

WATTSBURG AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION

SPECIAL BOARD MEETING
OCTOBER 28, 2019

The Wattsburg Area School District Board of Education held a Special Board meeting at the Wattsburg Area Elementary Center on October 28, 2019.

President Andy Pushchak called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Mr. Eric Duda, Dr. Bill Hallock, Mr. Josh Paris, Mrs. Julie Pikiewicz, Mr. Marty Pushchak, Mrs. Brenda Sandberg, Mr. Aaron Snippert, Mrs. Amanda Thayer-Zacks, and Dr. Andy Pushchak attended. Also attending were Mr. Kenneth Berlin, Superintendent; Mrs. Rebecca Kelley, Assistant to the Superintendent and Mrs. Vicki Bendig, Business Administrator.

Roll Call

Motion by Mrs. Sandberg, seconded by Mr. Pushchak to approve the agenda as presented. Motion approved by a voice vote with no opposition. Motion carried.

Agenda

Dr. Pushchak informed the public of the purpose of this meeting is to consider approval of updates to the district outdoor athletic facilities and to share information related to the project including the scope of the project and proposed financing of the project. The Board's priorities have been curriculum, technology, transportation, personnel, maintenance of facilities and updating our buildings and food service.

He shared that there has been concern about the fast pace of this project and the two main reasons for the pace is the district being able to take advantage of the financial markets and acting now will better our chances of having the project completed in time for student use in fall 2020. These decisions are made with two constituencies in mind, our students and our taxpayers.

- Joy Biebel - addressed the board with questions on where the money to fund the project was going to come from. She stressed that taxpayers are going to be holding the bag and there is no transparency of the board. The public has not been given any numbers and no information about the project. We saved for years to renovate the middle school, why not save for this project.
- Danny Carter - addressed the board stating he agreed with Joy Biebel and would like to add that we upgrade transportation and provide activity buses for students who participate in sports. He likes the idea of updating the fields but not at 3.5 million dollars.
- Lori Zaumseil - addressed the board that she has filed a Right to Know and has not received an answer yet. She stated that 5 weeks does not justify timely planning for a project of this size and cost. She also wanted to know why there cannot be two all-call lists (one for parents and one for taxpayers) so they would receive a call when district

Guest and Citizen Comments

business needs to be addressed. She supported an activity bus where parents go to an area to pick up their students.

- Troy Zaumseil - asked why there is such a rush on this project. Also questioned why Keystone was being chosen when there are 13 other Co-Star companies who could do the work. He feels the board needs to make educated decisions. Slow down the project. Not No, just not now. Do some field maintenance and save up like we did for the middle school renovation.
- Randy Biebel - referred to statistics from mygreentownship.com 89% of residents like Greene Township, 70% are happy with the school, 76% feel the taxes are fair. The district's millage is among the highest in Erie County and statistics show an expected 7% drop in township residency for the future. The Board needs to be diligent in their planning and spending.
- Jodi Gray - received an all-call about the meeting tonight that made her curious about what was going on. She stated she is not either for or against turf, but it has not been more than 60 days and she would like to know why the rush. Not tonight is not no forever. Consider that in your vote.
- Dave Defazio - not against turf. He received a call on Friday regarding the Special Board Meeting this evening. The middle school renovation was done right, why don't we follow that same process. How can a 3-million-dollar decision be made from September to October 28? This will add on to bond debt. How are we going to pay for it without raising taxes? There are low income, single parent families in the district and how will this affect them? Would like to see back the activity bus. All for sports in school.
- Tara Pound – former SHS athlete, mom of athlete. Feels like there are several small items that have been requested to make the athletic fields more welcoming, but they have been turned down. Turf is a fantastic idea but now is not the right time.
- Gloria Bird – had not heard about the meeting until Sunday evening. She was appalled that nothing had been said until recently. A project this substantial should be checked out and put on a ballot for vote so everyone gets an opinion. This is not the right time.
- Brian Brown – Taxes are too high already. Vote NO.
- Mike Farrell – Commended the Board on Academics. Would like to see the activity bus be brought back. Would like to see the athletic fields remain grass. Turf fields have more serious injuries.
- Rebecca Farrell – taxpayer feels Board does not listen. What is the rush for this? Money should be spent on textbooks and supplies. Only a small percent of students will benefit from this project.
- Keith Mueller – Many student athletes will benefit from this project. Current fields are in terrible shape and need repair. Turf maintenance and upkeep costs are 5 to 1 turf is much cheaper. Wondered the cost if we did wait... We could be looking at 4 million dollars.
- Rich Konkol Jr. – Saw this online 2 days ago. Has no problem paying for future but this is not being fiscally responsible. Bid period should

be 3 months at least. Feels activity bus will boost participation. Give this project time and don't rush it. Put money into education no athletics and boost intelligence.

A recess was called at 7:24 p.m. to allow presenters to set up for presentation. The meeting reconvened at 7:30 p.m.

Nick Falgione of PNC Capital Markets LLC presented information on Bond Refinancing and Capital Funding and how this could benefit the district at this time.

PNC Presentation

Motion by Mr. Pushchak, seconded by Dr. Hallock to approve the [Reimbursement Resolution](#). In a recorded roll call vote, Mr. Pushchak, Mrs. Thayer-Zacks, Mr. Duda, Dr. Hallock, Mr. Paris, Mrs. Piekiewicz and Dr. Pushchak voted to approve the resolution. Mrs. Sandberg and Mr. Snippert voted against. Motion approved by a 7/2 vote. Motion carried.

**Reimbursement
Resolution**

Russell Lyddane, from Keystone Sports Construction gave a presentation on the benefits of turf playing surfaces vs. natural surfaces. He gave an overview of the company and gave a scope of work for the project. He also shared some of the projects they have done.

**Keystone Sports
Construction**

Motion by Mr. Snippert, seconded by Dr. Hallock to approve the [contract with Keystone Sports Construction](#) for improvements to the outdoor athletic complex. In a recorded roll call vote, Mrs. Thayer-Zacks, Mr. Duda, Dr. Hallock, Mr. Paris, Mrs. Piekiewicz Mr. Pushchak, and Dr. Pushchak voted to approve the resolution. Mrs. Sandberg and Mr. Snippert voted against. Motion approved by a 7/2 vote. Motion carried.

**Keystone Sports
Construction
Agreement**

There being no other items before the Board, upon motion by Dr. Hallock, seconded by Mrs. Thayer-Zacks, the meeting was adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

Signature on File
Vicki Bendig
School Board Secretary