

**SWITZERLAND COUNTY SCHOOL CORPORATION**  
**Minutes of the March 29, 2010**  
**EXECUTIVE SESSION BOARD MEETING**  
**4:30 P.M.**  
**SPECIAL SCHOOL BOARD MEETING**  
**6:00 P.M.**

The School Board of Trustees met before the regular public meeting for an Executive Session beginning at 4:30 at the Switzerland County Middle School Library to discuss I.C.5-14-1.5-6.1(b)(9).

The board members present were Mr. Phipps, Mr. Roberts, Mr. McKay, Mrs. Moore, Mr. Truitt and Mr. Waltz. School Superintendent, Dr. Elizabeth T. Jones, School Board Attorney, Ron Hocker, and Matt Hocker were also in attendance. Mr. Daugherty was unable to attend.

The board discussed no subject matter in the Executive Session other than the subject matter specified in the public notice.

**CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE TO THE FLAG:**

Mr. Phipps called the meeting to order and led the group in the pledge to the flag.

**ATTENDANCE:**

Board members in attendance were Mr. Phipps, Mr. Roberts, Mr. McKay, Mrs. Moore, Mr. Truitt and Mr. Waltz. Mr. Daugherty was unable to attend.

Others in attendance were Dr. Elizabeth T. Jones, Wilma Swango, Mona Crabtree, Ronald Hocker, Matt Hocker, Ginny Reeves, Janet Hendricks, Sara Pavey, John Sieglitz, Pat Lanman, Michael Jones, Dan Noel, Rhonda Pennington, John Druba, Tammy Hayes, Barb Covington, Helen Parks, Jacquita Lanman, Kathy Daugherty, Melody Smith, Lisa Burk, Linda Kurdys, Sandra Jones, Anne Findley, Dawn Ransdell, Deb Archer, Rhonda Humphrey, Lynda McKenzie, Cathy Manbeck, Peggy Scully, Laura Jones, Gerry Peters, Nancy Peters, Lesa McGarvey, Dave Ziegler, and Kim Temple.

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA:**

Mr. McKay made a motion to approve the agenda as submitted. Mr. Waltz seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

The board voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the regular school board meeting of March 15, 2010. Mr. Truitt made the motion to approve the minutes. Mr. McKay seconded.

**FINANCIAL UPDATE:**

Corporation Treasurer, Wilma Swango, gave an update to the board regarding the current financial status. Dr. Jones said she and Mrs. Swango had been working on a list of cost saving measures they hoped would help the General Fund. Mrs. Swango explained that this is the first time they have seen such a serious reduction in state funding. Mrs. Swango also wanted to point out that she believed the \$481,000 reduction in funds in General Fund will only be for the 2010 calendar year. She said that 2011 won't be any prettier than this, but school business officers have not been informed as to what to expect for 2011.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

Mr. Truitt moved to approve the sixth grade to be placed in Jefferson-Craig Elementary with the understanding that the administration will begin immediately to investigate the feasibility of building on to Switzerland County Elementary and/or redistricting. Mr. Waltz seconded the motion. Mr. Waltz said he felt that moving the sixth grade back into a setting where they would get 20 extra minutes of educational time each day was a sound decision. Mr. Roberts said that it was his understanding that there is adequate space at Switzerland County Elementary School for three sections of students and if that is true, he could not support the plan to move the whole 6<sup>th</sup> grade into Jefferson-Craig. Mrs. Moore said she would support the plan as long as that meant going forward and immediately checking into the feasibility of building onto Switzerland County Elementary. The vote to approve the recommendation was as follows: AYES: Waltz, Truitt, Phipps, Moore, McKay. NAYS: Roberts

Dr. Jones said that she wanted to clarify the difference between General Fund, which was discussed earlier, and Capital Projects before she began discussion of the current and planned building projects for the corporation. Dr. Jones said that the General Fund covers salaries, benefits, classroom supplies and professional development. She said the Capital Projects fund was used for things such as building projects. She said that when Mrs. Swango talked earlier about the reduction of funds, she was talking about the General Fund. Mr. McKay said that he had recently discovered that it was okay to transfer funds from one fund to the other and asked if this was an avenue that might be explored. Mrs. Swango said school corporations were allowed to transfer 5% of Capital Projects funds with no restrictions, or 10% with certain restrictions. Mrs. Swango said business professionals have warned them to be cautious of this, however, because this can only be

done as a one time thing. She said is not recommended in case the expense ends up being an on-going thing from year to year.

Mrs. Swango wanted to explain the Capital Projects Appropriation Report. She said that monies are broken down by building. She said this means that money appropriated for the Middle School cannot be used for projects at the High School, Jefferson-Craig, or Switzerland County Elementary. That being said, Mrs. Swango explained, when looking at Jefferson-Craig's Capital Projects balances, the money that was set aside to pay the Energy Savings Contract loan isn't being used for this purpose because of the sale of the QZAB bonds to Friendship Bank. She said the corporation was allowed to pay for the bonds with Debt Service funds and the money from the sale of the bonds was used to pay off the Energy Savings loan. She said this then freed up the Capital Projects money originally intended for the repayment of the loan to be used for something else, which would probably be the Traffic Safety Project. Mrs. Swango then pointed out the Capital Projects balances for each school and the total current cash balance in the fund, which is \$1,181,875. She said that the corporation does have property taxes in Capital Projects that are received in June and December. The 2010 levy is \$1,175,026, which added with the cash balance equals \$2,932,901. Mrs. Swango also gave the board an outstanding purchase order report. The last report Mrs. Swango presented to the board concerned 2010 Capital Projects budgets for each school. Projects listed on the report were : Vevay Campus Traffic Safety Project; Jefferson Craig Playground Equipment; Jefferson-Craig Improvement Project; High School Windows/Doors Project; and New Telephone System. Mr. Truitt asked about the grant for the new phone system. Mr. Sieglitz said that he might hear something about the grant in the next couple of weeks. He said the installation of the phones was being delayed until he did hear something, even though the new system is already fully funded. He said that the amount received by the corporation could be anywhere from \$0 to \$85,000.

High School Principal, Dan Noel, gave a description of what improvements were currently being done at the High School and what was planned for the summer. He said all outside doors were painted blue during spring break. He said that next they would be painting the dugouts at the ball fields. Mr. Noel talked about what they are looking at regarding the windows at the High School. Mr. Noel said they were checking into installing a double set of doors at the entrance. He said he was also looking at reconfiguring the front entrance and office for security reasons. He said the drainage problem at the soccer field had been investigated and some of it needed to be dug out and re-seeded, but this couldn't be done until the weather breaks. He said he was looking at logos for the press box at the soccer field and the baseball field. Mr. Noel said replacement trees cannot be planted until the existing roots and stumps are taken care of, but that would be done soon. He said they were putting in clay bricks for baseball and softball. Mr. Noel said he was working on the replacement of the walk-in freezer which would be done as soon as there is a break in weather. He said Myron was working on replacing some of the outside lights. Mr. Noel said he was also looking at installing a stop sign at the High School.

Dr. Jones said some of the plans for Jefferson-Craig this summer included window replacement, new flooring, and painting, which really came under the Energy Savings Plan. Dr. Jones said that Jefferson-Craig's Capital Projects list also included playground equipment, which would be funded by QZAB's. Dr. Jones said the board had seen the list of requested projects for Switzerland County Elementary, which would be discussed later, as well as the Middle School's list.

Mrs. Moore said that those things were great, but she had seen around town and at the other schools, that flowers and attractive bushes had been planted and wondered if the Agriculture class couldn't do some of those things at the High School. Mr. Noel said he wanted to get together with Mr. McKay and the Buildings and Grounds Committee and Mr. Curlin to make sure that the right shrubs and flowers were chosen and things were done correctly.

Dr. Jones said that at this time, she wanted to discuss the Traffic Safety Improvement Project. She said she and Mr. Hocker and Mrs. Swango had met with the Architect, Mr. Ball, and had developed a timeline for when things pertaining to the project needed to be done in order for completion this summer. Dr. Jones said some of the dates included in this timeline are April 19th, when the board would be shown the specs; on April 26th, any changes to the specs would be reviewed; and a pre-bid meeting is scheduled for April 30th. Dr. Jones said the public bid opening is scheduled for May 14<sup>th</sup> and the awarding of the contract is scheduled for May 17<sup>th</sup> with work scheduled to begin on June 2<sup>nd</sup>. Dr. Jones gave the board members a rough draft of what the final project will look like at this time. She said that as has been discussed previously, the buses need to be re-routed to alleviate congestion and get them away from parents dropping off and picking up their children from school. Dr. Jones explained the pathway of the buses behind each school building, which extends to the site of the new Administration Building, and showed them the relocation of the student parking lot at the High School, as well as the addition of a practice soccer field and tennis courts. She said that it is basically the same as the previous drawings they have seen. Dr. Jones said that she was not saying that all of these things will happen this summer. She said this plan also shows a future bus parking lot and bus barn, which is a part of a three-phase plan. She said that a fenced in area for the buses was a great necessity to prevent the vandalism that is now occurring. She said she wanted the student parking at the High School to be separate from the staff parking. Dr. Jones said there may be changes to the project, and she could not say how much the project would cost. She said that the corporation was trying to partner with the Endowment Committee, and felt like the cost she had estimated would be a fair amount for half of the project.

Mr. Waltz moved to approve an addendum to the Architect Contract of Donald Ball for the Traffic Safety Improvement Project. Mr. McKay seconded the motion. Mr. Hocker explained to the board that at the last meeting, they had gone ahead and signed a contract with Mr. Ball, but just before that meeting, the board had asked Mr. Ball to consider a reduction in his fees based on the percentage of the construction costs, as well as to provide a mechanism in the contract by which his contract would not be in dispute in the event the project did not go forward. Mr. Hocker said that Mr. Ball has reduced his

percentage rate from 9.2% to 8.2% and has added wording to ensure that if the project is halted, his contract will not be in dispute. The board's vote to approve the addendum to the contract was unanimous.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

Mr. Truitt made a motion to approve the appointment of the board president to serve as the board member on the Athletic Staff Selection Committee. Mr. Roberts seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous. The Athletic Staff Committee was created to oversee the hiring of athletic coaching staff.

The board unanimously approved the advertisement of bids for the Traffic Safety Improvement Project in a motion by Mr. Truitt, seconded by Mrs. Moore. Dr. Jones said that by approving the advertisement of the bids, the timeline for the project will be set in motion.

Mr. Truitt moved to approve the Endowment Request of up to \$500,000, and/or half the projected cost for the Traffic Safety Improvement Project for the Vevay Campus of Jefferson-Craig, Middle School and High School. Mrs. Moore seconded the motion. Mr. Roberts said that he could not support a project that was going to cost one half million dollars when we did not know for sure what the final outcome was going to be. Mr. Hocker explained that the board had the right to withdraw their request for the funds if the project were terminated, which would free up the money. Dr. Jones said that the bids were scheduled to be approved on May 17, but if all of the bids aren't acceptable to the board, then the process would have to be started again. The vote was as follows: AYES: McKay, Moore, Phipps, Truitt, Waltz. NAYS: Roberts.

The board unanimously approved the acceptance of the English Team's \$1000 grant funds from the Vevay-Switzerland County Foundation for the presentation of a Shakespearean Play which 200 students will see. The motion to approve the donation was made by Mrs. Moore and seconded by Mr. Roberts.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Rhonda Humphrey said if the board thought there might be adequate room at Switzerland County Elementary School, she did not know why the option of adding on to the school was not looked into earlier. She said she believed kids are not going to do well on ISTEP when they have to be moved around. She said she was concerned about her child being bullied by new kids. She said the cafeteria at Switzerland County Elementary was bigger than the one at Jefferson-Craig which is shared by the elementary and middle school kids. She said she did not see why the board thought this needed to be done. Mrs. Humphrey said recess is twenty minutes and that was twenty minutes sixth graders are not in class, so she did not see where they would get all the extra class time. She said that school is not fun for the kids and that more time should be spent on service learning. She wondered, if there were money issues, why more money could not be spent on aides for classrooms instead of on the appearances of the school buildings.

Tully Anderson said he was a proponent of the reconfiguration. He said that he has been substitute teaching at the middle school and has seen some of the grammar, punctuation, and spelling problems the sixth graders are having. Mr. Anderson said that sixth graders need that extra time for a better foundation to be laid for those skills.

Barbara Covington said that fifth graders have been switching classes all year and wondered why they are having to do this as they were losing out on valuable class time. Mrs. Covington said that she did not understand about there being different standards at the elementary level and middle school level. She asked since the sixth graders would be going to the middle school for Science and Computer labs, would they not still be learning there. Mrs. Covington said she heard about all of the things that are being done at the High School from Capital Projects, but she did not hear what funds were available for Switzerland County Elementary and wanted to know what was being done to upgrade the school. She said that her kids are already telling her that they do not have time to finish eating. She asked if the enrollment has progressively increased there, while Jefferson-Craig has declined, then why hasn't something been looked at sooner. She said she thinks if all of the sixth graders are placed at Jefferson-Craig, there will be bullying issues.

Peggy Scully said she is a retired teacher. She said that school is not fun for kids, but educators should try to make it fun for them. Mrs. Scully suggested that the teachers read "Awaking the Sleeping Giant" and use it as a guide here in Switzerland County.

Kim Temple said that all of the 6<sup>th</sup> grade teachers on staff at the middle school really care about the students and only want what is best for them. She said that she and many others feel the sixth graders are not ready to handle the emotional challenges of the Middle School environment. Mrs. Temple said that out of one hundred and ten students, ten might be emotionally ready for the Middle School and the other one hundred aren't. She went on to say whether they are at Jefferson-Craig, or at each of the schools, the sixth grade needs to be back in the elementary environment for another year.

Helen Parks said she is a retired teacher who has come back to help out with ISTEP testing. She said she felt the sixth graders needed to be in self-contained classrooms. She said they are lost when they come to the Middle School and that children mature a lot in one year.

Tammy Hayes said, as a parent, all she wants is to be reassured that her son will not be shoved into a classroom with thirty kids. Mrs. Hayes said that in a classroom of that size, she feels her son will not receive the education he needs.

#### **PERSONNEL:**

Mrs. Moore moved to approve the non-renewal of the teaching contract of Melissa Andrew. Mr. Truitt seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

**PROFESSIONAL LEAVE / FIELD TRIPS:**

Mr. Truitt moved to approve a Professional Leave Request from Greg Curlin to attend the National Ag Council's National Policy Seminar in Washington, D.C., on March 5-9, 2010. Mrs. Moore seconded the motion. Mrs. Moore said that staff members needed to get their requests to the board in a timelier manner. The board voted unanimously to approve the request.

**USE OF FACILITIES:**

None.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORTS: (SUPERINTENDENT)**

Superintendent, Dr. Elizabeth Jones, announced that the next Endowment Meeting would be held on Tuesday, March 30, 2010 at 6:00pm at the Middle School.

Dr. Jones also announced that the next Regular board meeting would be held on Monday, April 19, 2010.

Dr. Jones said she also wanted to make mention of the fact that Bonnie Fancher has received the Historic Hoosier Hills Exemplary Program of the Year award ; and also that Wilma Swango has received IASBO's Region 10 Treasurer of the Year award.

**BOARD REPORT AND COMMENTS:**

Mr. Phipps extended his congratulations to the award recipients.

Mr. Waltz said he would like to see the sixth graders back out at Switzerland County Elementary School and wanted immediate action to see if this is feasible.

Mr. McKay said he appreciated all of the feedback and the interest shown by those who came to the meeting.

Mrs. Moore said that it's always hard to make such a big decision, whether it is right, or whether it is wrong. She said that in this situation, it is better to put the sixth graders back into a contained setting. Mrs. Moore said the sixth grade teachers are wonderful. She said those teachers are only going to help the kids do the best they can do. She said she understood parents' concerns, but asked the audience to please trust the board and the administrators to do the right thing and give this a chance.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Roberts moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Truitt seconded and the vote was unanimous. The meeting was so adjourned. (7:50 p.m.)

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James Phipps, President

Wayne Daugherty, Vice President  
(Unable to attend meeting)

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William Roberts, Secretary

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Virgil Mckay, Member

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Tonya Moore, Member

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Andy Truitt, Member

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Vernon Waltz, Member