to accept the provided list of gifts/donations.

6. The Board considered the recommendation of the Superintendent for Board approval to nominate Joyce A. Snell to serve as the School Board Trustee for the Western Region, for a two-year period effective March 31, 2016.

**Expenditures**

Expenditures were submitted for Board review and will be placed on the agenda for approval at the Regular Board Meeting.
Board Comments

The Board briefly discussed making a formal motion to form a standing sub-committee to liaison with the township. Mr. Wolfe recommended they discuss the issue in Executive Session.

SUSPENSION OF BUSINESS TO HEAR FROM RESIDENTS AND/OR TAXPAYERS

There were no comments at this time.

Hannah seconded Vezzi on the recommendation of the Superintendent, Director of Finance Brian Tony, and Director of Maintenance Dean Stewart for Board approval to authorize the administration to advertise for bids for removal, supply, and replacement of a minimum of 27, 3-panel single hung window units in the Middle School.

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Director of Technology and Innovation Aileen Owens for Board approval to permit Ms. Stephanie Deluca, Intermediate School STEAM Coordinator to attend the Deeper Learning Conference in San Diego, California from Tuesday, March 22, 2016 through Thursday, March 24, 2016. The Grable Foundation will support the airfare, lodging and conference registration. District costs will include a substitute teacher for three days, ground transportation and some meals.

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Voice Vote – All Yes

Vezzi seconded Petrillo to suspend the meeting at 9:16 PM and enter into Executive Session to discuss legal and/or personnel matters.

President Newcomer announced there will not be any votes taken after Executive Session.

Voice Vote – All Yes

Executive Session convened at 9:22 PM.

Vezzi seconded Petrillo to exit Executive Session at 10:51 PM and return to the committee meeting.

Voice Vote – All Yes

Vezzi seconded Petrillo to adjourn the meeting at 10:51 PM.

Voice Vote – All Yes

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Cynthia Geisler, Board Secretary