

The Charles A. Beard Memorial School Corporation Board of School Trustees called their special session to order at 6:00 pm. The meeting was held at the Knightstown Community High School located at 8149 W. US 40, Knightstown, IN 46148. Those in attendance were:

- Board Members: Wade Beatty, Steve Dalton, Mark Fort, Leah Kopp, Timothy Wehr, and Kevin Knott
- Central Office Staff: Gary Storie, Superintendent; David Bundy, Business Manager; Jena Schmidt, Administrative Assistant to Superintendent
- CTA President: Tom Crawford
- Media: Jeff Eakins, Bethany Tabb
- Patrons: Approximately 23 Patrons

The meeting was called to order by board president at 6:00 pm. Roll Call was taken, a quorum was present. The board president then requested to change the order of business and to conduct interviews from prospective board members first. The board was in agreement.

Kevin Knott then stated that due to the resignation of board member Ron Womack, a new member will be appointed to complete his term through June 30, 2010. Kevin Knott also thanked Ron Womack for his service and dedication. He also stated that four patrons had expressed an interest in serving on the school board. They include: Kenneth Hunter, David Irwin, Thomas Schaezle, and James Toth. He explained the process and stated interviews would be conducted in alphabetical order. The board will appoint at the regular session on August 19, 2008.

### **Interviews**

Kenneth Hunter – 145 N. High Street, Greensboro – Mr. Hunter stated he is interested in becoming more involved and active in the community. He has served on the board of advisors of Southwest Ambulance Service and has served as an EMT. He is currently a member of Greensboro Volunteer Fire Department. Steve Dalton asked his view on open government both to the community and press. Mr. Hunter responded he has not done any research and his primary source of information is from The Knightstown Banner. He was glad when new members were elected to the board. He said he likes what has been accomplished from this board, and hopes to see them continue with the progress. Steve Dalton asked what he sees as the top struggles of the district. Mr. Hunter responded a counselor in elementary schools is needed. Leah Kopp asked what he feels the greatest asset of the corporation and why. Mr. Hunter responded the staff. She then asked if he was a team player and he responded yes. Leah Kopp asked him to talk about a difficult situation and how he handled it. Kenneth Hunter stated he would be as honest and open as possible. He would gather as much information as possible before making a decision. He then stated he does this task daily with his children. Mark Fort asked his opinion on the past mistakes of the board and/or corporation. Kenneth

Hunter stated they are in the past and have been corrected at this point. Kevin Knott asked him to describe an experience from personal life that would pertain to board experience. Kenneth Hunter stated he would make the best possible decision given the information he had. If incorrect, he would deal with any consequences. He does not feel a conflict would arise if the decision has the best interests of the kids in mind. Wade Beatty asked how he would react if he were on the losing side of a vote, could he support the board. Kenneth Hunter responded yes. Mark Fort asked in light of the current financial situation, what were his thoughts on closing schools or consolidation. Kenneth Hunter stated he would prefer not to but if it came to a have to, then he would make that decision. Kevin Knott asked if he could adhere to the time commitment requirements. Kenneth Hunter stated it would be no different than being on ambulance and fire department. He then thanked the board for allowing him to speak.

David Irwin – 6474 W. 300 S., New Castle – David Irwin stated he was aware of the tough decisions ahead and with three children; he would be as involved as possible. Mark Fort asked him what he views as good and bad in the corporation. David Irwin stated the corporation has a good staff and teachers, the bad are the money decisions that were made. He stated he is aware of the good ISTEP scores at Kennard Elementary and the main thing is to provide a good education for students. Steve Dalton asked his views on open government. David Irwin stated the corporation needs to be open. He would like to see any conflicts be put to rest. There has been too much time spent in the past. Steve Dalton then asked what he feels is the biggest challenge facing the corporation. David Irwin stated the possibility of air conditioning in the elementary schools. This has resulted in closing school early and sending students' home early. Leah Kopp asked his views on the corporation's greatest asset. David Irwin stated the staff. He also stated we have a community that cares. Leah Kopp asked if he was a team player and what his personal goals are for the board. David stated he was a team player although he is not afraid to voice his opinion. His personal goals would be to decrease property taxes and improve the situation at the elementary schools. Mark Fort asked if he would work to provide the best education that the corporation can afford. David Irwin said yes, education needs to be the main focus. Kevin Knott asked how he dealt with difficult decisions. David Irwin responded it is never easy, he was a supervisor in a factory for several years and it is not popular when a hard decision needs to be made. He would do everything possible to gather all facts prior to making a decision. Kevin Knott asked if he was able to make the time commitment required. David Irwin stated it would not be a problem. Wade Beatty asked if he could vote his conscience if he were on the losing end and still support the board's decision. David Irwin stated yes and once the decision was made he could support board. Mark Fort asked what strength he would bring to the board. David Irwin stated he has business experience, has grown up in the community and with three children in the school system, he is aware of the challenges. He concluded that he would like the opportunity to serve and feels he could be a good part of the board.

Thomas Schaetzle – 4729 W 450 S, Knightstown – He stated he moved to the area in 1999, and had lived in Greenfield prior to that. He has two boys at Kennard Elementary and has become active in the school and community and built relationships with teachers. He is an executive with an IT consulting firm and has experience in business process consulting as well as IT

consulting. In 2007 he coordinated with BSU to organize, develop tactics and processes and then develop a plan and assisted in executing that plan. He stated his business and executive experiences are strengths he could bring to the board and is willing to balance all responsibilities to support and work on this board. Leah Kopp asked what he felt the greatest asset is. Thomas Schaetzle stated the faculty and the fact that we have a rural setting. He also stated the smaller class sizes and the ability that exists to work closer with students. Leah Kopp then asked what he felt were some challenges facing this board. Thomas Schaetzle stated the redistrict that is being considered as it affects his children. He also stated finding the balance required to work within the budget constraints handed down from the state. Balancing the rewards against the risks and working with those who would be affected by those decisions. Leah Kopp asked if he was a team player. Thomas Schaetzle stated affirmative and his professional history as a project manager requires mediation and negotiation as part of a team atmosphere. Steve Dalton asked his views on open government. Thomas Schaetzle stated he has reviewed the open door law and as a corporation feels openness will keep all parties honest. It not only raises the amount of communication, but will is more likely help others to be willing to become more involved and work together. Steve Dalton asked what he felt was the biggest challenges the corporation faced. Thomas Schaetzle stated that finding a balance between giving a good education and providing the funding for that education. Basically it comes down to prioritizations and communication as to why decisions are being made. It promotes a greater probability of a buy-in. Wade Beatty asked if he could support a decision if his views were in opposition. Thomas Schaetzle responded it would come down to what was best for the children. He would make a decision that would be best for the majority not the minority and the board would need to come to the table as a united force so all would benefit. Kevin Knott asked how he would make the tough decisions. Thomas Schaetzle stated he had been involved in a tough decision at his church. As a trustee, they faced selling some property that held memories and was deemed near and dear to many people personally. The group held open meetings, communicated with people, and presented the facts. He has also been a part of developing plans that would eliminate jobs. In conclusion he stated he would appreciate the opportunity to sit on this board. This would allow him to become even more involved in the community in a more formal setting.

James Toth – 4642 S. 625 W., Knightstown – He thanked the board for the opportunity to speak and stated he would soberly give 110%. He was raised in Pennsylvania and moved to Indiana in January of 2000 to become a chemist for Eli Lilly & Company. He feels he can bring a fresh perspective and has the opportunity to come in with a blank slate and without any preconceived notions. He also thanked the audience for their support and attendance. He felt the taxpayers cannot be forgotten in this process. He has taken time to review the open door law and understands the community is aware, involved and feels engaged. He also realizes the tough choices the board is faced with, requirements to accomplish more with less revenue. He stated we owe our children the best possible education and the board has a responsibility to educate and spend their money wisely. He has also researched data surrounding the graduation rate and the number of seniors seeking higher education beyond high school. Knightstown is lagging behind in this area. He stated the board should realize and impress upon students that a high school diploma is not enough. As an IHSAA official he has had the

opportunity to travel to other districts and he stated the focus on sporting events and school spirit may be lacking here and a smart program should be developed. Finally he stressed the importance of a rural setting. The quality of education is essential to make our corporation look more attractive not only to new families but also to business. The school board needs to focus on those items. He expressed that new faces, new energy, and the possibility of getting the community involved is tremendous. He also stated he feels that open government is great and the board has a responsibility to foster that sense of trust. Steve Dalton asked what he felt were some of the biggest challenges faced in the corporation. James Toth stated getting kids to think about getting that level of education beyond high school. He also expressed that the possibility of consolidation will be a big issue. Kevin Knott asked him to speak about a difficult situation and how he handled it. James Toth explained the pastor selection process in his church and how they decide by consensus instead of a vote. He was a part of that process. Working with others and coming to a conclusion for the good of all was difficult but a good experience. Leah Kopp asked what he felt was the corporation's greatest asset. James Toth stated community. His family settled here because the community is friendly and relatively safe. Leah Kopp then asked if he was a team player, could he support the board and what his personal goals were. James Toth stated he was a team player, he could support the board in their decisions, however would continue to look for opportunities to revisit some issues. His personal goals would be to make sure a facility was established to promote sporting events and school spirit and that higher education rate continues to improve. Kevin Knott asked if the time commitment was a problem. James Toth stated he does have other commitments, however this is important and he would find the balance necessary to ensure things get done.

Kevin Knott then suggested the board consider the candidates and appoint a member at the next regular session on August 19. He then suggested the board take a seven minute break and reconvene at 7:20 pm.

Kevin Knott called the meeting back to order at 7:20 pm.

### **Public Expression**

Kevin Knott went over the protocol for this portion of the meeting and asked if there were any patrons who would like to speak.

Sandra Willis - 4184 S. 625 W., Knightstown – stated her concern that her second grade student being slated for redistricting was currently receiving Title I services and would hate to see her child lose services already granted to her. She also stated the supply lists are different and she has already purchased supplies according to the Kennard list.

Amy Schaetzle – 4729 W. 450 S., Knightstown – expressed her opposition to the proposed redistrict plan as her fourth grader would also be required to change schools two years in a row and she does not feel that would be fair. She also stated it is her understanding that the overcrowding problem would be moved from Kennard to Knightstown Elementary.

Cindy Thompson - 195 S. High Street, Greensboro – She stated she is very comfortable at Kennard and over the course of many years has developed personal relationships and feels her third grade child does very well. She is concerned that her child would not do as well in a new school. She said Kennard has personally helped both herself and her children.

Shirley Heck - Principal at Carthage & Kennard Elementary – She expressed her thanks to the board and superintendent for addressing the overcrowding issue. She understands the concerns and reasons for the proposal, however she feels Kennard Elementary staff can offer technological resources that other schools cannot due to increased funding through the Title I grant. She also stated whatever the board decided she and her staff will continue to put the educational needs of the students first.

Karen Harwood - 101 W. Broad Street, Kennard – Stated her opposition to the redistrict proposal. She said this affects not only the students but also the care givers of the students. She is a caregiver to one of the students slated for the redistrict. She will now be required to travel more mileage if she needs to provide assistance to the school.

Tina Fowler – 3996 W. 400 S., New Castle – She stated she is not opposed to the redistrict proposal, however she is concerned that she was not given any advance notice. She believes her student will receive a quality education at Knightstown Elementary.

Kevin Knott informed the public that all comments are appreciated and will be taken under advisement.

### **Old Business –**

The Superintendent stated he believed all had been notified, and apologized if this did not occur. He also understands this is a tough subject with emotional ramifications. However, after registration, Kennard Elementary School had 33 second grade students and as the superintendent, the best educational decision would be to approve the redistrict proposal as presented. Due to budget constraints, hiring a new teacher is not possible. He also stated this would put fourth grade at Knightstown Elementary School at approximately 28 students per class. Steve Dalton stated his children are involved and it is his desire not to move schools, however, there are times when a difficult decision needs to be made. His research has indicated that a smaller class size is more critical at the lower level. He stated he feels the board should support the recommendation of the superintendent. Kevin Knott thanked the patrons, but after looking at the numbers he believes the board should deal with the issue and it makes the best sense to level the number of students in the classroom. Mark Fort stated this is a tough decision and the board serves for the good and the bad. He stated the board needed to look at the educational balance and do what is best for the kids. Steve Dalton moved to approve the recommendation to change the attendance boundary as presented by the superintendent. Leah Kopp gave the second. She then stated that as a board it was important to look at the education of the children and an overcrowded classroom is not in their best interest. She sympathized with the parents, but stated the opportunities available at

Knightstown Elementary School are endless. With no further discussion the motion carried 6-0. This will take effect immediately.

### **Personnel**

The Superintendent recommended approval for Medical Leave request for #2008-8-12-A. Wade Beatty moved to approve with a second by Mark Fort. The superintendent stated this approval would result in no additional expenses to the corporation. With no further discussion, motion carried 6-0.

The Superintendent recommended approving the resignations of Caylie Dicken, 5<sup>th</sup> Grade teacher at Knightstown Intermediate School and Lisa Mercer, French teacher at Knightstown High School. Mark Fort moved to accept both resignations with a second by Leah Kopp. Motion carried 6-0.

The Superintendent stated an amendment was needed for the contract of Shirley Heck. The number of days was correct, however the amount listed was for the additional five days. Therefore, her contract should be for 210 days at an amount of \$61,525.00 which includes a \$970.00 stipend for mileage between buildings. Steve Dalton moved to accept as presented with a second by Mark Fort. Motion carried 6-0.

### **Superintendent Report**

The Superintendent gave a power point presentation of the 2009 Budget. He explained the process taken by him and the Business Manager in completing the budget. He stated the maximum levy the law allows and the goal is to have a 6-7% cash balance at the end. He also explained that due to financial limitations, we will not be at that level, however the goal will be to have a balanced budget at the end of 2009. He also explained the corporation had not balanced the budget in three years, and if all goes according to plan, CAB will have a \$200,000 cash balance at the end of 2009.

Steve Dalton asked questions surrounding bus replacement costs as well as reimbursement received from the state for special services. The Business Manager estimated the cost of a bus at \$80,000.00. The Superintendent explained the budget should reflect approximately 125% of the projected expenses for special services provided through our coop.

Kevin Knott asked if the budget reflects necessary loans acquired from the corporation. The superintendent stated it does and that payback is completed as soon as tax revenue is received.

Mark Fort asked if a judgment bond would hurt the school corporation. The Superintendent stated after speaking with financial advisors, this does occur and the judgment is used as a mechanism to pay back debt. He also stated our corporation has received the AAA rating which is the highest possible rating available.

Steve Dalton expressed that as a taxpayer and board member, he appreciated the effort provided by the Superintendent and Business Manager to get the school from red and into the

black by the end of 2009. He then read a statement describing his opinion on the past practice of the school board and administration.

Kevin Knott stated we currently have a strong superintendent who will make tough decisions to move this corporation forward. Tackling these difficult issues and necessary decisions that lie ahead of this board will bring this budget process forward. He stated his appreciation of the effort made.

The Superintendent also wanted to recognize the Business Manager for his knowledge and assistance in working on the preparation of the budget. He has made strong efforts in working to balance the budget. He then asked for permission to advertise the budget.

Wade Beatty moved to accept as presented and to advertise in local newspaper. Leah Kopp gave the second and motion carried 6-0.

There was no further business to come before the board.

### **Public Expression**

John Hibbert – 8361 W. 650 S., Knightstown – he stated that he knew personnel cuts were being planned and asked that before making these cuts, each person should be evaluated as to what they contribute to the corporation. He believes some staff bring extra to the school and may hurt the students if they are cut.

Amy Schaetzle – 4729 W. 450 S., Knightstown – Expressed her disappointment on the decision to redistrict. She feels that by fixing one problem another is created.

Kim Dalton – 5690 W. 450 S., Knightstown – She asked that in future years, the board keep the boundary the same so kids aren't bounced back and forth.

Tom Schaetzle – 4729 W. 450 S., Knightstown – He also expressed his disappointment on the redistrict approval. He did question what would be the result of those students who will be losing Title I benefits. The superintendent stated a trade-off would occur between services and smaller class sizes.

Sandra Willis - 4184 S. 625 W., Knightstown – She stated she was not concerned that her granddaughter would lose Title services. She realizes the smaller classes will be of a greater benefit as teachers have more one on one time with their students. She believed the same quality education will be given at Knightstown Elementary as she would receive at Kennard Elementary.

Kevin Knott stated the decision was a difficult one and he empathizes with the parents. However he believes the reduction in class size is critical.

Steve Dalton also expressed this decision was a difficult one. He understands, but is willing to make the difficult decisions to help the second graders in their education.

Kevin Knott thanked all patrons for the comments that were given.

With no further business to come before the board, Wade Beatty moved to adjourn at 9:02 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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SECRETARY

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MEMBER

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MEMBER