

**MONROE COUNTY COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATION**  
**BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES**  
**Work Session, November 7, 2007**

**MEMORANDA**

The Board of School Trustees of the Monroe County Community School Corporation met in work session, for which proper notice had been given at 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 7, 2007, at the School Administration Center, 315 E. North Drive, Bloomington, Indiana.

**Board members present:** Jeannine Butler, Susan Daniels, Teresa Grossi, Valerie Merriam, Jim Muehling, Lois Sabo-Skelton and Sue Wanzer

**Also present:** James Harvey, Superintendent; Tim Thrasher, Comptroller; Peggy Chambers, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources and Personnel; Mary Lovejoy, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction; Mike Shipman, Director of Assessment and School Operations; Mike Scherer, Director of Extended Services; Karen Adams, Principal of Fairview Elementary; Trudy Litz, Assistant Principal of Fairview Elementary; Janet Tupper, Administrative Assistant; and Mary Krupinski, architect for the Fairview School project. In addition, three visitors were present.

President of the Board, Jim Muehling, called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. and suggested that the Board discuss Fairview first. Board members received information about and/or discussed the following:

1. **Fairview Restructuring, Location, Renovation, etc.** – Mr. Harvey referred to a letter he had received from Weddle Bros. Construction and site plans received from architect Mary Krupinski. He noted that a letter received from Kelly Abel of Weddle Brothers addressed costs of options and some shortcomings in trying to use the site during construction. Ms. Krupinski reviewed both options for Fairview, i.e. (1) renovation of a portion of the building combined with new construction, and (2) all new construction. She explained locations for bus drop-off, playground and faculty/staff/visitor parking for each option. Board members discussed pros and cons of each option. Mr. Harvey noted that with a site this small, the parameter will need to be secured and there will not be room for a green trail. Ms. Krupinski responded to specific questions posed by Board members. She said the plan now included pre-school through 6<sup>th</sup> grade. It was suggested that once these decisions are made the Board could move into the bigger picture to talk about community conversations that Board members may want to have.

During ensuing discussion, Board members talked about the size of each option (square footage), the importance of not ‘under planning’, and the cost per square foot. Mr. Harvey noted that Mr. Abel is concerned that renovated space would cost \$190 per square foot and new construction would be about \$150 per square foot. The possibility of making community services available, including a health center, continued to be of interest to the Board.

Mr. Harvey noted that Option 2 allows using the building during construction; however, there will be no on-site parking and no playground. He and some Board members suggested that Butler Park could be used for playground space during construction. It was noted that there would be a need for extra buses, which means additional traffic, to bring teachers into the building. Mr. Scherer agreed that there is some parking area close where teachers could park and ride a shuttle to the school.

Mr. Harvey pointed out several factors that impact the design of the school if we try to use the old building, such as: (1) location omits parking by the church; (2) it dictates some of the mechanical systems; (3) it dictates elevation of the building; (4) there is no way to duplicate the finishes in the old building; (5) even though a lot of money is spent, you would know when you walk out of the old and into the new part of the building.

Mr. Harvey shared information regarding upcoming changes in personnel with the Odle McGuire and Shook as well as with Veazey Parrott Durkin and Shoulders architectural firms. Noting that Martin Truesdale is the lead architect on the Tri-North and Hoosier Hills Career Center (HHCC) projects, he said a meeting had been held with him as well as with Ms. Krupinski to talk about engineering firms. He said the decision is to select one engineering firm because they will use similar mechanical systems which will be an advantage to our maintenance of the systems. He said they met with three engineering firms earlier on November 7 and selected Stare Engineering. He noted that about 95% of their work is with schools. He said they are probably the state's leading engineering firm for geo-thermal design and they think this would be a good geo-thermal candidate. Mr. Harvey said he told them that the Board has had those discussions and would like for Fairview School to be as 'green' as possible.

In response to questions, Ms. Krupinski said she has not worked with this engineering firm; however, she did reference checks and was pleased with interactions and their eagerness to collaborate as a team. Mr. Harvey confirmed that it is a small firm but one that has been in this business for about fifty years. He said with so many projects ongoing, we will need people who pay attention to detail and to our projects. He said even with a big firm, any project is assigned to a group. He said based on conversations it seems there may be a relationship worked out between Mr. Truesdale and Stare Engineering so that he comes under their umbrella. Mr. Scherer added that Mr. Truesdale has already done a lot of work for Tri-North and HHCC.

Mr. Harvey summarized his discussion by noting that Ms. Krupinski listened to the Board in capturing all the elements that were talked about for Fairview. Board members expressed thanks to Ms. Krupinski for her hard work.

In response to additional questions, Mr. Scherer said based on Board approval, a relatively accurate estimate of costs will be needed to hold a 1028 hearing. Mr. Harvey said according to the initial facilities plan, the projected start time for Fairview construction is March, 2009. He said the most current plan starts Fairview three months later and it is expected to take two summers and a school year to finish the project. He said it will take about 10 weeks to get the old building down and site work done after the new building is constructed and the worse case scenario would be that children will have to play in the park into the fall of 2010.

Mr. Harvey asked if Board members agreed this is enough information to talk to staff and the community and the response was affirmative. The staff will have input into how classrooms are configured.

2. **Long-range Facility Plan** – Mr. Scherer explained that the long-range facilities plan has two components that were originally in Phase II: Binford and Aurora. He said Aurora was in the 2009 Capital Projects Fund (CPF) Plan and it is about a \$750,000 project. He said after meeting with the principal they decided to move it into Phase I and it will be part of the 1028 hearing. He said the Board will need to select an architect for that project. He said Martin Truesdale is now able to devote one hundred percent of his time and if he couples with Stare Engineering, they can do more work. He explained that we are also remodeling a portion of the classrooms at Binford this summer.

Mr. Harvey explained that decisions were made regarding strategies for Phase I and it was decided to do more than originally planned. He said as a school district we have been good custodians of our facilities. He said once we start delaying or not doing projects, we will be in trouble. He noted that

Aurora is all academic space, so it was included in Phase I. He said if the Service and Administration buildings are included, they may be dropped and those would have to be done with CPF.

Mr. Harvey recalled that when the long-range facility plan was adopted in April, the public was advised that the tax rate would be kept level. He said in 2009 we will push the CPF to the maximum level. He said because of an increase in our assessed valuation (AV) and a more favorable bond environment we may be able to sell \$40,000,000 worth of bonds. He said if we do not sell that much, projects from 2009 and 2018 will be funded from CPF.

Mr. Harvey reminded the Board that its Middle School Task Force will be bringing a recommendation next summer. He said if they recommend Binford be returned to a middle school and the Board approves, if it is not included in the long-range plan now it would be out by itself. He added that we are going to DLGF (Department of Local Government Finance) with a package. He said you can always pull something out of the package but it cannot be added later. Mr. Scherer further explained that sometimes DLGF reduces the amount for non-academic projects instead of deleting one portion of the plan. Mr. Harvey noted that the Governor has moved forward with a property tax plan and if approved, the state would take over the General and Transportation Funds. He said one of the conversations the administration has had was what happens if we build a new bus garage and in four years from now the state takes over school transportation. He said that would mean statewide fleet bids on buses and then what happens to the service center. He further noted that much of this discussion has taken place with the Indiana Urban Schools Association (IUSA) group. He said there are 35 schools included in IUSA and they educate 40% of the students in the state.

Mr. Scherer explained that Aurora needs an overhaul. He said the building was given a facelift when we took it over but it needs a new roof and a general upgrade plus a small addition for a science lab. He said it also needs interior finishes and to be brought up-to-date mechanically at a cost of \$750,000.

Regarding Binford, Mr. Scherer said the school would need what was done at Tri-North. He noted that it was a middle school converted to an elementary school and then back to a middle school and back to elementary. He said the science rooms are gone and there is plenty of room to add them. He said the lockers are still in the hallways and students use them. He added that renovation planned for this summer needs to be done whether or not it is converted back to a middle school.

Mr. Thrasher said he had a financial meeting last week with Lonnie Therber (financial advisor) and we could issue up to \$40,000,000 in bonds without increasing the tax rate. He said he has no intent to do that but it is good to know that it could be done. He said he also discussed the possibility of selling bonds before we have firm bids in hand. He said it is not preferable but it is feasible; if we do not have bids we do not know what will happen with the cost.

Mr. Harvey said this clearly caps the amount of money that we have, but it goes back to the need to get CPF at the max level. He explained that we are allowed to accumulate money over a period of time in CPF and if we end up selling bonds before we have firm bids then we use CPF to supplement. He noted that we included \$1.6 million in the 2008 CPF for that purpose. He said CPF is like a savings account and we do not have to spend every penny in CPF. Mr. Thrasher agreed that it makes sense to put everything into the 1028 hearing and if it gets thrown out it can be included in the CPF plan. He said our bonds are very attractive and Mr. Therber thinks we will get a good competitive rate.

Mr. Harvey said the administration needs guidelines in terms of where to go from here. He said if the

Board votes not to put New Tech High School (NTHS) at Miller Drive, do we consider it for any other purposes or are we done with Miller Drive. He said he was invited to a meeting with a venture capital group who wanted to know the school system's interest in pursuing a stand-alone site for NTHS. He said there may be some benevolence but they are a for-profit group. He said he does not know how much time to spend pursuing some of these ideas. He said the Miller Drive property could be purchased as part of the bond issue. He said if we keep the Debt Service Fund (SDF) where it is, we could bond \$40,000,000 which is more than sufficient to do what we want to do.

One Board member said given needs for renovation of the administration and service buildings, he thought that was a consideration. He thinks it is natural to move in that direction even if NTHS is not located there. Another Board member agreed. Mr. Harvey said we don't need 26,000 square feet for office space for the service building. He said if it is purchased, some of the building would need to be converted to warehouse space.

Another Board member recalled the initial plans did not include ATS (Alternative to Suspension) and YO (Youth Outreach) programs for the Miller Drive property, although they recently have been. Mr. Scherer said money is available from the Broadview project for these programs. Mr. Harvey said he has a desire to serve more kids in these programs but there is no room to expand them at Broadview. In response to a question, he said money remaining in the Broadview project can only be spent at Broadview or it could be used to pay off the bond issue earlier if the programs are located at Miller Drive. He said there are some things we have to move, i.e. the science resource center and there are two programs coming into the HHCC where there is no space. He reiterated the question: should we pursue purchase of Miller Drive property. He said he needed to know because a current tenant wants to buy all or part of the property and other leases are up the end of November.

Yet another Board member said having had the opportunity walk around it, she thinks it would be a great asset for us to have; it also gives luxury of having room to grow. Mr. Harvey said the purchase will not be reflected totally in the downsizing or renovation of the service building. He said the School Age Care Program, Information Services and science resource center all need space. He said the administration also had conversations with the Teachers Warehouse who would like to have space; that program is operated with volunteers. He said the lease language for Miller Drive property recognizes that we have to go with appraisals and the owners know that.

Another Board member said she looks at it positively as space for the service building and other programs. In response to a question posed by another Board member, Mr. Harvey said it would be easier to gain DLGF approval if NTHS were there (because it is academic space). During ensuing discussion, Mr. Harvey said we leased part of this property last summer to keep the entire facility from getting away. He understands the Board wants to know what might be located there. He said the site on South Rogers Street is more attractive but is cost prohibitive. He said the owners are willing to find capital but they also expect to generate income. He said for example, if they knew the school system is interested and willing they could put together a 'deal' that is possible to build a NTHS that would be ready in 2009.

Mr. Harvey said another thing that surfaced today in a meeting at HHCC is the possibility of Ivy Tech leasing space at HHCC if we can accommodate. He said that would happen with the culinary arts area because they are starting a hotel management program and they do not have facilities.

Mr. Muehling noted that some Board members attended the community forum on the proposed charter school. One Board member who attended said a statement was made by the group that plans

are now formed and they want to meet with the School Board to share those plans. She said they would like to be seen as a 'lab' school and the school system would learn from them. Another Board member said she asked the moderator to share a public correction to note that the leader of the group had talked to the Superintendent only once and that was just a week before the proposal was submitted. Board members agreed that conversations with the charter school group should be at the operational level, i.e. with the Superintendent and cabinet, rather than at the policy level (Board). Another Board member noted that some of those involved with the charter school proposal are MCCSC employees. She said at Indiana University such employees would have to sign a conflict of interest statement. She heard that the marketing approach would be going door to door and she wants to make sure we are protecting our families. Mr. Harvey said we cannot forget the impact it could have on Fairview. He will pursue.

3. **Future Meeting Topics** – Dr. Grossi asked about hearing a report from CAPE. It will be scheduled for a work session or as an information report at the next regular meeting. Dr. Butler understood that high school principals have prepared a 'white paper' for their schools. She said if appropriate for the Board to know those plans, she would like to have some discussion about their overall plans for the future. In response to Dr. Butler's suggestion that the Board meet to discuss protocol, Mr. Muehling said an executive session will be planned for December for Superintendent mid-year evaluation purposes.

The work session adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

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Jim Muehling, President

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Teresa Grossi, Vice President

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Lois Sabo-Skelton, Secretary

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Valerie Merriam, Assistant Secretary

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Jeannine Butler, Member

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Susan Daniels, Member

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Susan P. Wanzer, Member