

**BETHLEHEM AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD FACILITIES COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, APRIL 4, 2011**

Mrs. Loretta Leeson, Facilities Chairperson of the Board of School Directors, called the meeting of the Board Facilities Committee to order at 6:01 p.m. on Monday, April 4, 2011, in the Dining Room of the Education Center. Present were School Board members Loretta Leeson, William Burkhardt, Benjamin Tenaglia, Michele Cann, Irene Follweiler, Michael Faccineto, Aurea Ortiz, and Eugene McKeon. Also present were Dr. Joseph J. Roy, superintendent of schools; Dr. Jack Silva, assistant superintendent for education; Stacy Gober, assistant to the superintendent for finance and administration; Mark Stein, director of facilities and operations; Arif Fazil, D'Huy Engineering, Inc.; Ann Behers, operations manager; and representatives from the press.

The following items were discussed:

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR TO VISITORS –

None.

DISCUSSION ITEMS –

Mr. Stein thanked the board and Dr. Roy for the opportunity to join the Bethlehem Area School District. He briefed them on his educational and employment background, and then outlined item number two on the agenda, Entry Plan. Mr. Stein explained that elements of his entry plan included learning, listening, communicating, managing, changing and exceeding expectations. The first part of the plan, learning, is underway as his first week with the district has been about learning the maintenance department and the various aspects it handles. Listening is about understanding the missions and parties of educating the Bethlehem Area School District students; how do we support that mission, and what are our challenges in successfully meeting those needs? Communicating is about encouraging a “free flow” of information between team members and emphasizing the importance of those tasks in support of our core mission. Mr. Stein continued to explain that managing is about identifying, assessing, making decisions, implementing controls, and supervising actions; also encouraging employees to be innovative by trying better and smarter ways to accomplish tasks. Exceeding expectations is about doing things right the first time, and also inspiring confidence of our department and confidence in our department, and build personal trust along the way. Mr. Stein said that he will strive to meet with all administrators and key employees, and walk all of the buildings spaces within his first few months here. He said that he will establish goals and priorities and align those goals with “our roadmap” for education. Mr. Stein then outlined his priorities that he felt were the first that should be tackled. These included the budget, understanding people and processes, the energy program, and the long term capital plans.

Mrs. Leeson thanked Mr. Stein and welcomed him to the district. Mrs. Leeson then asked Mr. Stein to explain item number three on the agenda, Nitschmann Middle School Air Conditioning Concern.

Mr. Stein explained that at Nitschmann Middle School, there are two rooms utilized by two teachers teaming to educate both special and regular education students. The rooms are interior windowless classrooms that have an air conditioner unit that is no longer working. In order to address this issue, Mr. Stein said that he is investigating the replacement of a thirty-four year old condensing unit on the roof that has long out-lived its useful life. This past Friday, representatives from D'Huy Engineering Inc. (DEI) and the maintenance department conducted a field survey to investigate some options. One option is to replace the existing air handler with residential units at an estimated cost of \$25,000. Mr. Stein stated that the board must recognize that this is not a full solution, but rather that we are trying to extend the life of an old facility. Mr. Stein stated that the administration was seeking authorization to include an alternate bid for these units in the Nitschmann Middle School boiler project that is currently in design and not yet bid.

Mrs. Leeson asked Mr. Stein for clarification that a large part of Nitschmann Middle School is currently not air conditioned, and also that there are other rooms within the school that do not have access to air conditioning.

Mr. Stein answered that Mrs. Leeson was correct in stating that portions of the building were not air conditioned. The other areas in the school that do not have access to air conditioning have windows that can be opened. The two areas being discussed do not have access to windows as they are interior classrooms.

Mrs. Leeson asked Mr. Stein if there were any unused classrooms at Nitschmann Middle School that the district was aware of.

Mr. Stein answered that there were no unused spaces according to the building principal.

Mr. Follweiler asked Mr. Stein if the \$25,000 was the estimated cost of a new unit.

Mr. Stein answered that the approximate cost of \$25,000 would include removal of the old unit as well as the installation of a residential split unit that would provide air conditioning to the interior rooms. Mr. Stein continued to explain that commercial units would cost approximately \$25,000 each; this is why the administration is proposing to have residential units installed in the interim as the building will hopefully be renovated within the next ten years.

Mrs. Follweiler then reviewed the options for replacement of the air conditioning units. The first option would be to replace them with commercial units and also the most expensive option, the second option, which is what is being proposed, would be to replace them with the residential units, and the last option would be not to replace them at all.

Mr. Stein said that Mrs. Follweiler's statement was correct; however, when he visited the building last week, he noted that the room was an uncomfortable temperature when the outside temperature was about forty-five degrees.

Mrs. Cann said that her son attends Nitschmann Middle School, and she asked him about the room temperatures at the school. He stated that the interior areas, without being prompted, were hot, the rooms with access to outside windows were “okay”, and those areas with air conditioning “felt like school”. Mrs. Cann said that students do not feel like they are in school when the classrooms are hot or uncomfortable.

Dr. Roy said that he wanted the board to know the air conditioning units will not be fixed this spring. The boiler project is slated to be completed over the summer months, so if these rooms become too hot to use, the school will have to find alternative rooms to place the students.

Mrs. Ortiz asked how big the classrooms were. She asked if the district has investigated the free standing air conditioning units that do not require windows.

Mr. Stein answered that they were typical classroom size, which was about nine hundred square foot each. He said that the free standing units Mrs. Ortiz was referring to were smaller residential units that would not be appropriate for these spaces.

Mr. Burkhardt asked if these rooms were always classrooms.

Mr. Fazil answered that these spaces were originally designed as classrooms when the building was built in 1957. When the addition was added in the 1970’s, these rooms then became interior rooms and air conditioning was added. Mr. Fazil said that it is a requirement of the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) that to qualify as classroom space, interior classrooms without windows be provided HVAC.

Mrs. Leeson asked if there was any way these two classrooms could be moved to Broughal Middle School to eliminate the need to install air conditioning.

Dr. Roy said that would be a challenging task as this classroom is a seventh grade regular education room, and the students would be elsewhere during the day when there were other activities going on.

Mrs. Leeson asked if there was any other space in the building that could be used in lieu of replacing the units.

Mrs. Cann said that Nitschmann Middle School is a school and should feel like a school. She felt that the air conditioning units should be replaced.

Mrs. Leeson said that she would like to investigate if there was any other space that could be used at the school before the alternate bid was awarded.

Mr. Fazil said that if a decision was not made soon regarding including the air conditioning units as an alternate bid on the boiler project, it would not be able to be included at all.

Mrs. Leeson wanted confirmation that the advantage to including the air conditioning in the boiler bid was that hopefully a better bid would be received if both projects were bid together.

Mr. Fazil said yes, this was correct, and the district would also save overhead costs.

Dr. Roy said that the air conditioning project is being bid as an alternate, so the district does not have to award it. He said that we can wait and see what the bids come in at before a decision is made if the unit will be replaced or not.

After a poll of the board, it was decided that the air conditioning unit could be included as an alternate on the Nitschmann Middle School boiler project bid.

Mr. Fazil then explained item number four on the agenda, Energy Update. The energy policy has been reviewed and is on target. He also said that a formal written report will be distributed and reviewed. A decision will need to be made how it will be disseminated as there is a significant amount of data and information in the report. Mr. Fazil stated that the solar projects are well under way; James Buchanan and Spring Garden Elementary Schools as well as East Hills Middle School are all "online", which means that the buildings are producing and using solar power. At the next meeting, Mr. Fazil said that it is possible to look at the dashboard to see what the panel is producing. Hopefully, the dashboards can be integrated into classroom education to be used as a teaching tool. Mr. Fazil stated that at the next regular board meeting, the architect for Broughal Middle School, Robert Furst, was invited to attend as the LEED Gold Certificate and plaque have been received. Mr. Furst would like to present these certificates to the board. Mr. Fazil noted that this was a big deal as Broughal Middle School is the only school in the Lehigh Valley area that has achieved this level of certification, and there are only a few other schools throughout the state that have achieved this level.

Mrs. Leeson thanked Mr. Fazil for sharing the information about the LEED Gold awards. She stated that she was personally very proud of the achievement and the school.

Mrs. Follweiler asked if the potential financial savings could be restated for the solar projects.

Mr. Fazil said that the estimated savings should be approximately \$1.6 million in savings over the next twenty years.

Mr. Stein then updated the board on sinkholes that have appeared around the district. Two sinkholes have been identified at East Hills Middle School, one of which is on the football field. There was also another sinkhole identified at Marvine Elementary School. The contractor has been mobilized and will investigate the sinkholes. Mr. Stein then requested approval from the board to solicit bids for two contracted services that must be in place by July 1, 2011. One service is for the elevator preventative maintenance contract, and the other is for the fire alarm maintenance contract.

Mrs. Leeson wanted confirmation that these services are something that the district normally has done each year.

Mr. Stein answered that her statement was correct. The elevator preventative maintenance must be completed in order to obtain certification from the state; the Department of Labor and Industry requires the district to maintain certification of our elevators, and the contract will also provide the service to keep the elevators functioning properly and safely. The fire alarm testing and inspections are required by the local jurisdictions; this service ensures that the operation of the fire alarms is in accordance with the local codes.

After a poll of the board, it was decided that the administration could solicit bids for the elevator preventative maintenance and the fire alarm maintenance.

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR TO VISITORS –

Stephen Antalics, 737 Ridge Street, Bethlehem: Mr. Antalics suggested that the board inquire if the shuttered churches within the district could be a source of taxable income. He said that he suggested this to the board approximately one to two years ago.

Mrs. Leeson said that the district did follow up with his suggestion, and the district has gotten assessments on the closed churches.

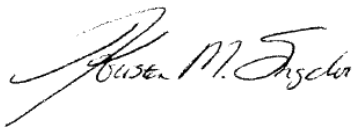
Mr. Antalics stated that St. Joseph's Church is assessed at \$160,000. This could relieve some of the district's burden.

Donna Sayegh, 1629 West Broad Street, Bethlehem: Ms. Save said that she was a student in the area and currently obtaining her master's degree. She said that she is trying to get involved in the city because she is interested in the education of children. She said that she has been hearing a lot about Nitschmann Middle School being under utilized by the students. Ms. Save suggested reconfiguring the school to better meet the needs of the students.

OPEN FORUM –

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:35 p.m.

Minutes prepared by:



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



Mark Stein, Director of Facilities and Operations