

**BETHLEHEM AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD FACILITIES COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, May 4, 2009**

Mrs. Michele Cann, Facilities Chairperson of the Board of School Directors, called the meeting of the Board Facilities Committee to order at 7:08 p.m. on Monday, May 4, 2009, in the Cafeteria of Broughal Middle School. Present were School Board members Dr. Craig Haytmanek, Benjamin Tenaglia, Judith Dexter, Charlene Koch, Loretta Leeson, Rosario Amato, Michele Cann, Irene Follweiler, and Eugene McKeon. Also present were Dr. Joseph A. Lewis, superintendent of schools; Stanley Majewski, assistant superintendent for finance and administration; Scott T. Gilliland, director of facilities and operations; Arif Fazil, district engineer (D'Huy Engineering, Inc.); Robert Furst, district architect (Architecture FURST, Pc); Thomas Washington, assistant superintendent for human resources; Frank Arbushites, acting director of information technologies; Mary Katona, assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction; Richard Agretto, director of special education; Anne Morton, assistant director of business affairs; Joseph Santoro, principal of Broughal Middle School; Kimberly Hayes, director of food service, and representatives from the press.

The board toured the new Broughal Middle School at 6:00 p.m.

The following items were discussed:

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR TO VISITORS –

No discussion.

DISCUSSION ITEMS –

Mrs. Cann presented agenda item A, Authorization to Expend 2009 Series B Bond Funds for the Design and Approval for the Demolition and Site Work of the old Northeast Middle School. She explained that this item was being brought before the board for approval as the timeline for starting the demolition would be approximately nine months.

Mr. Gilliland explained that the administration was looking to start the approval process for the demolition and site work of the old Northeast Middle School. The design and approval process for this project is estimated at approximately nine months. He said that this was being brought before the board for consideration so the administration could start preparing and planning for the project.

Mrs. Cann asked how long the Northampton Area School District has requested an extension of their lease.

Dr. Lewis stated that they have asked for an extension of one additional month. This would not affect the timelines for the permits and design approvals needed in order to start the project. Northampton Area School District has also offered the district some of their equipment.

Mr. Gilliland said that he has an appointment set up with Northampton next week to go and look at the equipment they are looking to donate.

Mr. Tenaglia asked if there were any changes in the packet of information that the board received last week to the packets that were handed out tonight.

Mr. Gilliland said that there was no change in information.

Mrs. Leeson wanted confirmation that the administration was only requesting to start the design and planning for the demolition of the old Northeast Middle School and that the cost for the environmental remediation design of the building would not exceed \$30,000. She asked what the budget was for the demolition.

Mr. Fazil answered that there was \$5 million carried for everything including D'Huy's design and construction, administration fee, and the environmental fee. He also said that the sooner the project is bid, the better chance the district has of having the cost come in close to the \$5 million figure due to the competitive market and the current condition of the economy.

Mrs. Leeson said that the \$5 million estimate is not included in the current bond, but it would have to be included in the "new money." Currently, the district does not have this money allotted in the current budget.

Mr. Fazil said that his statement was incorrect in the fact that the cost was not included in the current bond funds, but the \$5 million figure had been the estimate for the demolition and design process since the project was planned.

After a poll of the board, it was decided that agenda item A would appear on the Regular Board Meeting Agenda.

AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE MAY 18, 2009, REGULAR BOARD MEETING –

After discussion, the board committee agreed to bring the following agenda item to the May 18, 2009, Regular Board Meeting:

- A. Authorization to Expend 2009 Series B Bond Funds for the Design and Approval for the Demolition and Site Work of the Old Northeast Middle School

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR TO VISITORS –

No discussion.

OPEN FORUM –

Dr. Lewis said that at this point in the meeting, he would like to distribute a memo that was sent by the solicitor in response to Mrs. Dexter's question. He then asked Mrs. Dexter to reiterate her question.

Mrs. Dexter said that she asked whether or not the district was obligated to demolish the existing Broughal Middle School or if the possibility existed to establish a partnership with Lehigh University or another entity for use of the building. She also asked if when the plans for Broughal Middle School were prepared, was the bid awarded for demolition or was an alternate included to bid the demolition at a later date or not at all. She was asking as she has received some questions from the community as to if the building really had to be demolished.

Dr. Lewis said that it was not bid as an alternate; the bid for demolition has been awarded. If the district did not follow through on the demolition of the existing Broughal Middle School, it could be considered a breach of contract. Dr. Lewis also said that extensive conversations have been held in the past with the former president of Lehigh University as well as Lehigh's director of facilities to see if they had use for this building. This option has been exhausted. He said it was an impractical process and asked the board to be realistic.

Mr. Amato said that the plans were submitted to the Pennsylvania Department of Education under the condition that the existing building was to be demolished. The plot plans need to be adhered to, and if they are not, there would be extensive cost to the district to change the plans that were already approved.

Mr. Gilliland stated that the district has already received approvals for the demolition. If the decision was made that the old Broughal Middle School was to remain, the district would have to go back to the Pennsylvania Department of Education as well as the City of Bethlehem to obtain new permits and approvals. The issue of storm water runoff would still have to be addressed.

Mr. Amato asked what the practicality of this was.

Mr. Fazil reminded the board that when the project was being designed, he went through "great lengths" to incorporate the alternate of not demolishing the old Broughal Middle School. That option was denied by the state. If this was something that the board wanted to consider, the approval process would have to start over again. Mr. Fazil also said that district does not have the option not to demolish the building with the current approvals.

Mr. Amato said that it would cost the district a substantial amount of money to change these approvals.

Mr. Gilliland stated that he has talked to the contractor and states he has already signed the demolition contracts with the contractors. It would cost he and the district a substantial amount of money to be released from these contracts.

Mrs. Koch said that she remembered conversations between the district's previous superintendent and Dr. Lewis with Lehigh University. She said that it was not the fact that

Lehigh was not interested, but rather that their board of directors was not interested. She said that her understanding was that Lehigh was not interested in the building itself, but only the land that it was on. She said that Lehigh did not plan on preserving the old Broughal Middle School; they planned on tearing it down.

Dr. Lewis asked the board if they were interested in possibly trying to reverse the approvals and contracts for demolition.

Mr. Amato asked if the district was going ahead with the original plans.

Mrs. Dexter stated that she was not making a motion to change the plans for the school.

Mrs. Cann asked the board if they wanted to vote on changing the approvals to leave the existing building up.

Mrs. Follweiler said that nothing was brought up other than a question. At this point, there was nothing to vote on.

Dr. Lewis said that it would cost the district considerable dollars to change the approvals and contracts. He also said that we cannot expect Lehigh to “throw millions our way” for the building. There would be fees for new permits, designs, and approvals; the issue of storm water runoff would still have to be addressed. If the existing building were to remain, it was possible that it would not be easy to correct storm water runoff. An intricate system may have to be installed to correct it.

Mrs. Dexter said that she was asking a question of what was already approved because of the questions she received from the public. There were people in the community that were interested in preserving the building and they wanted to know the status.

Mr. McKeon said he suggested that if the building were to be sold as is, the fees for the changes in approvals should be paid by the buyer and not the district.

Mr. Antalics asked if he could speak as he did not hear the announcement made for Courtesy of the Floor.

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR TO VISITORS –

Stephen Antalics, 737 Ridge Street, Bethlehem: Mr. Antalics said that the old Broughal Middle School does not have to be demolished to install athletic fields. He said that he spoke with the Pennsylvania Department of Education and athletics are not mandatory. They are considered an extra-curricular activity. He said that there were people in the community that were interested in preserving Broughal Middle School. He asked if the district was willing to exchange a historic building for athletic fields. He told the board that they should preserve the building.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:31 p.m.

Page 5 of 5
Facilities Meeting Minutes
May 4, 2009

Minutes prepared by:

Kristen M. Snyder, Secretary to the Director of Facilities and Operations

Scott T. Gilliland, Director of Facilities and Operations