

**EAST TROY COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION
Special Meeting Minutes – January 2, 2013**

The East Troy Community School District Board met in regular session on January 2, 2013. The meeting was called to order by President, Brian Wexler at 7:03 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Board members present were Mike Zei, Martha Bresler, Murray Mitten, Dawn Buchholtz and Brian Wexler. Also present were Dr. Christopher Hibner, Kathy Zwirgzdas, Amy Foszpanczyk, administrators, 36 guests and one reporter.

Brian Wexler read the open meeting statement indicating that the meeting is open to the public as required by state statute and that notice of the meeting had been sent to the media and/or posted.

IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PER BOARD POLICY

Chris Gultch expressed his concern of the Board having a “disconnect” with the local tax payers and asked the Board to reprioritize the District’s needs. He stated that he believes that Chester Byrnes is an immediate need; an auditorium is not currently needed, as well as the lights for the soccer field be moved down the list of priorities. He also reminded the Board that they should factor in the running costs of an auditorium and how that will affect the rest of the budget.

Neil Marini expressed his concerns of rising costs of transportation, general maintenance and technology in the District and recommended that the Board keep in mind that they are not the only taxing entity.

Jean Stephan stated that the referendum which included an auditorium passed in the Village of East Troy and recommended that the Board research elementary upgrade options prior to including them as an option for referendum. She elaborated on the necessity of an auditorium and STEM curriculum, as well as on a plan to continue to maintain Leona Doubek until a better overall elementary plan is devised.

Jeff Purnell stated that he believes the District needs an auditorium and that there should be focus on knowledge, education and opportunity.

Tedd Zess expressed to the Board that he believes Leona Doubek is a critical issue that needs to be addressed and that Prairie View was designed for only three grades and because of that, it is not ideal to add students to that building. He also encouraged the Board to focus on safety and security needs of the District and to create a referendum that addresses the critical needs of the District as well as one that is guaranteed to pass.

Sue Griffin stated she believes the previous referendum did not pass due to poor advertisement. She commented on a flyer that discouraged voting “yes” for the referendum and how that affected the

results. She also voiced her opinion on needing an auditorium and how other districts are using an auditorium for profit, as well as a community outreach.

Martha Purnell thanked the individuals that chose to speak at the Board meeting and explained her experience of shadowing her high school daughter during a normal school day. She expressed that she believes that there are needs in all buildings, but the Board should focus on the high school and an auditorium. She also encouraged that the school Board collaborate with the city and village Boards.

Tim Griffin endorsed the original referendum including the auditorium. He elaborated on the percentage of students, District wide, that would benefit from having an auditorium and compared the amount of athletes using one of the District's athletic facilities versus the amount of students that would be using an auditorium. He stressed that the District's facilities be balanced.

Steve Lambrechts recapped that the Ad Hoc Facilities Committee determined \$41 million of District needs and that the Board was to prioritize those needs upon what the District and community needs. He also stressed the importance of taking in consideration the recommendations and experience of the experts; that if they go back with the same referendum as the first, the second is more likely to fail. He recommended to the Board that they assess the critical needs of the District and come up with a referendum that is guaranteed to pass and continues to build support for the district and community.

Dave Fridley expressed that with several students attending East Troy Schools, that he is excited for possible improvements in the District but asked the Board to consider school of choice and what attracts and keeps students within a District. He stressed that an auditorium would be a reflection of what the District feels is important; that not only academics are important, but extracurricular activities as well.

Mikko Erkamaa stated he did not know that there was a referendum during the last voting session. He also explained his belief that if the District has more to offer, it will increase student enrollment and attract people to move to East Troy which will ultimately increase home values in the community.

Kathy Mengel stressed that she believes that the previous referendum did not pass due to the community not knowing about it and that the Board should keep in mind that current students are the "springboard" to the future and they (and their parents) deserve to have an auditorium. She also read a short letter from Peter Donalds, an East Troy graduate, summarizing his pride of the ETHS drama department and his shock that East Troy still does not have an auditorium. He also wrote of his belief of theatre being a "melting pot" of cliques that brings kids out of their shell and that an auditorium would be a good source of revenue.

Sandy Brietzman explained how working for various community programs, the number one questions asked by prospective community members are "What does the District offer? What facilities

do they have?” and because of this she believes the District needs an auditorium. She also explained how she was surprised by how many people did not know about the referendum and recommended that the Board make decisions that are an investment to the students.

Brian Wexler read a letter written by Ken and Char Zess that they had asked him to read during the public participation. The letter written by Ken and Char Zess summarized that asking for the same referendum would result in failure and that an auditorium is a want, not a need. The letter also stated that an auditorium will not increase ACT scores and that the Board should consider the Prairie View site and a District wide security upgrade. They had also suggested demolishing the Leona Doubek/Chester Byrnes site; the facilities have served the District well, but it’s time to let them go. The letter also stated that children build friendships and a foundation at the elementary level, not at the high school level, so it is important to provide a modern, safe, state of the art elementary facility to build a connection with students so that they do not want to leave the District.

Brian Wexler thanked the community for their input and stated that the Board truly values and takes the input seriously. He also reiterated that the Board and District is dedicated to the students and the East Troy Community.

V. REFERENDUM OPTIONS

The Board, along with administrators and representatives from Bray Architects and Miron Construction discussed several referendum options. They began with two options from the prior meeting and one new option to discuss in further detail. Multiple other scenarios were discussed throughout the evening.

A follow up meeting was set for January 10, 2013 at 6:30 p.m. Bray Architects were directed to develop a full cost on addressing Leona Doubek with air conditioning, asbestos removal for areas that would be affected as well as any other general improvements for basic functionality.

IX. ADJOURN

A motion was made by Dawn Buchholtz and seconded by Mike Zei to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 10:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Zei