

**Worksession Meeting**  
**Steel Valley School District Board of Directors**  
**Senior High School Conference Room**  
**April 17, 2007**

Mrs. Cannon called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Dr. Kinavey reported that his plan is to make sure the district is financially sound. He reviewed the financial areas that Mr. Yaklich will be addressing. Mr. Yaklich is reconciling differences between 2005-2006 general ledger to the 2005-2006 annual financial report. Correcting journal entries so that the audit may be completed. He has met with the auditors to review the journal entries. Mr. Yaklich will reconcile state and federal receivables for the 2005-2006 audit.

Dr. Kinavey reported that the district has a deficit of \$1 million. He is working with the administrators to reduce the budget so the district is financially sound and the children receive the best education they are entitled to. Another Financial Committee meeting is tentatively set for the first week in May.

**Roll Call**

Upon roll call the following members were present:

Mr. Ducar, Mrs. Fedor, Mr. Tim McCallister, Mrs. Sloan, Mrs. Terrick, and Mrs. Cannon

Absent: Mr. Heddleston, Mr. Ed McCallister, Mrs. Kubancsek  
Mr. Heddleston had an emergency, Mr. Ed McCallister was out of town and Mrs. Kubancsek had an emergency

Also Present:

Dr. Kinavey, Mr. Fetzko, Ms. Sabo, Dr. Policastro, Mrs. Borges, Mr. Colebank

A moment of silence was held for the students, staff and families at Virginia Tech in light of the recent violence on its campus and the families of the victims of the shooting in Homestead this afternoon.

## **Reports:**

A presentation was made by Mr. Michael Pehur and Mr. Adam Meyer from the Allegheny County Department of Economic Development on Tax Abatement/LERTA. The Enterprise Zone approached them about a tax abatement program in the commercial district in Munhall, Homestead and West Homestead for the taxing bodies. A map was reviewed of the proposed area, which includes parcels up to 10<sup>th</sup> and Hays Avenues in Homestead and 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Munhall. The redevelopment area must be certified by the Redevelopment Authority. They are currently working in the area that borders the waterfront.

Basically, they presented a temporary abatement of real estate taxes to develop incentive for expansion and extension of properties and only for improvement to properties. The proposal would specify the area based on zoning or a physical boundary and it must be a blighted area. The state's definition of blighted is vague.

The process would be for all taxing bodies to pass resolutions detailing the area and the amount of exemption based on assessed value. Mr. Pehur distributed hypothetical projections. A developer would receive tax abatement the first year at 100%, 80% second year and 60% in year three until the abatement expires in six years.

Mr. Drew Borcik, Homestead Council President, asked the Board to consider this proposal. He feels it may entice developers to come in and develop the blighted areas, which would increase the tax base.

Mr. Ducar asked about the parking issue in Homestead and how would this entice business owners.

Mr. Pehur answered questions and provided a draft resolution. The resolution provided by Mr. Fetzko outlined a different boundary. The area for tax abatement must be decided yet. There was discussion about the boundaries. This is a preliminary discussion between taxing bodies.

The businesses improving the 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue facades worked with the Enterprise Zone directly. There is no tax abatement to these owners. The Enterprise Zone lends money to businesses. Mr. Borcik noted that there are also state and federal tax incentives available due to the area being designated as a Federal Historic area.

The Enterprise Zone acquired and marketed 60 vacant parcels for redevelopment. Only two businesses responded. Mr. Pehur noted that the benefit would be marginal, and there will not be an influx of improvements.

Mrs. Fedor noted that the assessment level is based on 2002 figures. The clock starts when the improvements begin. Mr. Pehur noted that the tax abatement process would not trigger a reassessment. The average value is \$5,000-\$10,000 for a parcel. It was noted that tax abatement would include improvements to current structure and new buildings on vacant lots.

Mr. Borcik asked why the Board wants to audit the TIF. He feels we would be auditing the auditor. Mrs. Fedor stated that the school district does not receive the TIF money as outlined in the plan. Mr. Borcik stated that Integra does the audit for USBank and suggested speaking with Mark Patrick at 412-350-1080. The Redevelopment Authority gets a copy of the audit and it's a public document. The school district does not get a copy of the audit. Mr. Fetzko will contact Mr. Patrick.

Items on the agenda were discussed. No action was taken.

## **Minutes**

No comments or changes.

## **Financial Management**

Ms. Sabo will attend Munhall Council meeting on April 18 in support of the TIF audit and Munhall's participation. It was reported that Park School's 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students will be attending the council meeting as part of its Borough Days program.

Mrs. Sloan noted that Sloan Lock & Key has been closed for two years. Ms. Sabo will change the name on bills.

Mrs. Fedor reported that new revenue and expenditure reports for January, February and March 2007 were received. There was discussion about the information on them. Mrs. Fedor noted that by adding the year to date figure and remaining balance, we are on budget with expenditures as approved for the 2006-2007 school year. The income is not finalized.

Mrs. Sloan questioned bus passes for students. Pressley Ridge students are either special education or they are expelled students. Middle school students attend classes at the police station or the library. A US Steel refund of \$72,000 was questioned. Mr. Fetzko noted it was a re-assessment tax refund.

### **Operations**

If the district will raze the building the district does not need to expend the \$9,000. Mr. Ducar suggested pulling Item 2.3 and give the Administration permission to prepare a plan for razing the building and developing the site. To raze the building would cost \$800,000. Mrs. Cannon stated that for the district to improve Woodlawn years ago, we would have received less in reimbursement from the state. Therefore, a new middle school was built on to the high school. Mr. Ducar noted that razing Woodlawn would be an improvement to the district. Mr. Fetzko noted that there has to be a site development plan to use the capital projects fund. Even if it takes 10 years to develop, a plan needs to be submitted to Harrisburg for approval. Mr. Fetzko offered to get the district a free bid to raze the building. He noted that the district would need to acquire an umbrella insurance policy. Mrs. Fedor noted that we need to look to the future.

### **Co-Curricular Leadership**

Mr. Tim McCallister questioned the low student participation on the 8<sup>th</sup> grade field trip to Washington DC. He stated that May 10 & 11 are days of school, and the district must cover the cost of substitutes for two days. He was disappointed that such few members of the 8<sup>th</sup> grade class are attending. It was suggested that the district require 50% of the class attend for future

field trips and hold better fundraisers in the future. Dr. Kinavey will speak to Mr. Walsh about increasing participation. Dr. Kinavey will follow-up on the number of chaperones attending.

### **Special Assignments**

Item 4.1 was revised asking the Board to approve the administrative budgets for Southeastern Area Special School and Steel Center Vo-Tech, and the amount proposed will be added to the motion.

Dr. Kinavey reported that it will cost the district approximately \$600,000 to send our students to Steel Center Vo-Tech in 2007-2008. It costs \$36,000 per students to attend the Mon Valley School. Dr. Kinavey noted that the high school principal would be sending letters to parents and speaking to the students about the seriousness of the program and the cost to the district. Many of the Steel Center students are taking vo-tech training as well as higher level academic classes in the high school. Mr. Colebank noted that Steel Center is on track with Project 720 and high school improvement. Due to Bethel Park School District joining, this lowered the cost to other districts by 11%.

There was discussion about the new Act 114 law requiring a Federal Criminal History check of prospective employees. Since the district pays the Act 34 and 151 clearance costs for volunteers, Dr. Kinavey is recommending that the district pay for the Act 114 fingerprinting for volunteers. Dr. Kinavey will remind the principals that the recordkeeping of the volunteer clearances needs to be up to date. Mr. Colebank will prepare a database to keep track of approved volunteers. It was decided to require all volunteers to have all three clearances and the district will pay for them. The Board will hold a first reading for revisions to Policy No. 916 and also add language to require new volunteers starting with the 2007-2008 to have a Federal Criminal History check.

### **Educational Leadership**

Discussion about the advanced placement test costs. The previous procedure erroneously classified all students as low income, which allowed them to take the tests for \$22. Students who are not classified as low income will now be paying \$83. Mrs. Terrick stated that we don't want to hinder

students from taking the AP tests, especially if they are taking more than one test at \$83 each. It was suggested to have a fundraiser to help with the costs. Item 5.4 is being proposed to correct this year's mistake only. The Board would have to look into this issue for next year. Mr. Schlanger could put \$2,000 into the high school budget for next year. Mr. Ducar said the Steel Valley Education Foundation would pick up the costs for this year and possibly for future years. Item 5.4 will be revised to include a statement that the Steel Valley Foundation for Education will cover the fees for the AP exams.

Mrs. Sloan read a complimentary letter from Ron Becket, Alumni from the Class of 1949. It was decided to use his letter in a news release.

### **Citizen Comments**

Mr. Pavasko questioned Item 2.5 and what was the finding. The Board decided to replace the roof at Park School. Mr. Pavasko asked if the Board looked at Burt Hill's recommendation in the feasibility study. Per Item 2.4, Mr. Ducar noted that Park School would not fall under the maintenance program along with Barrett, Franklin and high school/middle school because they will have a new roof. Were any other bids for the roof repairs received. Tremco is a Pittsburgh company. Mr. Pavasko stated that he doesn't see why we are repairing roofs that are not leaking and are considered to be in good to fair condition according the feasibility study. Dr. Kinavey noted that Mr. Keesecker recommended these repairs.

Mrs. Terrick suggested paying for the roof repairs from the 2005 capital improvements only. It was decided to change Item 2.4 to state that the repairs to the roofs will be paid from the 2005 Capital Improvements and the maintenance program to be paid from the 2000-2001 Capital Improvements account and the General Fund.

Mr. Ducar reported that the company who is repairing the new middle school gym roof would be in the district tomorrow. The roof leak is caused by not having curbs installed on the roof to divert the water. The curbs are made and have been delivered. A crane is needed to install them, and the ground is too soft. Mr. Tim McCallister noted that students have not been permitted to play volleyball in the new middle school gym, but gym class is held in the gym. Dr. Kinavey will look into this matter.

Mrs. Cannon asked about the occupancy permit for the new middle school gym.

The meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m. and the board members went into an executive session to discuss personnel matters. The executive session concluded at 10:30 p.m.