

**BETHLEHEM AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD FACILITIES COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, JUNE 13, 2011**

Mrs. Loretta Leeson, Facilities Chairperson of the Board of School Directors, called the meeting of the Board Facilities Committee to order at 6:41 p.m. on Monday, June 13, 2011, in the Auditorium of East Hills Middle School. Present were School Board members Loretta Leeson, William Burkhardt, Benjamin Tenaglia, Michele Cann, Irene Follweiler, Michael Faccinotto, 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, district engineer, D'Huy Engineering, Inc.; Frank Arbushites, director of technology; Ann Behers, operations manager; and representatives from the press.

The following items were discussed:

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR TO VISITORS –

Jeremy Schuler, 397 Birch Drive, Nazareth: Mr. Schuler stated that he is the Hurricane Basketball Club president, and he attended the meeting tonight to speak to the board regarding Board Policy 707. He said that previously, the club has spoken to the board about not making any changes to the policy. The club was given a directive by the board to review more efficient ways of using facilities to reduce costs for both the club and the district. Mr. Schuler said that the board has received a proposal from Bethlehem Area Basketball League, which is a league that is being created to combine the efforts of both the Hurricane Basketball Club (HBC) and the Bethlehem Township Athletic Association (BTAA). What has been determined is that this new partnership could possibly save the district approximately \$19,500 as a result of combining schedules and also by training volunteer site managers. This training would be at no cost to the district. Mr. Schuler noted that the estimated costs for 2011-2012 would be approximately \$7,956 for the district. The total costs for the 2010-2011 school year for HBC and BTAA leases were approximately \$35,445; next year, he anticipated the costs to be approximately \$15,912. He stated that the BTAA and HBC represent about 75% of the costs for all Class IA leases. Mr. Schuler said that he hopes the board recognizes the hard work that has gone into reducing costs to the district and the community. He asked to board to please take the proposal from the BABL into consideration.

DISCUSSION ITEMS –

Mr. Fazil then explained item number two on the agenda, Energy Update. He said that in late January, the board approved the lighting retrofit prototypes. The readings have been taken for the actual occupancy, time periods the lights are on, and the areas. This information substantiates what was assumed. Mr. Fazil explained that the prototypes will be implemented shortly, and when the students return in September, more information will be gathered to verify the calculations. He noted that there was a change in the rooms that will have the prototypes installed; the classroom lighting at Spring Garden Elementary School will not be installed, but

instead, classroom lighting at James Buchanan and Freemansburg Elementary Schools will be completed. He explained that the reason this is being done is because there is already installation slated to be done at James Buchanan in the multi-purpose room, and the light fixtures at Freemansburg are more representative of a typical building. Mr. Fazil stated that the lighting retrofit prototypes will be installed as follows: East Hills Middle School auxiliary gym, James Buchanan Elementary School multi-purpose room and two classrooms, and Freemansburg Elementary School two classrooms.

Mrs. Leeson asked if there was any additional cost because of the change of locations.

Mr. Fazil said no, there would not be any additional costs, but the only item that may change is the Act 129 rebates. This was because they continue to change, and there is a new rebate program coming out.

Mr. Burkhardt asked if any electricity is being generated at the sites that the solar panels were installed.

Mr. Fazil answered that yes, there is electricity being generated at James Buchanan, Spring Garden, and Farmersville Elementary Schools, and East Hills Middle School. James Buchanan has been online since February. The only item that is still pending is to bring the building principals together to do an introduction, and to bring an update to the board. Mr. Fazil noted that we are also waiting for the “pulses” from PPL Electric Utilities, Inc. to be completed; he explained that pulses are the integration of the meters so the district can see exactly what is being purchased off the grid, what is being consumed by the school, and what is being generated by the panels. Currently, we have the information of what is being generated by the panels, but the other two pieces will be integrated by PPL Electric Utilities, Inc. soon.

Mr. McKeon asked what the status was of the Freedom High School solar canopy project, and if the township has approved the plan.

Mr. Fazil answered that currently, he is waiting for final drawings from Tangent Energy Solutions. This project proved to be more complicated because of the permits required and the approval process. He said that he believes this will be completed before school is back in session for the 2011-2012 school year. Mr. Fazil explained that as far as the township is concerned, the land development approval has been received, but the building permit drawings, which are the detailed electrical and foundation drawings, have not been submitted yet.

Mr. Stein then explained item number three on the agenda, SPARK Building Discussion. He said that the district has been contacted by interested parties inquiring about the future use of the facility. At this time, the board has three options to consider for the building; vacate and close, lease, or sell the property. The administration is requesting direction from the board on what they wish to do with the property. Mr. Stein then explained each of the three options in further detail for the board, and said that with whatever option they choose, there will be a cost for the fiber lease termination. This year is the final year of the lease agreement that provides fiber from the SPARK building to the Freedom High School server room. This is an approximate cost of

\$21,600 to end this lease. Mr. Stein said that at this time, the administration is recommending that the board consider the possibility of leasing the property.

Mrs. Leeson asked if there was currently any interest from any outside parties of leasing or purchasing the property.

Mr. Stein answered that there has been interest from two to three different parties in leasing, but he has not heard from anyone about wanting to purchase the property.

Mrs. Leeson asked what the market value for a monthly lease would be, and if the parties who are currently interested in leasing have expressed any interest in purchasing the property.

Mr. Stein said that the monthly rate for a lease has yet to be determined, and there has not been any inquires or discussion about purchasing the property.

Mrs. Follweiler asked what “avoid spending \$35,000 per year” represented under the leasing option.

Mr. Stein explained that the \$35,000 per year represents the utility costs to run the building; this includes electric, gas, water and sewer.

Dr. Roy said that if the building remains in use, it would cost approximately \$35,000 per year to operate the building. If the building is leased, the lessee would be responsible for the utilities.

Mrs. Follweiler said that during the discussion of the fiber lease, there were a few board members who wished to delay the approval of it due to the potential of the SPARK building closing. She asked if the termination fee was for the contract that was approved this year and wanted to make sure that the \$21,600 was to cancel the contract.

Mr. Arbushites answered that the district is obligated to pay the first year’s cost on the lease; this is the “exit plan” as far as the provider is concerned.

Mrs. Follweiler asked if there was a way to “repurpose the contract”.

Mr. Arbushites said this particular lease is for a unique piece of fiber that goes from Freedom High School to the SPARK building, and did not believe that it could be used for another purpose.

Mrs. Follweiler asked what the approximate square footage was of the district’s two smallest elementary schools.

Mr. Stein answered that the two smallest schools were about 38,000 square feet each.

Mr. Faccinetto said that he would like to see the building leased at a fair value, but if the building cannot be leased, he would agree to sell the property. This building was specifically purchased for the SPARK program, and he believed that there was no other use for the building.

After a poll of the board, it was decided that the administration could pursue leasing the SPARK building.

Mrs. Leeson then explained item number four on the agenda, Board Policy 707 – Lease – Second Reading Discussion. She stated that the board has struggled with Policy 707 for a few years as it has been revised numerous times. In April 2011, the board asked the administration for an amended policy to make sure that all community groups could use the facilities at no additional cost to the district, but also, that the district was not going to attempt to make any money on these groups. Mrs. Leeson said that the HBC and BTAA have come up with a “wonderful and unique idea” to share the spaces and reduce the costs to the district. She said that the board reviewed the proposal from BABL. Mrs. Leeson said that it was asked if the community groups could charge their participants one to two dollars per event to cover their costs.

Mr. Stein answered that nothing in Policy 707 precludes these groups from charging a fee; however, it may be against their own bylaws or structure.

Mrs. Leeson said that the board also requested to know what other school districts are doing as far as charging fees to their youth athletic organizations.

Mr. Stein answered that after reviewing five surrounding district’s lease policies, it was determined that some are requiring groups to pay, while others do not. Based on the information that was presented to the board, the administration is requesting direction on Policy 707. There are two options to consider; one is to continue the subsidy for Class IA organizations, the second is to end the subsidy.

Mrs. Follweiler stated that she was in favor of training volunteer site managers to cut costs. She wanted to make sure that the number of site managers who would have key access to the buildings would be limited, and also that there would be a documented training program in place. She also asked if a district paid custodian would be on site during the times that the events are taking place.

Mr. Stein answered that for all events requiring a site manager, there would be a district paid custodian on duty. The custodian would be the “key holder” and believed that handing out keys to the district’s buildings poses a security concern.

Dr. Roy said that another advantage to having a custodian on site is that the gyms or areas being used on the weekends will be cleaned up and ready to be used when the students return to school on Mondays.

Mrs. Leeson said that in 2010-2011, it cost the district \$23,572 to support these programs. She said that at this time, she is assuming that this money is included in the 2011-2012 budget. She

believed that by ending the subsidy to the community groups, the district would be able to reinstate the middle school soccer program.

Mrs. Cann said that these community groups are not any different from the middle school soccer clubs, as the athletes that are participating in these sports are the district's future high school athletes. She believed that they are not two different programs; they are one in the same.

Mrs. Leeson noted that she respectfully disagreed with Mrs. Cann in that the district already had a basketball program in place at the middle school. She said that while she supports the HBC and BTAA, they are outside programs and outside organizations.

Mr. Faccinetto asked if there was any way the district could fund both the clubs and the middle school soccer program by finding \$8,000 somewhere else in the budget.

Dr. Roy said that the proposal from the BABL that reduces the district's costs does free up some money. That, combined with looking at other areas of the budget, may lead to ideas and proposals for funding middle school soccer.

Mrs. Leeson said that last year, the HBC and BTAA did spend \$23,000 as well; their proposal has them spending much less. She believed that they would be able to afford the fees if the district ended the subsidy.

Mrs. Follweiler asked if there was any way the fiber lease could be negotiated so the district would not have to pay the termination fee; that money could then be used to fund the middle school soccer program.

Mrs. Leeson said that the board needs to make a decision if the policy will be amended so that there will be no cost to the district, or to accept a policy that the district continues to subsidize these groups.

Mr. Burkhardt said that he wanted clarification on which version of the policy would be implemented if the district decided to continue to support these groups at a cost not to exceed \$8,000; this figure was mentioned in paragraph four of the letter that the board received explaining Policy 707.

Dr. Roy explained that the proposal from BABL was their proposal to reduce costs to the district while recommending that the policy remain the same.

Mrs. Leeson said that by keeping the current policy, the district would still incur charges of approximately \$8,000 per year to support these groups.

Dr. Roy said this was correct, but the costs have been cut; they have been reduced from \$25,000 per year to \$8,000 per year. He explained that option one is to keep the current policy because BABL has come up with a way to reduce costs, and option two is to change the policy to eliminate the entire Class IA classification.

Mrs. Leeson said that if the policy were changed to eliminate the Class IA classification, the BABL will spend \$15,900 versus the \$25,000 they spent the prior year. If the policy is to remain unchanged, the costs will be shared at approximately \$8,000 each. The board must decide if they want to amend or not amend the policy.

Mr. Burkhardt believed that it was reasonable for both the district and the BABL to each spend \$8,000. He said that this shows that the district was truly interested in receiving the BABL's input.

Mrs. Follweiler, in referring to the document regarding the athletic field usage, wanted clarification that the charges were for field use versus gymnasium use.

Mr. Stein said that currently, the district is not charging a fee for Class IA's to use athletic fields. If the policy were changed to eliminate the Class IA category, not only would the BTAA and HBC be affected, but also numerous other organizations. They would then be required to pay field use fees according to the recommended rental charges.

After a poll of the board, it was decided that the policy would remain unchanged.

Mr. Stein then explained item 5-A on the agenda – Freemansburg Elementary School Office Air Conditioner Update. He said that the existing 1992 air conditioning unit in the main office area has failed and must be replaced. This project will cost approximately \$30,000, and because of the nature of the repairs, the job must be completed over the summer months.

Mr. Tenaglia asked if a new HVAC system was being installed, or if a smaller component, such as a compressor, was being replaced.

Mr. Fazil answered that some components of the existing system will be reused such as the controls and hot water system; the air handler and roof top condensing unit will be replaced. These must be replaced due to compatibility issues; the existing system is an old R-22 system that is no longer made, and in order to be compatible, both units must be replaced at the same time.

Mrs. Leeson asked how this project will be funded.

Mr. Stein said the project will be paid for out of 2011-2012 operating budget.

Mrs. Leeson asked if the district had any other buildings that are not air conditioned.

Mr. Fazil answered that Nitschmann Middle School, and the Rosemont and Monocacy buildings do not have air conditioning. The air conditioning project for Freemansburg Elementary School is specifically for the office suite.

After a poll of the board, it was decided that this item could appear on the Regular Board Meeting agenda.

Mr. Stein then explained item number 5-B on the agenda, Fountain Hill Elementary School Domestic Hot Water System Update. He said that there is a 1,000 gallon hot water heater that was installed in 1966; this tank is beyond its useful life and is currently leaking. The plan is to replace this tank with a more efficient and smaller heater. Currently, the existing hot water heater must be run around the clock to keep it from leaking so profusely that it will fail. Both of the above projects are listed under agenda item F, Approval of Pennsylvania Department of Education Self-Certifications – Various Projects, for the board's approval.

After a poll of the board, it was decided that this item could appear on the Regular Board Meeting agenda.

Mr. Fazil then introduced agenda item A, William Penn Commons Update – Proposed Development on William Penn Highway Across from Farmersville Elementary School. He said some months back, he provided the board with an update on the proposed development and that the project was proceeding. The data regarding the traffic concerns at the school have been considered carefully, and to alleviate the concerns, there will be a new entrance on the north side of William Penn Highway that will access the new development, and on the south side, the entry/exit point for left hand turns will be relocated to the traffic light that will be timed by a camera. Mr. Fazil believed that this plan improves the traffic concerns significantly. He told the board that although the developers had requested a contribution from the district, he had informed them that this project will need to be completed at no cost for the district. At this time, the developers have requested that the district provide letters of support to explain that this plan will improve the traffic situations so they may try to access any funds allocated for safety road improvement funding.

Mrs. Leeson wanted confirmation that these improvements would be completed at no cost to the district.

Mr. Fazil informed her that there is no commitment of costs associated with the project construction costs; the developers were only requesting letters of support.

After a poll of the board, it was decided that this item could appear on the Regular Board Meeting agenda.

Mr. Stein then explained agenda item B, Quotations for Lawn Care Services for the Remaining 2010-2011 School Year and through January 31, 2012. He said that since the beginning of the cutting season, the district has lost two of three lawn care vendors; the recommendation is to award these seven properties to new vendors.

Mr. Tenaglia asked if the district required performance bonds when the service was bid.

Mrs. Gober responded that there was a performance bond required, and the administration will evaluate whether the performance bond will need to be executed based on the increased cost for the lawn care services.

Mrs. Leeson requested that the board be kept informed on the process of the performance bond. After a poll of the board, it was decided that this item could appear on the Regular Board Meeting agenda.

Mr. Stein introduced agenda item C, Bid Award – Fire Alarms Inspection, Testing, Certification and Repair Services. He stated that this service was bid and the administration is recommending that the five year contract be awarded to SimplexGrinnell, L.P.

After a poll of the board, it was decided that this item could appear on the Regular Board Meeting agenda.

Mr. Stein explained agenda item D, Bid Award – Maintenance, Service and Replacement of Parts for Elevators. This service was also bid, and the administration is recommending that the three year contract be awarded to Schindler Elevator Corporation.

After a poll of the board, it was decided that this item could appear on the Regular Board Meeting agenda.

Mr. Stein explained agenda item E, Quotations, by saying that there were three separate quotes for approval by the board. One quote was for a forklift for use by the Maintenance Department warehouse, the second quote was for HVAC repairs at the Education Center, and the third quote was for calendar printing.

Mrs. Leeson asked if it would be possible create an electronic calendar and only print a limited number of calendars to try to cut costs.

Dr. Roy said that the back to school newsletter will not be printed this year; this was a four to six page letter that contained a lot of the same information as the calendar. This will save the district approximately \$3,000. The annual notifications that the district is required to do will be included in the calendar.

Mrs. Leeson asked if it would be possible for the Vo-Tech to print the calendars.

Dr. Roy said that was not investigated this year.

Ms. Mickolay, administrative assistant for the superintendent of schools, stated that she checked with the Vo-Tech last year to see if they could do the printing, but they said they could not complete the calendars as they do not work over the summer months.

Mrs. Leeson asked if the calendar will be printed in black and white or color. She asked if the district could save any money by printing the calendar in only black and white.

Ms. Mickolay answered that the calendar will be printed in color.

Mrs. Leeson stated that while she understood that calendar printing is not a huge cost, she would like to look at reducing costs such as this that are considered non-academic and have little impact on the students.

After a poll of the board, it was decided that this item could appear on the Regular Board Meeting agenda.

Mrs. Leeson said that the board previously discussed the middle school soccer program; she wanted to know if there was interest from the board in trying to use some of the savings from the new lease proposal from BABL to reinstate the program.

After a poll of the board, it was decided that the administration could investigate possibly reinstating the middle school soccer program with the savings.

AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE JUNE 27, 2011, REGULAR BOARD MEETING –

After discussion, the board committee agreed to bring the following agenda items to the June 27, 2011, Regular Board Meeting:

- A. William Penn Commons Update – Proposed Development on William Penn Highway Across from Farmersville Elementary School
- B. Quotations for Lawn Care Services for the Remaining 2010-2011 School Year and through January 31, 2012
- C. Bid Award – Fire Alarms Inspection, Testing, Certification and Repair Services
- D. Bid Award – Maintenance, Service, and Replacement Parts for Elevators
- E. Quotations
- F. Approval of Pennsylvania Department of Education Self-Certifications – Various Projects

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR TO VISITORS –

Karen Becker, 738 Apollo Drive, Bethlehem: Ms. Becker stated that she found it disheartening to sit in the audience and listen to the budget cuts that have to be made and then listen to a discussion about the \$8,000 the district wishes to use to subsidize outside sports organizations. She believed that subsidizing these organizations does not help the intramural sports programs. She requested that the board reinstate education instead of athletics, and cautioned them that academics have been “cut to the bone”.

OPEN FORUM –

Mr. Faccinetto said that he would like to discuss section five, part B, of Policy 6. This policy refers to the Courtesy of the Floor at Regular Board Meetings and Board Committee Meetings. He said that the change was approved to limit the first Courtesy of the Floor to agenda items only, and the second to any other items the public wished to discuss. He believed this was not a good service as it appeared to be an "access" issue from the public to the board.

Mrs. Cann stated that there was concern that the first Courtesy of the Floor could get lengthy with discussion on items that were not the "business of the evening". She said that she would not have a problem with going back to a general Courtesy of the Floor.

Mrs. Follweiler said that there was a time when people who had come to the meetings to discuss agenda items were delayed until the end of the meeting because there was lengthy discussion on items that were not on the agenda. She said that if the business of the evening is not addressed during the first Courtesy of the Floor, we may lose someone who came to speak to the board.

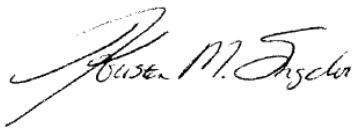
Mr. McKeon suggested leaving the policy the way it was. He believed that the meetings went quicker with discussing the non-agenda items end of the meeting. If there was a member of the audience who had a voice on an agenda item, it was possible that it would not be heard and considered before the items were voted on if they were not able to speak at the first Courtesy of the Floor.

After a poll of the board, it was decided that the policy would remain the same.

Mrs. Cann said that the only other item she would like to note was regarding Policy 707. She said that students that are enrolled in the feeder programs are generally not children that are going to expensive camps. Some of the athletes that have come out of the feeder programs in the last several years have been stars in the athletic programs and were subsidized by these athletic organizations; you never know where your star athletes will come from, and these programs provide opportunities to everyone.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:00 p.m.

Minutes prepared by:



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



Mark Stein, Director of Facilities and Operations