

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES
OF
CLAY COMMUNITY SCHOOLS**

A Special Public Work Session of the Clay Community Schools Board of Trustees was held at the Central Administrative Office, 1013 S. Forest Avenue, Brazil, IN 47834, on Thursday, November 19, 2015. Tom Reberger, Scott Hill, Kevin Kumpf, Ron Scherb, Amy Burke Adams, and Shane Wiram were present. Fred Froderman was absent.

I. Call to Order

The special session meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Board President Ron Scherb.

II. Discussion of Building/Renovation Project

Superintendent Jeffery Fritz presented an overview of the project. He reviewed the timeline, noting the following:

- March, 2015: The Board approved a facility assessment study, which was subsequently completed by Schmidt Associates.
- August, 2015: Interviews were held for the construction management firm and the architectural firm. Members of the interview committee included Superintendent Fritz, Board President Ron Scherb, Director Business Affairs Mark Shayotovich, and Director of Extended Services Mike Howard.
- August/September, 2015: Architects conducted studies with teachers and classified employees to get their input. The information gathered was used to develop the initial scope of the project.
- Following the development of the initial scope, several leadership team meetings were held. The leadership team included Superintendent Fritz, Mike Howard, Mark Shayotovich, Director of Human Resources and former Northview High School Principal Ernie Simpson, Assistant Superintendent and former Northview High School Principal Dr. Tim Rayle, Clay City Junior/Senior High School Principal Jeff Bell, Northview High School Principal Chris Mauk, North Clay Middle School Principal Robert Boltinghouse, school board member and former Director of Buildings and Grounds Tom Reberger, Fanning Howey architects Chuck Tyler and Mike Schipp, and Garmong Construction Services representatives Brian Kooistra, Lance Gassert, and Jake Wagle. In addition, Jeff Qualkinbush of Barnes & Thornburg has helped with bond and financial issues.
- October 19 & 21, 2015: Community meetings were held at Clay City Junior/Senior High School and Northview High School. The meeting at Northview was to represent both Northview and North Clay Middle School.
- The different scopes of the project had been presented at different board meetings.
- On December 10, a regular board meeting will be held, and the 1028/Preliminary Determination Hearing for the project will occur during that meeting.

Superintendent Fritz and Mr. Shayotovich offered a Power Point presentation of the proposed scope of the project. This same Power Point presentation had been shown

during the November 12 regular session school board meeting and is a part of the official minutes of that meeting.

The floor was then opened for the board members to discuss the building/renovation project. First to speak was Mr. Scherb, and he commented on the fact that Tom Reberger had been the only board member who had participated as a member of the Leadership Team. Mr. Scherb acknowledged that Superintendent Fritz had called him to let him know that Mr. Reberger had volunteered to participate, and he also acknowledged that he had not volunteered to serve on the leadership team because he did not have time to participate.

In response to Mr. Scherb's question as to why Mr. Reberger volunteered, Mr. Reberger stated that he thought he had something that he could offer by having been a school corporation employee for 43 ½ years, 20 years which were spent as a math teacher and 23 ½ years which were spent as facilities director. He asserted that he probably knew the buildings inside out more thoroughly than anyone in the corporation because that had been his job and that was what he was supposed to do. His goal in volunteering to serve on the leadership team was to listen to everybody's input and to make people aware if he saw something that was going to be a problem or was going to be very expensive to do because of where things were located. From a board member's standpoint and from a taxpayer's standpoint, he knew after hearing the preliminary numbers that they had to get the cost down. He had the time to serve, and he was more than happy to do that and to offer his expertise.

Mr. Wiram commented that he would like to see a three- to five-year Capital Projects Fund plan to see how technology and classroom furniture would be funded if those costs are not included in the building/renovation project.

At this point, the public in attendance was encouraged to comment on the building/renovation project. The names of those speaking and a brief summary of their concerns and comments follows:

- 1) Scott McDonald, Counselor at Northview: In his opinion, safety is the number one priority, and he asserted that Clay City, Northview, and North Clay are not safe. He asked for the project to be considered for the safety of the kids and the safety of everyone involved in the community when they come to any of the school corporation buildings.
- 2) Paul Sindors: He shared his concerns about safety. He commended the board members for being proactive and thinking ahead of the game of what the school corporation needs to be doing in that regard. He believes any and all safety measures that can be taken are totally necessary. Mr. Sindors also commented that the school corporation needed to keep up with modern technology, which is changing rapidly. While acknowledging that there was a price tag and cuts would be made, Mr. Sindors urged the Board to be careful to cut what they had to and must, but not cut too much because sometimes when too much is cut, it would become more expensive in the long run. He encouraged the Board to give the project its full consideration.

- 3) Scott Buell, Northview: He agreed that safety was the number one priority. His concern was the safety of athletes. He noted that the lack of practice space at Northview means the athletic teams have to go to three different elementary schools to practice, and if there are activities scheduled in those buildings, there have been times when teams have been told they can't practice because there is nowhere for them to go. Also, in January, February, and March, there will be between 150-200 students trying to train and practice in the gym area, in the social studies hall, and in the cafeteria. In his opinion, a student activities center is a desperate need to give room to the athletes and make it safer for them. He also pointed out that additional locker room space for the football and basketball teams was definitely needed. The bleachers also need to be looked at. He thanked the Board for being proactive, and he hoped the Board would continue looking forward at this.
- 4) Amy Wetnight, Head of Art Department at Northview: Ms. Wetnight agreed with the previous comments regarding not having enough gym space and concerns about safety. She also brought up concerns she had about electrical issues in the art rooms, the need for another kiln, ventilation issues in the art rooms, an issue with being able to dispose of water that has been used to wash clay off of hands, and the lack of storage space. She noted that the desks in the art rooms are all broken.
- 5) Tony Trout, Northview teacher and coach: Mr. Trout stated that he was here to support the building project. He noted that he was one of a few who had been a teacher in the Northview building since it was opened in 1988. He deemed the building to be a very nice place to work, with a very eye-appealing design and having been very well maintained. There were, however, mistakes made in the original plan. Mr. Trout and other teachers in the building are very excited about the building project and the opportunity to correct those mistakes that were made early. Issues that Mr. Trout hoped would be corrected with the building project included: Addressing entrance safety concerns; putting each academic department together in an area so that the department can stay together and plan together; and, increasing space available for athletics, band programs, and student activities. Mr. Trout truly believes this community supports athletics, and the school corporation owes it to the student athletes at Northview and Clay City to update the facilities. He concluded his comments by stating that he felt now was the time for these changes; the money is available, as is the tax base. He urged the board to move forward on this building project.
- 6) Bethany Jones, Northview PE and Health Department Chair: Mrs. Jones discussed how a student activity center would benefit the PE department in terms of safety, curriculum, and ability to meet standards. She noted that there were times when groups would be setting up for a special event in the gym and PE classes had to be cancelled, with students being sent to the cafeteria during the class time; if an activity center was available, students would be able to continue with their daily lesson plans. Mrs. Jones also noted that sometimes 50-75 students are enrolled in one PE class period, and with one gym and limited use of the upper decks, safety becomes an issue. Another concern of Mrs. Jones was the fact that students in the Advanced PE class do not have access to a safe

area where standards can be fully met. An issue that arose this year involved a conflict with a freshman PE class and a Movement and Dance Technique class that both meet during the same period and have to rotate the use of the gym; an activity center would eliminate that conflict. Mrs. Jones' final concern was in regard to locker rooms and the need for better security.

- 7) Joni Sutherland, Northview Art teacher: Mrs. Sutherland supported everything she had heard at this meeting. She added that she had taught at Jasper High School in Jasper, Indiana, at a time when they were going through a renovation. While acknowledging that Jasper is a little bit different than this community, Mrs. Sutherland noted that Jasper did not cut things; they did it right the first time. She encouraged the Board to do what it could with the budget they had. Mrs. Sutherland also mentioned the Olympic-size pool at Jasper that was going to go over budget but was refinanced and added only pennies to the tax levy. She pointed out that a school draws in other things to a community, and by doing these types of renovations, businesses will take note of that. She urged the Board to consider what would draw more into this community; she believes that starts with the schools.
- 8) Jeff Bell, Clay City Junior/Senior High School Principal: Noting that he couldn't be more proud of what had been said and presented, Mr. Bell added that everyone working in the school corporation does what they do for the kids. He urged the Board to do it right. Mr. Bell commented that the kids are producing and they deserve the best, whether it's academics, athletics, etc. He also commented that he wanted students who have graduated to feel that their school corporation had the vision for the future for their kids, should they decide they want to come back here to raise their family. His final comment was that Clay Community Schools is a great place to work and a great place for kids to go to school: They deserve the best.
- 9) Bob Medworth, Band Director at Northview: Mr. Medworth noted that this was his 39th year in Clay Community Schools as a teacher and band director, with some years spent as girls' varsity basketball coach, and he commented that he had probably spent more hours in Northview High School than anyone alive. One issue Mr. Medworth pointed out was the upper decks in the Northview gym that he described as worthless. Because there is only one gym, athletic teams sometimes must travel to Van Buren. Also, the winter guard and drumline must load all of their equipment and travel to Jackson Township, and all of the equipment has to be returned to Northview each time for school the next day. Mr. Medworth does not believe that students should have to do that; there is a chance to fix that now. Mr. Medworth agreed with Mr. Sindors that if it isn't fixed now, it is going to cost more later. Other issues noted by Mr. Medworth included the width of the doors being too narrow to accommodate percussion equipment without risk of damage to the door or equipment as well as the built-in risers limiting the use of the band and choir rooms. He pointed out that in the original design of the Northview building, which was for a Brazil/Staunton consolidation, many parts were designed for 600-700 students rather than for the number of students resulting from a Brazil/Staunton/Van Buren consolidation. Mr.

Medworth agreed with previous comments about the need for improved safety in the buildings. He urged the Board, as strongly as possible, to make this happen.

- 10) Kathy Rendant, North Clay and Northview Media Specialist: Mrs. Rendant stated that she has two children who are students at Clay City, so she is probably the only person in the room who has a vested interest in everything that happens in the secondary schools. She was thrilled that consideration was being given to getting rid of the two-story library at Northview. She believed safety to be of the utmost concern. She urged the Board to go ahead with this project because it affects every school and all of the kids.

Additional board member comments were made by the following:

- Tom Reberger: Mr. Reberger was absolutely thrilled with the people who had shown up at the meeting. He shared his opinion that the Board had a great opportunity to do something very good for this entire community, and the Board needed to take advantage of it and do it now.
- Kevin Kumpf: Mr. Kumpf stated that it had been great to have all of the teachers who had come up to speak for the building project. He thought it would have been really nice to have taxpayers who are not involved in the schools to come up and give their comments, but he was assuming no news was good news. He believed the Board needed to stay vigilant on this, and he urged anyone with concerns to speak up. Mr. Kumpf did not know if there was a certain amount of dollars that could be spent to keep the present tax rate, but he thought it was nice that Mrs. Sutherland mentioned that a few more cents could go a long way on taxes. He noted that he had never complained about paying taxes; he believes they benefit everybody. It was his hope that everyone understood that board members would not benefit anything from this other than knowing they had hopefully done something well for the school corporation. He noted that whenever the Board votes something in or something out, it's not a personal issue; rather, it's probably a financial issue, and they are just trying to do the job they were voted in to do.
- Scott Hill: Mr. Hill commented that they all realized there were a lot of wants and a lot of needs, and they all agree the buildings need updated to come up with the times or get a little bit ahead of the times. School safety is number one, at least for Mr. Hill, and probably for the other board members as well. He noted that getting all of the wants and needs while still being fiscally responsible was a hard ratio, but he believed the numbers presented were in the ballpark.
- Amy Burke Adams: Mrs. Adams thanked those who had attended the meeting for coming and feeling comfortable enough to express their opinions, thoughts, and suggestions at the podium. She wanted to take the opportunity to let everyone know that she was fully in support of a renovation project, and she has been the entire time. She continued by noting that she was in full support of a project that will meet the needs of the community. Additionally, she noted that she was in full support of transparency of this project, by which she meant that

what is borrowed will go for that of which the public has been made aware. What she has been against is discussion of \$700,000 being spent on Astroturf at Northview. Mrs. Adams believes that teachers received misinformation and formed misconceptions that she was against this building project, and she did not have an opportunity to clarify because she had been advised by a board member early on that board members shouldn't share their opinions.

Mrs. Adams referred to the two community meetings during which the community had been allowed to share their opinions of the plans that were presented; she noted that the community did not see any of the wish lists or add-ons. She added that those meetings had not been for the Board to talk to the community. Last week, during the public session, the Board requested a work session so that the board members could interact with the public, and tonight that meeting was being held. Mrs. Adams admitted that she was disappointed when she saw the procedures for this meeting, specifically the instruction that the Board could not interact with the public. She found this disturbing tonight because she had notified some board members and the superintendent earlier that she had actually started receiving feedback in the last few days. Mrs. Adams stated that those who had contacted her had alleged that some teachers felt as though they were being hushed and had been told that they could not express their feelings or their suggestions or ideas because they would be violating a chain of command. If true, Mrs. Adams would find that disturbing only because the chain of command, in her opinion, would be over a problem in a classroom or with employment; it wouldn't be a gag order, as a citizen or taxpayer or someone who works in the schools, to stifle their opinion. Mrs. Adams believes that everyone who lives in this community and who pays taxes should feel free to express their opinion or suggestion about this project. She noted that it would affect everyone until 2030.

Mrs. Adams reiterated that she is fully in support of the project. As for the process, she wished it had been a little bit more transparent. She wants people to feel comfortable speaking and not fear retaliation or evaluations on RISE being tampered with. She stressed that those were allegations, not anything that she had seen.

At this point, Mrs. Adams repeated her statement that she was not in support of \$700,000 worth of Astroturf; she believed that to be excessive and she noted that no other community around here has it that is in the same income bracket or tax bracket or size as this corporation. Everything else on this project she supports.

Other considerations Mrs. Adams brought up were a central gym complex in the middle of the county and pools. She wanted to know if they could have been afforded, what they might have cost, and whether they had ever been considered or talked about. Mrs. Adams noted that she did not know what had been discussed and what had been cut out of the original \$65 million estimate.

As for a second locker room for visiting football teams, Mrs. Adams would like to see improvements made to the existing girls locker room at Northview before a football locker room would be built.

One other item that Mrs. Adams would like to discuss is doing something with the old central office building. She noted that the building still has heat, lights, and water going into it. When discussion of the building was last brought up, under the previous superintendent, the Board had been told that records were still being stored there. Mrs. Adams asked at what point the records would be moved and where would they be stored. She suggested the possibility, while walls and additional space are being built, of considering moving those records. Once those records have been moved, the building could be sold, perhaps to somebody in Knightsville.

Mrs. Adams brought up another consideration: All of the spaces being built will require additional heating costs, lighting costs, people to clean, and people to supervise. These are additional costs that have not been discussed. The costs might be considered minimal, but they will still be there and will be ongoing for the life of those additions.

The Clay City auditoria was one area in which Mrs. Adams had hoped to see more; she had hoped to see a new cafeteria built in Clay City because that is the area that every student uses. She would have preferred to have a cafeteria built as opposed to a music area because the music area could have moved into the existing auditoria. She would have liked to have been able to express that opinion early on.

Mrs. Adams concluded her comments by stating that she hoped the next time a renovation project was done, there would be some discussion of a central athletic complex with a few gyms, a swimming pool, and some tracks. She would like to have open dialogue as the renovation discussions continue.

- Shane Wiram: Mr. Wiram commented that he had always said he wanted to do this right. His concerns: safety, academics, and athletics. He believes the school corporation has a prime opportunity to cover all three bases in a fiscal manner that won't harm future generations. He is all in favor of this project. There are a lot of details to work out. He asked for patience in the beginning stages and encouraged dialogue between school patrons and the Board.
- Ron Scherb: Mr. Scherb stated that he appreciated everybody's comments. He noted that the Board had a big decision to make. There were a lot of people who were not here that might have an opinion, and he suspects they will speak up at some point. He mentioned that the next school board meeting would be December 10 and would include the 1028 Hearing.

III. Adjournment

Having exhausted all agenda items, the meeting was adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

The meeting was audio recorded and copies may be requested by contacting the Central Administrative Office.