

Seneca Valley School District



SCHOOL BOARD SPECIAL MEETING

Seneca Valley Intermediate High School Auditorium

MINUTES

AUGUST 23, 2004

1. **CALL TO ORDER** - Mr. Berkebile called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.
 - A. **Moment of Silence** - The meeting was opened with a moment of silence.
 - B. **Pledge of Allegiance** - Mr. Berkebile led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.
 - C. **Roll Call** - Roll call by Board Secretary, Joan Rinaman, showed the following members present: Mr. Paul Adametz, Mr. Dean Berkebile, Mr. Kenneth Brennan, Mr. Anthony Evans, Mr. Robert Hill, Jr., Mr. William Paul, Mrs. Ann Reale, Mr. Anthony Storti, and Mr. Jeffrey Widdowson.

Others present included Dr. Donald Tylinski, Superintendent; Dr. Denise Chappell, Assistant Superintendent Secondary; Dr. Mary Ann Marchi, Assistant Superintendent Elementary; Mr. Lynn Stewart, Administrative Assistant for Financial Affairs; Mr. Jerome Straughter, Human Resources Director; Mrs. Linda Andreassi, Public Relations Coordinator; Dr. Matthew McKinley, Senior High School Principal; Mr. Tom Peterson, Solicitor; Ms. Beth Ewing, Parker Hunter; and Mr. John Hummel, Foreman Architects/Engineers.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

- A. Colleen Hroncich suggested the bonding projects be included in the normal budget process. There is no reason to hold off for a few months.
- B. John Stephens feels these items should have been included in the prior budget which suggests there is a disconnect between the Board and the administration. Voters should have the option to decide for themselves.

Mr. Brennan commented that the public should go to the Governor for letting this legislation through.

- C. Judith Schneider stated that Board members were elected to be conservatives and keep taxes low. The Board should wait until all options are explored.
- D. Sandra Glasser supports the last three speakers' comments. She would like to be a voice to be heard.
- E. Although she does not have children in the district, Sharon Hillebrecht also has a voice. All taxpayers should have a vote on taxes going up.

F. Brian Hroncich asserted that this bond issue is not being pursued due to the interest rates, but to get around the referendum issue. He also insisted that there will be a new Board in 18 months.

Mrs. Reale stated that she is fiscally responsible. She provided a handout that showed what Seneca Valley taxpayers pay on their property versus what they would pay in surrounding districts.

- G. In response to some earlier comments, James Muller stated that if we don't keep the schools up, people will move out of the district. He is mainly concerned with the growth at Rowan Elementary. It was explained that the numbers have been monitored all summer and in the last few weeks it was determined that three classrooms would need to be added to keep the numbers per classroom low. As contractually required, the positions were posted and the posting is up on August 24. The Board has given the administration authority to fill those positions so that a teacher will be in each of those rooms for the start of school. Mr. Muller also asked why the district does not build ahead. PDE regulations require that classrooms in the entire district must be full before construction can begin. Rowan has been at capacity, but other elementary buildings have rooms available, therefore no planning can begin.
- H. Cathy Rape feels that raising taxes each year means that something is wrong. Her suggestion is to start cutting some of the extras or leave it up to the people whether to raise taxes.
- I. Robin Redding stated that if the Board had been aware of the June deadline for construction, they would have increased taxes and then still recommended a \$34 million bond issue.
- J. Debbie Thomas discussed the overcrowding at Rowan. She is concerned whether a teacher will be prepared to begin teaching if he or she is put in place on Tuesday and will the teacher have someone by his or her side to help them. Dr. Marchi assured her that new teachers are assigned a mentor to help them for the first year. The teachers placed in these positions are professionals and will be ready to teach.
- K. Lois Steigerwald noted that she would be losing her home due to the tax increases. She has suffered a catastrophic illness and extensive rehabilitation. She feels students learned more in one-room schoolhouses than they do today.

3. ADMINISTRATION

- A. Approve a three-year transportation contract with W. L. Roenigk, Inc., through June 30, 2007. This cost is lower than with the previous carrier.
- B. Approve request of Track and Field Boosters to add a discus pad near the field house at no cost to the district.
- C. Approve request of Band Boosters to attend competitive band festival in Toronto, Canada, May 5-7. The students would miss two days of classes. This is the only trip the band has planned.
- D. Approve Student Council's request for a Raider Tater.
- E. Approve early kindergarten admission of three students for the 2004-05 school year.
- F. Award piano bid to Trombino Piano Gallerie in the amount of \$13,596. This was included in the budget.
- G. Authorize the administration to pay the following invoices:
 - 1. Classroll.com - \$24,529
 - 2. PLATO Learning Inc. - \$106,100
- H. Approve the submittal of a grant to Parent Outreach Initiative of the American Cancer Society in the amount of \$500. District matching funds are required.

Mr. Hill motioned, seconded by Mr. Storti, to approve the transportation contract, the booster requests, student council request, early admissions, piano bid, payment of invoices, and grant

submittal as listed above. Motion carried on a roll call vote with those present voting in the affirmative, except Mr. Adametz voting no.

- I. Authorize Parker/Hunter, Inc., to submit to the Board on September 2, 2004, a proposal for the purchase of the Seneca Valley School District's General Obligation bonds in a principal amount sufficient to finance the following projects:
 1. Reroofing at Connoquenessing Valley and Rowan Elementary Schools - \$2,075,823
 2. Driveway replacement at Senior High School - \$75,200
 3. District-Wide Technology Upgrade - \$750,000
 4. Senior High School Expansion - \$7,800,000
 5. Secondary Campus Water Service Infrastructure - \$323,000
- J. Approve a special meeting for 7:00 p.m., September 2, in the Intermediate High School auditorium to approve the bond proposal and personnel matters.

Mr. Hill motioned, seconded by Mrs. Reale, to approve the request for proposal from Parker/Hunter and a special meeting as listed above. It was confirmed that a ten-year useful life would be included for the technology portion of the bond. The Department of Community and Economic Development suggested that the deadline is June 2005. The Department of Education, Pennsylvania Association of School Business Officials, Pennsylvania School Boards' Association, our solicitor and investment counsel all interpret the date as September 3.

Mr. Evans questioned if there was a plan for the Senior High expansion. Mr. Hummel and Dr. McKinley were requested to put together a preliminary footprint of the changes, such as the number of classrooms, size of cafeteria, etc. for the September 2 meeting.

The district does not want to take money from the budgetary reserve to complete these projects for several reasons. These funds may be necessary to take care of an emergency situation. The health of this fund determines the rating of our bonds, which determines the interest rate we are charged. The budgetary reserve increases revenues through interest earnings.

Motion carried on a roll call vote with Mr. Evans, Mr. Paul, Mrs. Reale, Mr. Hill, Mr. Widdowson, and Mr. Berkebile voting in the affirmative and Mr. Storti, Mr. Adametz, and Mr. Brennan voting no.

4. **PERSONNEL** (Details provided in the agenda.)

- A. **Resignations** - *Professional* - Robin Ethridge; *Supplemental* - Sean McCarty; *Classified* - Mary Sheftick, Tammie Milcic.
- B. **Appointments** - *Professional* - Michelle Huffman, Jennifer McSweeney; *Long-Term Substitute* - Michele Welsh; day-to-day substitute list; *Supplemental* - Brenda Hagan, Allison Fodi, Todd Karman, Susan Finegan, Scott Stewart, Chad Brewer, Ryan Montgomery, Matthew Durst; *Classified* - Jacqueline Jones, Sandy Turner, Amy Kohl, Evelyn Stevenson, Ann Steele, Jennifer Sweeney, Jennifer Miller, Teresa Goldinger, Janet Popa (Technology Support Technician, pending appointment of replacement, salary - \$35,000); *Transfer* - Susan Brinker; day-to-day substitutes.

Mr. Hill motioned, seconded by Mr. Paul, to approve the resignations and appointments as listed above. Motion carried on a roll call vote with those present voting in the affirmative.

- C. **Other** - Gregory Christian, from Slippery Rock University, to intern with Joyce Crowley, a guidance counselor at Connoquenessing Valley Elementary School.

5. INFORMATION

- A. Information is provided in the backup on the Institute for Community Leadership in Education program.

6. **COMMUNICATION**

A. Mike Del Duca

7. **ADJOURNMENT** - With nothing further to come before the Board, Mr. Paul motioned, seconded by Mr. Storti, to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m. Motion carried on a voice vote.

Mr. Dean Berkebile, Board President

Mrs. Joan Rinaman, Board Secretary