

The Board of Education of the Fairfield City School District in the County of Butler, Ohio, held a Special Meeting on the 29th of October 2014 in the Catherine D. Milligan Community Room.

The meeting was called to order by the President at 6:30 pm.

ROLL CALL – Present: Mr. Berding, Mr. Hare, Mr. Heisler, Mr. Kearns & Mrs. Shorter

Also present: Mr. Otten, Mrs. Lane, Mr. Martin, Mr. Weiser & Mr. Clemmons
Absent: Mrs. Wildow

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

A. Items for Board Discussion

Location of school facilities – Mr. Otten

Mr. Otten presented the following information:

Fairfield’s Journey – Location of School Facilities

1. Where the journey began
 - a. June 16, 2011 – Board of Education approved the FCSD Master Facility Plan
 - b. FCSD/OFCC Project (Segment 1) will address all recommendations as listed by the Master Plan
2. Land acquisition for project
 - a. Land required for construction of sixth elementary school
 - b. 20 acre site recommended
 - c. Site acquisition (purchase) is a locally funded initiative (LFI) and is not co-funded by OFCC
 - d. Budget for the purchase of land - \$1,000,000
3. Search for property
 - a. September 2013 – District officials began meeting with property owners and real estate brokers regarding available land
 - b. Five locations were pursued:
 - i. Four – Fairfield Township
 - ii. One – Fairfield City
4. Working to identify our site
 - a. The District worked closely with SHP Leading Design (District Architect for project) and leaders of Fairfield Township, the City of Fairfield and Butler County to address needs of specific sites.
 - b. Obstacles:
 - i. Layout
 - ii. Topography
 - iii. Utilities
 - iv. Purchase price

5. We are faced with a roadblock
 - a. We have significant decisions to make which will impact our plan and our budget for the project
6. Purchase price + cost of site improvements vs. \$1M budgeted
 - a. The purchase of the land and the improvements to the site greatly exceed the amount budgeted for the land
7. Option 1
 - a. Continue to pursue the purchase of property for the sixth elementary school
8. Drawbacks to Option 1
 - a. Suggested purchase price per site exceeds amount budgeted
 - b. Site improvements are necessary and the costs to complete this work is the responsibility of the District
 - c. Government entities are engaged regarding utilities to the proposed site and we are unsure of when or how those issues will be resolved
 - d. We are working on a timeline – Deadline for Site Identification is November 21, 2014
9. Option 2
 - a. Modify our plan and utilize the current land that Fairfield City School District owns for site locations
10. Recommended site locations
 - a. New Central located on current property behind Central and Freshman
 - b. New elementary (sixth) school located on property across from FHS (originally proposed as the location of the new Freshman School)
 - c. New Freshman School located on the current site of Fairfield Senior High School
11. Benefits to Option 2
 - a. The priorities of the original plan remain in tact
 - b. Fairfield Freshman will be designed and function as a stand-alone school
 - c. High School Campus will exist on one site
 - d. Elimination of pedestrian bridge (\$1M)
 - f. Land acquisition (\$1M)
 - g. Ability to address traffic flow problems (drop-off and pick-up) of our current site (FHS) for our parents and students
 - h. Utilize the savings to address other district needs (Ex: air conditioning of FMS and South)
 - i. We are being “Good Stewards” of our tax dollars
12. Drawbacks to Option 2
 - a. We will need to change the original Master Plan which was created by the Building Pride Committee
 - b. We had hoped to build the new elementary school in or near Fairfield Township

13. We must act now
 - a. Our project is ready to go!
 - b. We have examined numerous options and done our due diligence
 - c. We must make decisions regarding our site locations by November 21, 2014 in order to keep our project on schedule and to avoid additional costs

14. Recommendations
 - a. November 20, 2014 – Board of Education Meeting
 - i. Move forward with Option 2 to change the proposed locations of school facilities for the Freshman School and the new elementary school.
 - ii. Amend the Fairfield City Schools Master Plan to address the change in site locations

The discussion that followed the presentation included the following:

Mr. Hare noted that the only change to the Master Facilities Plan is the site location. He is satisfied with Mr. Otten's recommendation. One of his concerns is the traffic flow at the high school.

Mr. Berding asked what the district will lose at the high school site. Mr. Otten responded that it is uncertain at this point. The tennis courts and a field or two might be lost.

Mr. Hare asked if we might need to move the fields across the street and Mr. Otten stated that moving the fields across the street is a possibility.

Mr. Heisler asked if the scheduling of the new schools is being considered at this time. Mr. Otten responded that he has had a lot of discussion with Tom Weiser regarding scheduling and reminded everyone that schedules are guided by input from the Transportation Department.

Mrs. Shorter stated her concern that the township residents believe that the new elementary school would be located in the township. She recommends that more details be released to the public to show our efforts of securing the land as well as making sure that the public realizes that it was never our intention to mislead them. She wants the community to have all of the details regarding the location of the elementary school.

Mr. Kearns stated that efforts to search for a suitable location started in September 2013. He does not feel that the Board has misrepresented anything. The intent of the Master Facilities Plan was to minimize transitions (from one school building to another). He feels that the Board has honored that process. He stressed the importance of letting the community know what we have found in the land search. He reminded everyone that the Board is not voting tonight. He supports option 2.

Mr. Hare stated that at the point that good faith bargaining failed, we had to look at alternatives. He pointed out that the township budget is strained and that the township will have to make critical decisions in the near future. A new school building may cause more of a strain in additional safety services that must be provided. He complimented Mr. Otten on his presentation to the Board.

Mr. Kearns asked what our timeline will be. He wanted to know what additional costs would be incurred if the district does not meet the November deadline.

Todd Thakery of SHP Design stated that the biggest risk or delay would be that the schools would not open up on time.

Paul Motylinski, OFCC representative, stated that if the same contractors are used for all buildings, prices should go down. Efficiency for bidding is a consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

October 31, 2014 – Senior Citizens Luncheon, FHS, 11:15 AM-12:45 PM

November 1, 2014 – Rhythm Express/Fairfield Kiwanis Pancake Breakfast, 8:00 AM-12:00 PM,
FHS Cafeteria

November 20, 2014 – Board Meeting, 6:30 PM, FHS Catherine D. Milligan Community Room

November 26, 2014 – Conference Exchange Day, No School

November 27-28, 2014 – Thanksgiving Break

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Heisler

He congratulated the Board members that participated in the Dancing with the Choraliers. He felt it was a very entertaining event.

He feels that the proposal is a good alternative to the original plan for the new buildings.

Mr. Hare read the following statement:

First, I would like to recognize one of the members of the community who is present tonight. Noah Philpot, a Boy Scout, is here to observe a Board of Education meeting as part of his requirements for Boy Scouts citizenship badge. He picked a good meeting to attend because there was lots of discussion.

This week the Fairfield Rotary Club completed its annual distribution of dictionaries to the third graders. I want to thank the third graders at East for their enthusiastic reception and participation on Tuesday.

Olivia, a student at North, sat all night reading her dictionary. She learned about the planets, some sign language and told her family about some of the words she looked up.

Kudos to Coach Jason Kause and his wife Denise

In keeping with their efforts to raise money and awareness for local charities, we will use the last home football game vs. Hamilton on Friday, Oct. 31 as a night to raise money for cancer in honor of Lauren Hill. Lauren is the Mount St. Joseph University basketball player whose story of courage and inspiration has made national news as she works to play in just one game while battling terminal brain cancer. There will be donation buckets at the Athletic Booster and Tempo Club concession stands. Checks can be made payable to The Cure Starts Now.

Facility Issues:

I support the recommendations brought forth this evening because the fidelity of the District Master Facility Plan is maintained with the proposed configuration of schools, which is the best plan for delivering education.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Hare (continued)

I have two additional comments, one that is apparent to all and one that may not be apparent to many.
1-When it became apparent to me that “Good faith negotiations” could not continue because the purchase price for the land was too high, not in our budget and not in the best interest of the district we looked for alternatives, which were presented tonight.

2- In reviewing the Township budget there is a growing concern regarding funding of police and fire services. The Township has been supplementing the police and fire budgets from the general fund. The township budget will reach a critical point about the time the new school is to come online. With increased police and fire calls I would be concerned about adding another school population to be covered by police and fire departments to an already strained budget. Hopefully, the city will be able to accommodate the coverage needed for the additional school. The best option available is the one Mr. Otten presented tonight.

I have two quotes related to tonight’s discussion:

Perfection is not attainable, but if we chase perfections, we can catch excellence. This district has a history of excellence and it will continue to be excellent.

The second quote is from Bill Cosby: *I don’t know the key to success, but the key to failure is trying to please everybody.* We won’t be able to please everybody in this process.

Mrs. Shorter

She congratulated her fellow Board members that participated in the Dancing with the Choraliers event.

Mr. Berding

He congratulated all of the students inducted into the National Honor Society.
He thanked Mr. Clemmons for his assistance in searching for the possible site location.

14-109 ADJOURNMENT

MOTION – Moved by Mr. Hare to adjourn the meeting.

SECOND – Seconded by Mr. Heisler

Public comments: None

Board comments: None

ROLL CALL – Ayes: Mr. Berding, Mr. Hare, Mr. Heisler, Mr. Kearns & Mrs. Shorter

Nays: None

Motion Carried: 5-0

The meeting was adjourned at 7:19 pm by the President, Mr. Kearns.

President

Attest: _____

Treasurer