

The Charles A. Beard Memorial School Corporation Board of School Trustees called a Regular Session to order at 7:00 pm. The meeting was held at Knightstown High School located at 8149 W. US 40, Knightstown, IN 46148. Those in attendance were:

**Attendance:**

- **Board Members:** Wade Beatty, Steve Dalton, Mark Fort, Kevin Knott, Leah Kopp, Melissa Toth, Timothy Wehr
- **Central Office Staff:** Gary Storie, Superintendent; Jena Schmidt, Administrative Assistant; Stephanie Madison, Corporation Treasurer
- **School Board Counsel:** Jack Hittle
- **School Administrators:** Scott Ritchie
- **Media:** Knightstown Banner, New Castle Courier Times
- **Patrons:** Approximately 24 patrons

**REGULAR SESSION:**

**7:00 P.M. – MEDIA CENTER**

- I. Call to Order – Meeting called to order by Board President at 7:00 pm. Roll call was taken and noted all members were present. The Board President asked the Board’s opinion on an audio recording of the proceedings. Steve Dalton moved to approve the suggestion with a second from Kevin Knott. With no discussion, motion carried 7-0. The Technology Director started the recording.
- II. Minutes - July 20, 2011 – Regular Session  
Minutes of the previous meeting were submitted for board review. Leah Kopp moved to approve with a second by Mark Fort. Steve Dalton stated “Michelle Swift” should be amended to read “Michelle White”. With no further discussion, minutes were approved as amended 7-0.
- III. Claims  
Timothy Wehr gave the report on behalf of the finance committee. He then moved to approve claims. Mark Fort gave the second and motion carried 7-0.
- IV. Public Expression
  - Dorothy Hatton, 320 N. McCullum Street, Knightstown, IN – Stated her concerns are about the solar project. She then stated she would hold her concerns for the public hearing.
  - Jim Hope, 120 N. McCullum Street, Knightstown, IN – He believes the board is not taking into consideration the community who voted them in office. He also thinks the board members should go into the community and get those opinions. “I think it is time that the School Board be turned back over to the town and listen to their concerns.”
  - Rod Cushingam, 9591 W. US 40, Knightstown, IN – Asked the total amount of indebtedness the corporation has regarding the projects already completed and how long the corp will be in debt.

- Erma Keller, 238 E. Brown, Knightstown, IN – Stated she is very proud of this school and board. She also said she was given the opportunity to watch her grandson play soccer and enjoyed the new facilities. She would like to see written expenditures and proposals and would like to know how those items will be paid. She would like the community be able to read information as well as hear items in a board meeting.

V. Public Hearing – Lease – 1028 Hearing

The Regular Session of the School Board was closed and the Public 1028 Hearing was opened at 7:17 pm. The Superintendent turned the meeting over to Bond Counsel who explained the process that would be required if the project were to proceed. The Superintendent then explained the difference between the resolution approved this past July and the resolution on the table at this session.

The resolution before the board at this meeting simply states a public hearing has been held and a decision has been made to move one step forward. There was discussion between board members of recent concerns raised by both the Department of Local Government and Finance and the State Board of Accounts. One board member stated he had not had time to review the documents and would like to consider possibly reducing the project. Steve Dalton moved to table the resolution with a second by Kevin Knott. There was some discussion of the logistics of closing the public hearing before moving forward with a motion to table. After much discussion between the Board and Bond Counsel both the motion and second were rescinded so the public could be heard.

Bond Counsel addressed the correspondence from the Department of Local Government and Finance and stated a six page response was issued. He was also in communication with Paul Joyce from the State Board of Accounts. The meeting was then turned over to the Superintendent for a short presentation.

The meeting was opened for public comments and concerns

- Richard Voris, Knightstown – Read a statement and gave a synopsis of discussions from previous meetings between board members as those discussions related to comments and votes on the solar project. The board asked Mr. Voris to please keep his comments professional and show respect to those people involved. Mr. Voris completed with his summary.
- Dorothy Hatton, 320 N. McCullum, Knightstown – Stated she was not against solar energy; however she does have questions and concerns. She would like to see the corporation have the funds to purchase and not anticipate revenue to make payments. She stated she thinks the board is planning something they hope to generate money to pay for. She is also concerned that after a twenty year lease, the solar will look different and our equipment may be obsolete. She said she is not concerned about the solar aspect, just the financing.
- Gerald Leonard, 6675 S. Grant City Road, Knightstown – Stated his concerns were related to all the negatives mentioned during the superintendent's presentation and at the completion of the lease; the corporation would not own the equipment. He has mixed emotions about the ownership as well as the possible loss throughout the years.
- Maurice Lewman, 460 Warrick Street, Knightstown – Said the school is in the education business. He believes if the company (Johnson-Melloh) wants to build this project, let them build and then sell energy to the corporation for a less

amount. He also said it is Johnson Melloh's business to build solar and the school can't afford this project.

- Rick Trautmann, 9337 S. 575 W., Knightstown – Began by stating a board member previously said this would in no way affect taxes; however in tonight's presentation a statement was made that in essence this project may indeed affect taxes. He does not feel the corporation is in any position to gamble. He commended local media on their reporting and encouraged board members to recommend a referendum. He also said that since the Board did not move that direction, he assumed the board did not want to move forward. He also said it seems the board does not want community input and is only using that of Mr. Schneider and the board themselves. His desire would be for Johnson Melloh to go to a different school and let CAB see those results and make a decision at a later date instead of chasing a timeline. He is concerned about the total indebtedness based on previous new construction.
- Barbara Hulse, 45 N Adams Street, Knightstown – She believes it is risky to tax payers and doesn't feel it is considerate or economical either. She stated the school could go a lot of years before reaching a \$4 million dollar mark. She said solar energy is not "where it is at."
- Marsha Redmon, 38 S. Adams, Knightstown – She stated her concern with the town paying for this project and then asked how many administration and teachers of the corporation actually live within the district boundaries and would be helping to pay this bill.
- Jim Hope, 120 N McCullum, Knightstown – Told the board he was a Navy man and was always taught to vote. He wants to know why this is not going before the community in the form of a referendum. He also stated it seems the board is only dealing with one gentleman. He feels the board has refused to bring an engineer from another office and the community has not gotten any figures that show this project will work. He doesn't feel the board is getting the views of the community. The Board President stated this had been on the agenda for several months and is doing its due diligence. He also stated the board is receiving public comments tonight.
- Keith Ferrell, 2925 S. 400 W, New Castle – Stated his belief that the state does not have enough sun annually to warrant this solar project. He asked the board to check out the sunshine and also what the rest of the state is doing. He doesn't believe the board is doing this to save money.
- John Swartz, 7704 Hyland Meadows Dr., Knightstown – Stated he has personally gone to Indianapolis to see what this company (Johnson-Melloh) has to offer. He has witnessed, on a cloudy day, how much energy solar panels can produce. He also thanked a board member for taking time to speak with him. He then stated he is in favor of the project.
- Rod Cushingam, 9591 W. US 40, Knightstown – Informed the board he installed a solar system 11 years ago at his residence and it has been a cash drain ever since. He stated if this goes through without a referendum, in essence this corporation is buying two houses in the community for the next 17 years. He also mentioned he previously worked in a cutting edge career and within 6 months, the company was bankrupt because of the constant change in technology.
- Ron Short, (business) 625 W. Main St, Knightstown-(home) PO Box 146, New Lisbon – Began by saying he has been in business in Knightstown for over 20

years. He has seen the negligence of the town counsel and commends the school board and the Superintendent for taking a look at something that is potentially very advantageous. He believes the community is upset because of the cost and also commends Johnson-Melloh for the care and planning of this project and feels it was very well explained, discussed and presented. He also believes that Johnson-Melloh should give some kind of insurance to the corporation that would offset any additional costs.

- Tom Allison, Carey Street, Knightstown – He began by saying he has attended several board meetings, and thinks this school district is not in a position to be borrowing money in a credit card fashion. He believes this is about good people making bad decisions that are based on people who have a vested interest in the outcome. He went on to say that Carthage has 26 empty homes and Knightstown has approximately 35 empty homes. He wanted the board to know we are looking at least several years of very lean times at all levels of government from townships through the state level. These men (Johnson-Melloh) are in a business to sell things and don't begrudge them that right. He went on to say a solar panel company in Massachusetts went belly up taking the tax payers for \$22 million dollars as did an electric car company recently. The board has received hundreds of names of community patrons who do not want this project and ended by stating "Don't do this!"
- Erma Keller, 238 E. Brown Street, Knightstown – Informed the board she has done her due diligence, and asked what other options have been explored. She also said in June, Mr. Beatty asked her to attend the wind energy meeting at the high school. She said she is a supporter of alternative energy and noticed the government is quickly closing down opportunities for advantages on these projects. She wanted the board to know she did her homework and did not come with her mind set.
- Rick Trautmann – 9337 S. 575 W., Knightstown – Apologized if his earlier statements were offensive to anyone. However thanked one of the patrons for their comments. He stated this community has stepped out and built various items for the corporation. He then asked the board not to take additional money and build something that is speculative. He believes that is the consensus of the community.
- Jim Hope – 120 N. McCullum Street, Knightstown – He said he understands he can sometimes be an embarrassment, but he loves this town. He stated the corporation has many kids on free lunches and we can't afford this project. He also said the community doesn't mind paying taxes; they just don't want to take all these chances.
- With no additional patrons from the community to speak, the public session was closed at 8:53 pm.

The Board President expressed his thanks to everyone for coming and bringing their comments and concerns to the board. He also stated this was one area the board was considering in its efforts of doing everything possible to look at ways to cut costs and improve education over the long term. He informed the public that this board had to look at where the current kindergarten students will be as seniors, the board must look forward 12-13 years. He also wanted the community to know the board takes these decisions very seriously.

Steve Dalton stated he heard lots of good comments, and mentioned the board has held a ton of meetings. He would like to reduce the scope of the project to \$2 million; however that would

entail looking at a whole different set of financials. He is also aware that there would be a certain amount of fixed costs that would not change. He said he was not willing to move forward during this session, as he needs time to go over the financials. Steve Dalton moved to table the discussion on the solar project to look at other options. Wade Beatty gave the second with the addition of scheduling a special session on September 2, 2011, at which time this topic will be discussed. Mark Fort commented and expressed he was not comfortable at moving forward at this time. Kevin Knott also expressed his desire to table the decision so other options could be explored. His concerns are over the total debt that would be incurred and he would like to see more tax dollars placed within the classrooms. After more discussion, Wade Beatty moved to amend the date of the special session to August 31, 2011. Steve Dalton, who made the original motion, agreed to the amended date of the special session. Motion to schedule a special session on August 31, 2011 carried 7-0. The original motion to table resolution on the solar project was then placed before the board and opened for discussion. Leah Kopp stated the board has heard from the community and thinks focus should be placed on education not on providing solar energy. After more discussion, motion to table discussion was defeated 3-4 with Mark Fort, Kevin Knott, Leah Kopp and Melissa Toth casting the negative votes.

Kevin Knott then moved to dismiss the solar project with a second by Leah Kopp. There was much discussion among the board. Motion to dismiss the project carried 5-2 with Steve Dalton and Timothy Wehr casting the negative votes.

#### VI. Old Business

- a. The Superintendent recommended the appointment of Dan Clevenger as Girls Varsity Track Coach. Mark Fort moved to approve with a second by Kevin Knott. Motion was defeated 2-5 with Wade Beatty, Steve Dalton, Leah Kopp, Melissa Toth and Timothy Wehr casting the negative votes.
- b. Conflict of Interests – Declare any conflicts
  - i. Wade Beatty – Employer - Harvestland Coop - may do business with the corporation.
  - ii. Mark Fort – Part owner of Hoosier Outdoor Power – the corporation purchases parts from his store.
- c. Initiatives for Instructional Planning – the Superintendent gave a presentation on initiatives for instructional programs in the 2011-2012 school year. Timothy Wehr left the meeting at 9:27 pm. Kevin Knott asked the Superintendent of the possibility of getting speakers before the board in the future.

#### VII. New Business

- a. KIS Teaching Position – The Superintendent informed the board enrollment is up 20-30 students and very close to what we were a year ago. This is positive based on losing a large senior class. Our fifth grade class is currently operating on 30 students per class. The Superintendent is recommending the addition of a teacher to add a section to that grade level. Kevin Knott moved to approve recommendation with a second by Mark Fort. Motion carried 6-0.
- b. Advance from Common School Fund for Technology – The Superintendent stated the Indiana Department of Education announced the availability of funds to schools for advancement in technology. He stated these funds would be necessary to get wireless up and running in each of our schools. He also added we have some programs that require this feature. He is asking for approval to request these dollars. Melissa Toth moved to approve the recommendation with a second by Leah Kopp. After some discussion, motion carried 6-0.

- c. Language Speech Pathologist – The Superintendent stated this item needed to be eliminated from the agenda.
- d. Wellness Policy – The Superintendent recommends amending the Wellness Policy to reflect a peanut free environment within our district. He went on to say that in the interest of student safety, the corporation would no longer provide meals with peanuts, or peanut products. This would include items that are brought to schools would require they be commercially packaged so that ingredients can be checked. He said we have been informed of students enrolled with severe peanut allergies. He also informed the board training had been given to faculty on emergency measures to be taken in the event such a reaction would present itself. Mark Fort moved to approve the recommendation on first reading with a second by Leah Kopp. After some discussion, motion carried on first reading 6-0.

#### VIII. Personnel

a. Resignations/Retirements – The Superintendent informed the board of resignations received from Robert Williams, bus driver and Darren Haines, Boys Varsity Tennis Coach. Wade Beatty moved to approve the resignations with a second by Mark Fort. Motion carried 6-0.

b. New Hires – Intent Letters

- i. Jennifer Veach – Temporary teacher Grade 2 at KES
- ii. Rachel Boxell – Maternity Leave Grade 3 at KES
- iii. Emily Crider – Special Education teacher at KES
- iv. Monica Lumpkin – Grade 5 teacher at KIS
- v. Mary Ann Thomas – Part-time Speech Language Pathologist
- vi. Nathan Price – French teacher at KHS
- vii. Elizabeth Selvidge – Title I teacher at KES

Melissa Toth moved to approve all above requests with a second by Leah Kopp. Motion carried 6-0.

c. ECA Appointments

- i. Scott Morgan – Boys Varsity Tennis Coach - \$2660
- ii. Rebecca Vise – 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Volleyball Coach - \$1302
- iii. Mark Luzadder – Girls Varsity Track Coach - \$4398
- iv. Nathan Price – Volunteer Boys Soccer Coach
- v. Chase Olsheske – Volunteer Boys Soccer Coach

Melissa Toth moved to approve all above requests with a second by Leah Kopp. Motion carried 6-0.

#### IX. Superintendent Reports

- a. Financial Report – Financials are presented to the Board
- b. Report on student registration and enrollment – The Superintendent presented a report on enrollment.
- c. ISBA Communication – The board was presented with upcoming opportunities.
- d. Other – There were no other reports to come before the board.

#### X. Public Expression

- John Swartz, Hyland Meadows, Knightstown – Asked questions regarding standards in handwriting and specifically cursive writing. KES principal addressed his questions.

XI. Board Member Comments

- Melissa Toth – Stated she attended a math seminar and wanted the board to know that 100% of the Algebra I students at KIS, under the instruction of Greg Branson, passed the ECA. She also wanted to commend Jed Behny for assisting with administrative duties prior to being placed on a contract. Lastly she wanted to thank the employees who attended the picnic. She felt it was successful and it was nice to see and use the new facilities. She wanted to thank Jennifer Jacoby, Dennis Richardson and Central Office staff for their efforts and would like to see this become an annual event.
- Wade Beatty thanked Melissa Toth for all her efforts in organizing the picnic.
- Kevin Knott stated he was looking forward to this school year and wants to commend teachers for their efforts.

XII. Adjournment

With no further business to come before the Board, Mark Fort moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:09 pm.

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PRESIDENT

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MEMBER

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VICE PRESIDENT

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MEMBER

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