



New Castle Community School Corporation



OCTOBER 17, 2016 ~ VOL. 21-ISSUE 3

The New Castle Community School Board met in regular session at the Community Education Center on Monday, October 17, 2016. Those present were: Mrs. Nannett Polk, Mrs. Elizabeth Whitmer, Dr. Mark Davisson, Ms. Marcy Higham, Mr. Stephen Fisher, Superintendent of Schools; Mr. William Pheffer, Assistant Superintendent; Mrs. Megan Bell, Director of Finance; Mrs. Sherri Bergum, Curriculum Director; and Dr. Greg Crider, Corporation Attorney.

Others present were Nancy Dickerson, Susan Delay, Janet Maxwell, Kelli Arnold, Matt Schumaker, Liane Nickey, Tara Baker-Carter, Grace Washington, Cheri Estelle, Aimee Flynn, Gail Edwards, Stefanie Eikenberry, Debby Raines, Stefanie Renfro, Nici Shelton, Mike Summers, Cindy Summers, Regina Fuller, Michelle Frazier, Sarah Jones, Angie Jones, Laura Hart, Trent Brewster, Brandy Brewster, John Doty, Tina Lee-Hamby, Spencer Fleming, Jennifer McGowan, Amy Upchurch, Jennifer Alspaugh, Jennifer Blackford, Ben Burris, Nancy Newton, Junior Newton, Jessica Sanford, Joyce Rhoades, Jaci Hadsell, Pam Chew, Dustin Chew, Lisa Buksar, Sarah Callaway, Travis Callaway, and Kim Williamson.

The minutes from the September 12th and September 20th, 2016 meetings were unanimously approved by the Board on a motion by Ms. Higham, and seconded by Mrs. Whitmer, as presented.

On a motion by Mrs. Whitmer and seconded by Ms. Higham, the agenda was unanimously approved, as presented.

There were no public questions or comment on agenda items.

The Travel Report; Monthly Personnel Report; Bill List (Nos. 56002 through 56251); Payroll Claims and Donations; Field Trip Requests; Submitted Monthly Corporation Extra-Curricular Receipts and Disbursements; and Fund Reports were unanimously approved by the Board on a motion by Ms. Higham and seconded by Mrs. Whitmer, as submitted.

Liane Nickey, Program Director of Huffer Child Care Resource and Referral Agency, spoke to the Board on the importance of preschool programs. Henry County does not have enough high quality preschool programs or child care programs. Currently, there are over 1000 children who are not in preschool. Mrs. Whitmer noted the importance of a child being prepared to enter kindergarten. Local programs all have waiting lists. Parents struggle to find infant and toddler care in Henry County. Board members received a copy of data showing current programs available. A brief discussion was held. A video titled "Crazy About Our Kids" will be shown at the end of the meeting.

Mr. Pheffer explained details about agenda items related to the approval for the two million dollar GO bond. For over a year, the topic of borrowing money for needed repairs has been discussed.

During the board meeting, a public meeting was open to discuss what projects could take place over the next two to three years. The first expense will be to reimburse the corporation the \$500,000.00 from the Football Field project. Examples of some projects being considered included: installing safe school entries; modifications to the Middle School with the possible move of 6th Grade to the Middle School. Repairs and updates needed at the Middle School walls and doors; roof replacement; HVAC systems; electrical work and asphalt work are other examples of work needed done. These issues need to be addressed. Money spent from the GO bond can be used for any school project deemed important to the corporation.

To answer a question by Travis Callaway on what the total cost would be if all projects mentioned were done, Mr. Pheffer stated it would far exceed the two million dollars. An estimate is not yet available, but roof projects alone could be a million or two. Projects are staggered, based on safety issues, and prioritized that way.

On a motion by Dr. Davisson, and seconded by Mrs. Whitmer, the Project Hearing and Resolution was unanimously approved, as submitted. Board members previously received copies. Mr. Pheffer noted the Budget Debt Service is a certain number of pennies per every one hundred dollars of assessed value. Tax payers realize that in either property taxes or rent. Part of that tax comes from School Corporation debt service amount we have borrowed. Because the loan from the High School is being paid off, along with the two million dollars borrowed two years ago, we need to keep debt at the current level. This also allows us to take care of needed repairs. Mrs. Bell noted, due to circuit breakers, if our tax levy goes down because debt comes off, tax payers are not going to pay less. The money will go towards other tax units, or to us in other funds.

This evening's Public Hearing was advertised on September 20th. Board members previously received a copy of the affidavit. On a motion by Mrs. Whitmer, and seconded by Ms. Higham, the Motion to Include Affidavit for Proof of Publication for Project Hearing was unanimously approved, as submitted. This concluded the Project Hearing.

An Additional Appropriation Public Hearing was held. The purpose was to ask the Board for approval to spend the money. On a motion by Ms. Higham, and seconded by Mrs. Whitmer, the Additional Appropriation Hearing and Resolution was unanimously approved, as submitted. Board members previously received copies. Mr. Pheffer noted the money can be used for anything the Corporation believes important to continue education, safety, and vitality of structures. The money cannot be used for salaries, but must be used for building needs.

On a motion by Ms. Higham, and seconded by Dr. Davisson, the Motion to Include Affidavit for Proof of Publication for Additional Appropriation was unanimously approved, as submitted. Board members previously received copies. This advertisement was also made September 20th. This concluded the Additional Appropriation Hearing.

Mr. Pheffer explained the Final Bond Resolution includes several items. Ice Miller's form approving the issuance of the bonds, and the approval of the Master Continuing Disclosure Undertaking. This is regarding the Security and Exchange Commission's need to be transparent and have full disclosure. Also, the approval of the Bid Committee, made up of Mr. Fisher, Mr. Pheffer, and Mrs. Bell, who will represent the Board when bid recommendations are received.

Matt Schumaker, of City Securities, noted bids will be taken mid-November. These go to all underwriters throughout the country. Mr. Schumaker will recommend the lowest bid. The bonds will close on December 8th. Mr. Schumaker explained in the bond resolution there is a tax impact of 16 cents per one hundred dollars of assessed value, but with debt coming off, tax payers will not pay one additional dollar. On a motion by Ms. Higham, and seconded by Mrs. Whitmer, the Motion to Approve Final Bond Resolution was unanimously approved, as submitted. Board members previously received copies.

Mr. Fisher provided an update. Student enrollment was 3244 as of September 16th. This is down 77 students from last year. Teacher negotiations were completed at the end of September. He is waiting on IERB to approve them, and for the State to release grades. Teacher raises are expected in December. Discussions have taken place regarding available classroom space at the Middle School and considering moving 6th Grade students to the Middle School. The initial focus is being able to keep 6th Grade students contained in a separate part of the building. They would have separate lunch and dismissal times. The next phase would be to invest \$25 to \$30 million dollars into the building. Phase three would be to consider if the Board wants to offer additional classes and extra-curricular activities to 6th Graders at the Middle School. A committee will be formed and meetings will be held. Mr. Fisher noted he hopes to have a decision about phase one by January.

On a motion by Mrs. Whitmer, and seconded by Ms. Higham, the recommendation to adopt the Bus Replacement Plan was unanimously approved, as presented. Board member previously received copies. The Public Hearing was held during the September board meeting.

On a motion by Ms. Higham, and seconded by Mrs. Whitmer, the recommendation to adopt the Capital Projects Fund Plan was unanimously approved, as presented. Board member previously received copies. The Public Hearing was held during the September board meeting.

On a motion by Dr. Davisson, and seconded by Ms. Higham, the recommendation to adopt the Corporation Budget was unanimously approved, as presented. Board member previously received copies. The Public Hearing was held during the September board meeting. Mr. Fisher noted this reflects budget cuts made.

Included in the board packet was a copy of a Promissory Note. On a motion by Ms. Higham, and seconded by Mrs. Whitmer, this recommendation was unanimously approved, as presented. Mr. Fisher explained this is a renewal of a three year note signed in 2012 when we began self insuring worker's comp. Citizen's State Bank requested board minutes reflect this approval.

Mr. Fisher announced due to Larry Koby's retirement, Dustin Chew has been selected as the new Director of Technology, and Ben Burris will become the Network Engineer. They are also in the process of creating a Head Desktop position. Congratulations to them.

Janet Maxwell announced 54 students will be inducted as members into the National Honor Society on October 27th at 7 P.M. at Bundy Auditorium. Mr. Maxwell asked about including 6th Grade Teachers early in the discussion process about moving students to the Middle School. Mr. Fisher feels it needs to be determined if moving is even an option, before meeting with teachers.

Nancy Dickerson suggested a survey be done to get 6th Grade Teacher input. Mr. Fisher said Teachers may call him anytime, and noted Mark Schlotterbeck has conducted some Teacher surveys.

Lisa Buksar, parent of a 5th Grade student, would love to be involved in discussions about moving 6th Grade to the Middle School. She has many questions and wants everyone to have a voice in the process. Mr. Fisher welcomed her and thanked her for her interest. He noted any transition needs to be smooth as possible for the students.

Angie Jones, parent of 5th Grader, feels the process is being rushed, and has concerns about 6th Graders being with older students, and doing construction after moving the students. Mr. Fisher noted we have been discussing this option for two years. There are 10 classrooms available on the second floor, with plenty of lockers. Students would have their own area, separate lunch times, separate entrances, and be dismissed earlier between classes than older students. The committee will continue to work on all concerns.

Travis Callaway asked the difference in net cost savings by waiting for a rebuild then transitioning students, rather than moving during the build. Mr. Fisher responded that information is not yet known.

A patron suggested having the PTO Presidents, Union reps, and Principals, to speak for all concerns the parents have. Mr. Fisher thanked her for the suggestion.

Laura Hart, parent, is concerned the move is being forced too quickly, and she is not able to voice her opinion. She does not want her daughter around 8th Graders. She is upset she is just now hearing about the possible move. Mrs. Hart suggested leaving students where they are, and to invest money into Sunnyside. Mrs. Polk noted space is available at the Middle School and closing a school would be significance savings. She advised Mrs. Hart to speak to her legislature and be a voice for education. Mrs. Hart does not feel students can be self-contained and feels money and time is being wasted.

Cindy Summers, 6th Grade Teacher, asked when Teachers will be invited into discussion. Mr. Fisher responded it will be before the Board votes. Mrs. Summers also noted the smaller classroom sizes compared to what they have now. She noted Elementary Teachers have a lot of materials for the six subjects they teach and is concerned about storage. Mrs. Polk stated the committee will address all concerns.

John Doty, Co-Chair of the High School Music Department, announced the Trojan Marching Band has advanced to Semi-State competition and will perform at Pike High School this Saturday at 2:30 P.M.

This portion of the meeting adjourned at 8:20 P.M.

Following the meeting, Board members watched a 30 minute video on the importance of providing early education, child care development and special education programs. A brief discussion was held.