

MINUTES OF THE MARCH 07, 2012
5:30 P.M.
JOINT MEETING OF THE
SWITZERLAND COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES
AND
SWITZERLAND COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL ENDOWMENT
CORPORATION

The Switzerland County School Board of Trustees and the Switzerland County Public School Endowment Corporation met at 5:30 P.M. at Switzerland County Elementary School located in East Enterprise, Indiana.

CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE TO THE FLAG:

Mr. Phipps called the School Board meeting to order and led those in attendance in the pledge to the flag. Mr. Lohide called the meeting to order for the Endowment Corporation.

ATTENDANCE:

The members of the Switzerland County School Board of Trustees present were Mr. Phipps, Mr. Roberts, Mrs. Moore, Mr. Daugherty, Mrs. Peters and Mr. Waltz. Mr. Truitt was unable to attend.

The members of the Switzerland County Public School Endowment Corporation present were Mr. Lohide, Mr. Lanman, Mr. Scott, Dr. Jones, and Mr. Conroy.

Others in attendance were Wilma Swango, Mona Crabtree, Denise Crawford, Rob Banta, RaheJean Griffin, John Sieglitz, Rebecca Curlin, Ron Hocker, Greg Curlin, Marlene Jones, Terry Lancer, Cleo Detmer, Karen Noel, Dan Noel, Sally Weales, Mike Jones, and Jessica Griffith.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA:

Mrs. Peters made a motion to approve the agenda with the omission of Item H.1. under Personnel. Mr. Roberts seconded. The board voted unanimously to approve the amended agenda.

OLD BUSINESS:

Mr. Terry Lancer of RQAW was introduced by Dr. Jones who explained that he was there as requested by the School Board to once again make a presentation to them as well

as the Endowment Corporation regarding a list of potential areas of improvement to Switzerland County Elementary School and their projected costs. He said the list of items, derived after a walk-through of the facility, was based on the premise that the sixth grade students from that area would once again be housed there.

Mr. Lancer went through the items which included kitchen remodeling in order to accommodate two lines to quicken serving time; remodeling of Administration area to increase security and expand clinic area; updating of restrooms and water fountains to be compliant with current handicap codes and increase water efficiency; installation of storage units in classrooms; replacement of old electric thermal storage units; door replacements and other interior improvements; replacement of light fixtures and ceiling grids; playground area updates; the replacement of a drain down sump pump; the addition of a 5 classroom pod area, including restrooms, on the west side of the building and the relocation of the driveway around the building to accommodate the building addition; and the construction of a new gymnasium or the expansion of the current gym. He said the timeline for completion of the project depends on what the Board wants to see done, but a rough estimate would be as follows:

- April, 2012 – property survey
- May, 2012 – design
- July, 2012 – design development (fine tuning finishes, etc.)
- August, 2012 – drawings and specs production
- October, 2012 – bidding
- November, 2012 – put in footings
- Next Summer, 2013 - construction completed

Mr. Jones gave out information about the school's enrollment for the last three years the sixth grade was in the building which was 1994, 1995 and 1996. He said in comparison, the enrollment for 2012, if you added sixth graders from that district to it, is almost the same as it was 15 or 16 years ago. Mr. Jones said he was asked to look at the lunchroom schedule to see if the district's 6th grade students could be accommodated with the current configuration of the kitchen. He said it would add about 30 minutes to the lunch schedule but it could be done. He said he also wanted to point out some of the different ways the classrooms are being used now as compared to 1996. He said there were now computer labs used on a daily basis. He said there were 30 computers being used by over 411 students. He said he felt this should be a consideration as the way we educate and test our students is becoming more digital. He said some other things to consider is that when the school has convocations, some of the students have to sit on the floor because they will not fit in the bleachers. He said also, whenever functions are held there, the turnout from the community is always large.

Mrs. Peters wanted to know if the five classrooms were added, would the current utilities need to be relocated. Mr. Lancer said they would need to be relocated because they run along the side of the building and nothing could be built on top of them.

Mr. Waltz said he looked at the windows and they were thermal paned windows that seemed to him to be in good shape. When asked, staff members gave their opinions as to

whether they felt the windows were adequate. Some felt their rooms were cold, and others felt theirs were too warm. Mr. Lancer said the windows in question were added to the list to improve the natural light coming in and to improve energy efficiency.

Mr. Waltz asked if the enrollment projections had been looked at since the idea of six classrooms was brought up at the last meeting. He said he would rather build an additional classroom now rather than wait until it would be more expensive. Mr. Roberts was in agreement. He said if one of the additional rooms were used as a computer lab then he felt there were not enough classrooms in this design to accommodate any amount of growth.

When asked if there could be a design made with six classrooms, Mr. Lancer said he could design whatever the Board needed him to. He said each additional classroom would run around \$150 per square feet and each room would be about a hundred square feet, equaling \$150,000. Mrs. Peters said it seemed to her that there was a lot of wasted space in the Pod design and asked the teachers if the common area was used. Staff members said the area was used at different times for certain things. Mr. Lancer said he was trying to follow the Pod design from the rest of the building, but it was certainly a doable thing to have a corridor with three classrooms on one side and three on the other. He said the rooms could actually be used for any of the other grades, except for Kindergarten which had certain requirements.

Mrs. Moore said she needed to ask Mr. Jones if he wanted the sixth graders from that district to be moved back to Switzerland County Elementary, as she had gotten vibes from him that he didn't really want them back. Mr. Jones answered that this was not the case. He said he felt that if the sixth grade were going to be placed in an elementary setting, he felt they should attend the school located in the district in which they lived and would welcome them if there was adequate space to accommodate them. He said the question is how big the Board wants this school to become. He said he knew at some point redistricting had been discussed.

Mr. Scott asked what was driving this. He asked if the sixth grade was causing an overcrowding situation where it was. Mrs. Moore said two years ago the whole sixth grade was moved out of the Middle School into Jefferson-Craig Elementary School. She said some of the parents of fifth grade students at that time felt that if their children were going to put back in an elementary setting, then they wanted them to stay at their own school. She said some of the members of the Board at that time had promised parents that they would try to get the sixth grade back out at Switzerland County Elementary. Mr. Scott asked how many of the parents were fussing about it. Mrs. Moore said there were a few, but she did not have names. Mr. Conroy asked if she meant the entire sixth grade. Mrs. Moore said she was only talking about the sixth graders living in the East Enterprise district.

Mr. Phipps said he felt the K through 6 elementary school setting provided a better learning environment for the students and it was felt it would improve test scores.

Mr. Scott asked if the I-Pads would be an issue. Dr. Jones said the I-Pads would follow the students. She said the students at each school would be using the same technology.

Mr. Curlin said some of the sentiments of parents is that there was more transitioning for sixth graders from the East Enterprise district because they come from their old school to a totally new school for one year. He said the next year, those same students had to transition again to the Middle School, whereas the Jefferson-Craig students were already familiar with their building and other students and did not have to experience that extra transition.

Mr. Daugherty said he felt the reason for this move was that the sixth grade scores went down and it was felt it was because the whole sixth grade was at Jefferson-Craig and that the students from this district should be put back out here. Dr. Jones said the scores did go down at Jefferson-Craig but that it was on the fifth grade level. She said Jefferson-Craig previously never had over 10 students per grade level that were considered Learning Disabled and so they were exempted in many categories as far as testing when they had 250 students. Dr. Jones said when the Middle School was built, the sixth grade was placed there along with the seventh and eighth grades. She said the Board's decision a couple of years ago to move the sixth grade to Jefferson-Craig, was based on the fact that the Middle School had failed ISTEP scores several years in a row and they could not fail again. She said Jefferson-Craig was the one school that could take a hit academically and not be on probation. She said the Middle School's scores last year, without the sixth grade, earned them an A rating, so they accomplished what they set out to do at the Middle School. Mrs. Peters asked if we were back then to where we were a few years ago. Dr. Jones said it would help Jefferson-Craig if the student population was decreased.

Mr. Daugherty said the State guidelines are driving school corporations to do things differently in order to keep their schools from being put on probation. He said the Board was discussing this as a possibility in order to do what is in the best interest of the students. He said the Board had not voted on what they were going to do, they were just exploring all of the possibilities.

Mr. Roberts said he felt students should be kept at their building one more year. He said he also felt a lot of these kids were spending too much time on the bus and that problem would be alleviated.

Mr. Scott asked if students would lose anything if the sixth grade were sent back out to Switzerland County Elementary School. Dr. Jones said everything needed to be considered, such as the Band, the sports programs and the sixth grade trip.

Mr. Lanman asked Mr. Lancer how Friday's storms would affect the bidding process since many contractors will be busy helping those victims rebuild. Mr. Lancer said he felt the budget numbers he gave them were still relevant. He said maybe there were a few local contractors that would be busy in their areas, but with the last project that was

done here, there were bidders from many different places such as Lawrenceburg, Cincinnati, and Louisville, and was sure that would not change. Mr. Lancer said as far as soft costs, they would not have any for land purchase, but there would be a small Architect retention fee and financing costs which he would estimate at a minimum of 10 percent.

Mr. Lohide asked how many classrooms the school currently had. Mr. Jones said there were 26 rooms being utilized, but there were 20 regular classrooms. Mr. Lohide asked how many students were in each of the regular rooms. Mr. Jones said there were roughly 20 to 25 students per classroom. He also asked how many fifth graders there were this year. Mr. Jones said there were sixty students in grade five at Switzerland County Elementary School and there were forty-five students at Jefferson-Craig Elementary School which would be 105 students total. Mr. Lohide asked if redistricting was an option. Mr. Phipps said that was one topic that was being discussed.

The Board was asked how they would be paying for the new addition and remodeling if the East Enterprise district's sixth grade students were moved back out to this school. Mr. Phipps said they had discussed a variety of options such as the Common School Fund Loan. Mr. Jones said there were Capital Projects funds set aside for some of the projects on the renovation list. Mrs. Swango said one of things that needs to be considered is that Capital Projects Plans are three year plans and the monies might not be available until a future year. Mrs. Swango said another option was the Rainy Day Fund which currently had \$179,000 available funds. She said Mr. Phipps had previously mentioned the Common School Fund. She said those funds would not be available until March and she was waiting for mid to late March for more information to become available. Mrs. Swango said some other possible fund sources being looked at were bonds, including the Indiana Bond Bank which because they offer a pool, provided a good interest rate for long term debt.

Mr. Lohide then gave his personal list of priorities he would like to see done at the school. He said the additional wing was a priority for him. He said he felt the reconfiguration of the kitchen with an additional serving line was not a priority since the lunch schedule had worked before when those additional students were there. He said the third item on the list the rooftop fans and air conditioning units as well as the replacement of the thermal storage units would not be a priority for him since they were working now. Mr. Lohide said he was not sure about the upgrades to the playground area with rubber mulch for insurance reasons. He said he felt the remodeling of the entrance and administration area for security reasons was needed. He said he felt the upgrades to the lighting and ceiling grids needed to be done and cited the Energy Savings Group project that was done at Jefferson-Craig Elementary with the help of the Endowment. He said he did not really know what the replacement of the drain down sump pump was, but if it was currently working, he probably did not want to look at it. Mr. Lohide said the renovation of the restrooms and the addition of drinking fountains was a priority item for him. He said there always seems to be a need to improve interior finishes, such as touch up painting and terrazzo wall base. He also said the built-in storage cabinets in the classrooms would be a good thing to do. Mr. Lohide said he thought the Endowment

could partner with the School Corporation in paying for some of the items on the list, but there would probably be some things some of the members might not want to do. He said he was just giving his personal priority list. He said if the Corporation was thinking of getting a loan that would increase the county's taxes, then what he would like to do and continue to do is pay the Debt Service so there would be no increase to tax payers. He said then, as money comes to the Endowment, there may be funds to take care of some of the other projects on the list such as the thermal storage unit.

Mr. Phipps said one of the purposes of having this joint meeting was to show the Endowment members the list that was being looked at and to get their thoughts as to what they might want to help the Corporation with so he appreciated their comments.

Mr. Lohide said he was going to say something that some people might not want to hear but he was going to say it anyway. He said this school has a 300 capacity gymnasium and with additional students the school would house 470 students. He said it would be nice to have an assembly where everyone could be in the same room without having to seat students on the floor.

Mr. Conroy asked if someone could explain how the energy savings worked at Jefferson-Craig Elementary. Mrs. Swango said the Corporation had gone through a contract with a company called Energy Savings Group. She said each year for the next ten years, the Corporation had to submit a report to the State of Indiana documenting the energy savings and if we don't see energy savings, the company has to reimburse us. She said so far, in the two years following the renovations to the school, it was working.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Mrs. Denise Crawford said she was a first grade teacher at Switzerland County Elementary School. She said she felt the school needed additional rooms, especially if the district's sixth grade would be housed there again. She said when she first came there, portable classrooms were used to handle the extra students. She said those portables were gone now and teachers were still using every inch of available square footage of the building as they could. Mrs. Crawford asked a design question of Mr. Lancer regarding a restroom. She asked if she would be hearing the toilet flushing from where her room was currently located. He assured her that would not be an issue. He said the school was built in the 1980's under an open concept and some of the walls were actually what is considered temporary walls. He said the new wing would have solid walls.

Mr. Lancer said he wanted to point out that with this list of possible needs and projected costs, he realized that some of the things that are on there, the Board may not want to do right now. He said in five years, if that they wanted to do that project, they would have an estimated cost that could be put in a budget.

Mr. Lohide said hopefully the Endowment and its funds would be around for a long time to come, but his fear was that the money could be taken away. He said if something is not broken right now, then perhaps in a few years when it does break, the Endowment will have the funds to take care of it. He said he realized that waiting might cost more money in the long run.

Mr. Curlin said he felt the Board was on the right track by researching all of the possibilities for keeping the sixth grade in an elementary setting and keeping the kids from the East Enterprise area at their own school. He said he was also thinking about quantity and quality when it came to class size. He said he felt keeping the numbers down would improve the quality of students' education, thus helping to improve test scores. He said he wanted to say again that an extra transition for one set of kids versus both is a factor that should also be considered.

Mr. Scott asked the Board if some kind of redistricting was actually being considered. Mr. Phipps said that possibility had not been eliminated. Mr. Scott said if redistricting was a consideration, then it was way too early for all of the discussions about what to do at the Switzerland County Elementary School. He said in the past, the Board has kind of jerked kids around to suit their future plans and he did not like to see that done. Mr. Daugherty said the Vevay Newspaper had an article specifying places where growth could come in Switzerland County and obviously that was not going to happen in downtown Vevay. He said if the sixth grade is put back into Switzerland County Elementary School, redistricting was an option that might need the needs of both schools. Mr. Waltz said he felt Mr. Scott was right. He said when the study was done by Educational Services a couple of years ago, he did not think that company spoke with the people developing this end of the county. He said a housing recession slowed things down a for a while or there would be a lot more houses built than what we are now seeing. Mr. Lanman said this area is where the county's growth is going to be. He said with the housing subdivisions already here, as young families get into the housing market, this is where they will locate. Mr. Daugherty said we need to fix our educational facilities while we can for however many years we are looking at so that this does not have to be revisited for many years down the road.

USE OF FACILITIES:

The Indiana Department of Transportation requested to use the Board Room at the Administration Office on Tuesday at 1:00pm to explain what is happening with the Vevay Hill which will soon be closing soon for improvements for a lengthy period of time. Mrs. Moore wanted to know if the alternate route, Cogley Cole Road, was going to be worked on. Endowment member, Mark Lohide, who also serves as a County Commissioner, said the road has been made a lot safer with some bridge work and some work on the turns which they felt was a priority before the Vevay Hill closed. Mr. Roberts moved to approve the Use of Facilities request as presented. Mrs. Peters seconded the motion and the Board's vote was unanimous.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORTS: (SUPERINTENDENT)

Dr. Jones made the following meeting announcements:

- Tuesday, 3/13/12 – Executive Session School Board Meeting at 9:30am, Public Session at 10:30am
- Monday, 3/19/12 – Regular Monthly School Board Meeting

Mr. Lohide announced due to the Endowment's normally scheduled meeting week being the Corporation's Spring Break week, the next meeting will be held a week earlier, on March 20, 2012.

BOARD REPORT AND COMMENTS:

Mr. Phipps thanked those present for showing an interest and attending the meeting.

Mrs. Peters said she would like to have a list of the current enrollment, per grade, per school.

Mrs. Moore said she also wanted to thank the staff of the Switzerland County Elementary School as well as members of the Endowment Board for coming.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Roberts moved to adjourn the meeting. Mrs. Moore seconded and the vote was unanimous. The meeting was so adjourned. (7:20 p.m.)

James Phipps, President

William Roberts, Vice President

Tonya Moore, Secretary

Wayne Daugherty, Member

Nancy Peters, Member

Andy Truitt, Member

Vernon Waltz, Member