

LONG BEACH ISLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION

Long Beach Island, New Jersey

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING

Tuesday, August 2, 2016

The Board of Education of the Long Beach Island School District, Ocean County, met in public session at 6 p.m. in the Multipurpose Room of the Ethel Jacobsen School, 200 Barnegat Avenue, Surf City, New Jersey on August 2, 2016, for the purpose of a public presentation on school consolidation. There was no executive session. All members were notified in writing of the meeting date. In accordance with the provisions of the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Law, the Long Beach Island Board of Education has caused notice of this meeting by having the date, time and place thereof posted in *The Press of Atlantic City*.

The special meeting was called to order by the Board President, Mrs. Bott at 6:02 p.m.

The following members of the Board of Education were present:

Jennifer Bott	representing	Ship Bottom
Allyn Kain	representing	Surf City
Kristy Raber	representing	Surf City (arrived at 6:30 p.m. and left at 7:40 p.m.)
Colette Southwick	representing	Long Beach Township
Marilyn Wasilewski	representing	Barnegat Light
Tom Beaty	representing	Long Beach Township
Bonnie Picaro	representing	Long Beach Township (arrived at 6:05 p.m.)
James Donahower	representing	Harvey Cedars

Absent:

Georgene Hartmann	representing	Long Beach Township
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Also present:

Peter Kopack, Superintendent
Megan Gally, SBA/Board Secretary
Anthony Sciarrillo, Esq.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call: Roll call was taken.

Adequate Notice of Meeting: Adequate Notice of Meeting statement was read by Mrs. Bott.

Mission Statement: Mrs. Bott read the Mission Statement.

Mrs. Bott welcomed everyone and explained the reason for the meeting.

Dr. Kopack introduced the presenters:

School Consolidation:

Joseph DiCara, DiCara/Rubino Architects (also present Anthony DeNorchia): The presentation began at 6:05 p.m. Mr. DiCara gave a PowerPoint presentation on the preliminary plans for the Ethel Jacobsen School addition and upgrades as follows:

- Review of existing Ethel Jacobsen School site
- Arial view of current site
- Existing floor plan
- Current site plan
- Proposed floor plan and use of rooms
- Proposed floor plan (base plan) review of addition
- Proposed floor plan (gym)
- Proposed floor plan (administration, upgrades to mechanical system and main entrance relocation
- Cost estimate
- Timeline for preparation of referendum

The presentation ended at 6:25 p.m.

Tony Solimine, McManimon, Scotland & Baumann, LLC: The presentation began at 6:25 p.m. Mr. Solimine gave a handout to the BOE and discussed the following:

- Costs/tax impact analysis: \$51/year for a house valued at \$600,000.00 (Proceeds from sale of school and debt service aid which will lower the tax impact were not included in the calculation as they are undetermined.)
- Bonds/proceeds/timing

The Board discussed the following:

- Mr. Beaty asked what happens if the school is sold after the referendum. Do the proceeds go toward bonds and referendum or taxpayers? Mr. Solimine said that the use of funds/proceeds can be stated in the referendum wording. Mr. Beaty asked if the amount of the sale is needed for the referendum. Mr. Solimine said, "No."
- Mr. Donahower asked if public will see the highest amount of tax impact and how proceeds/debt service aid will reduce that impact and how to effectively reach the public. Mr. Solimine explained that this will be explained to the public via presentations and that they need to reach 7-8% of the voters.
- Ms. Kain asked if \$51 would be the same for all Boroughs on Long Beach Island. Mr. Solimine said, "Yes."
- Mrs. Picaro asked if the Board would have to wait until negotiations with Ship Bottom are completed. Mr. Solimine said the Board does not have to wait until negotiations are complete. Mr. DiCara said the referendum question(s) can be multiple part and that not all answers are needed to proceed. Mrs. Picaro asked what the latest date would be to alter the referendum question. Mr. Solimine said the question is due 18 days in advance of the referendum. Mrs. Picaro asked how many questions can be on the referendum and can the public vote on individual questions. Mr. Solimine said that all questions can stand on their own or be contingent on each other.
- Mr. Beaty asked about the phases of the referendum.
- Mrs. Southwick asked who is willing to go for full referendum.

- Mrs. Bott said that if the BOE moves forward with the March referendum, a decision will need to be made at the August 23rd meeting.
- Mrs. Picaro said the Board can't move forward without a referendum.
- Mrs. Southwick noted that there may be no referendum needed if the LBI School was sold to a private developer. She wants the children and teachers to get what they need. She called for a consensus on debt.
- Mrs. Wasilewski stated she cannot see a 15 million dollar referendum put on taxpayers without necessity and conscience. She suggests constructing the addition not including the gym.
- Mrs. Picaro said she doesn't want a 15 million dollar referendum either. She suggested that the district can keep both buildings and go for a referendum to fix both buildings. Maybe part of the LBI School could be occupied by Stockton University.
- Mrs. Bott reminded the Board that they are working toward a single-site solution.

The Board discussion ended.

Public Comment on Presentations:

Robert Butkus, Ship Bottom, commented, asked questions about the following:

- Congratulated the professionals on their presentations
- Asked if estimates included furnishings. Mrs. Bott said that furnishings from the LBI School would be moved to EJ School.
- Asked when the last referendum was. Ms. Kain recalled a referendum for a swimming pool in 1968.
- Mr. Butkus was in support of proceeding with the entire project
- Asked what an environmental courtyard is. Mr. DiCara explained that it is an outdoor learning space that is an extension of science/STEM.

Rick McDonough, Ship Bottom, commented, asked questions about the following:

- Is also in support of cost of referendum
- Asked the BOE to consider the quality and character of Ship Bottom in its decisions.
- Commented on how low local school taxes are
- Asked what the elevation would be of the EJ addition. Mr. DiCara responded that it would be approximately 1.5 feet higher than the existing building. The addition is required to be above the required flood elevation.
- Asked if the new construction would exceed any current zoning requirements in Surf City. Mr. DiCara said that the proposed building does not have to meet local zoning requirements. The NJ DOE would determine the height, etc. of the building.
- Asked what the current student capacity is at the EJ School. Mr. DiCara responded 151-167 students.
- The Cost Estimate slide was reviewed.
- Asked Board to remove Choice students so all can fit in current building. Dr. Kopack responded that there are only 41 Choice students so enrollment would be 193 so an addition would still be needed.
- In support of proposed gym and urged the BOE to move forward with entire project

James Loudon, Harvey Cedars, commented, asked questions about the following:

- Terms of bonds. Mr. Solimine answered, 20 years.
- Asked what percent of funding would come from state aid. Mr. Solimine and Mr. DiCara estimate 10%.
- Suggested one question for referendum for the entire project.
- Adequacy of current gym at EJ School was discussed.

Stacey Fuessinger, Ship Bottom, commented, asked questions about the following:

- Thanked the Board for the presentation.
- Transition plan—all students at EJ during construction? Dr. Kopack reviewed the student transition plan and confirmed that no students will be in trailers.
- Asked about the increase in cost from December plan to current. Mrs. Bott and Mr. DiCara reviewed the changes from the previous plan and discussed costs of upgrades to the existing EJ building.
- Asked how long the current cost estimate will be relevant. Mr. DiCara explained projected cost calculations and construction costs.

Diane Lorello, Ship Bottom, commented, asked questions about the following:

- Reinforced supportive comments made by other members of the public. She urged the BOE to make decisions in the best interest of the students and to move forward.
- Asked the BOE to maintain LBI School until the transition
- Asked if the BOE has any responsibility to pay FEMA monies back if school is vacated. Mrs. Bott said, "No." Mr. Sciarrillo replied, "As long as students came in and occupied the building for one day, we are fine."

Scott Sharpless, Barnegat Light, commented, asked questions about the following:

- Shared sentiments of Mr. Butkus and Mr. McDonough and is in support of referendum and proposed project.
- Thanked the BOE for time and patience

Public Comment ended at 7:25 p.m.

Board Discussion:

- Mrs. Southwick asked the attorney when it would be appropriate to make a motion for a referendum. Mr. Sciarrillo said that this is not a legal questions. Board members always have opportunity to raise questions.
- Mrs. Picaro spoke about the plans for the EJ addition and said that the design gives all that the combined schools have to offer. She hopes Ship Bottom can purchase the LBI School and that students can stay in the LBI school during construction. Mrs. Bott noted that the structural fix at the LBI School was only certified until September 2017. Mrs. Picaro asked if there should be a new structural evaluation of the LBI Grade School. Mrs. Bott said that if the building needs to be utilized, the board will investigate at that time.
- Mr. Beaty thanked Mr. DiCara and noted that he is in favor of the full plan.

- Mr. Beaty asked the following questions:
 - If the drawings were to scale--Mr. DiCara said no, but he can send him plans to scale.
 - He noted that on the proposed site plan, the paved playground area was missing from the plan. Mr. DiCara said that a paved play area was calculated into the plan. Mr. Beaty asked if the cost to move the play area and garden was included in calculations. Mr. DiCara said, "Yes."
 - Asked about the loss of bathroom in 2nd grade on plans--Mr. DiCara said that bathroom is not required.
 - Proposed mechanical services located behind new gym. If gym is not approved where would it be located?
 - Asked about HVAC upgrades. Mr. DiCara explained procedure for implementing upgrades and scheduling sequence to be included in contract. Cost is included in upgrades.
 - Asked if boilers would all be located in the mechanical room. Mr. DiCara said, "Yes."
 - Asked if there would be drop ceilings. Mr. DiCara said, "Yes."
 - Noted wasted space in hallway by art/gym on proposed plan. Mr. DiCara said a larger area is needed for ease of access between classes, but size of corridor can be reduced if requested.
 - Asked where height transitions are between building entrances and ramps. Mr. DiCara pointed them out on plans and noted handicapped accessible entrances.
 - Asked about the cost breakdown of the project—price/sq. ft. (\$315) to estimated cost on Cost Breakdown slide in presentation. Mr. DiCara explained the cost breakdown.
- Mrs. Picaro asked if the cost of fence on South 2nd Street was included. Mr. DiCara said, "Yes."
- Mrs. Picaro asked if the Board approved the total project, would the construction price be locked in. Mr. DiCara said, "No," and explained how construction costs are projected.

A motion was made by Mrs. Southwick, seconded by Marilyn Wasilewski to approve the full project referendum at the estimated cost of \$16 million. No action was taken.

The Board Discussion continued.

- Ms. Kain states she is astounded that the price almost doubled from December to now. Mrs. Wasilewski said the current plan is a whole new plan.
- Mrs. Bott said this is the plan we approved as a Board. The only change was administration section. Mr. DiCara said he met with administration to refine plans.
- Ms. Kain noted that the art room and special education room were added.
- Mrs. Picaro noted that there have been many changes in administration and leadership in the past few years. Mr. Sciarrillo cautioned her. She said we are close to a decision.
- Mr. Beaty expressed his frustration at having no control of minutia, but stated, we hired people to guide us and has confidence in Dr. Kopack and Ms. Gally's leadership.
- Mrs. Wasilewski stated she agreed but said the Board should have had input.
- Ms. Kain said she would feel more confident if she knew how much the Board will get for the sale of the LBI School.
- Mrs. Bott noted that the costs presented do not include savings. Mr. Solimine said that for every million dollars of savings, the referendum cost would be reduced by approximately \$3. Mr. DiCara noted that the Board has had input on plans at Board meetings and that he listens to recommendations made by Board members. Mr. DiCara asked if the Board will be ready to proceed with a plan at the next meeting.

- Mr. Sciarrillo asked if a motion was needed for the referendum or final plan. A discussion pursued, and it was decided that a motion was needed to approve plans. There was a brief discussion about what was approved at the July 19th meeting.

Mr. DiCara asks to poll the Board. Mr. Sciarrillo approves the request.

Mr. DiCara asks:

Does any Board member wish to eliminate art? Reply is, "No."

Does any Board member wish to eliminate STEM? Reply is, "No."

Does any Board member wish to eliminate Administration? Reply is, "Yes."

Mr. DiCara states he needs all comments before August 23rd so he may attend the meeting with answers.

A motion was made by Colette Southwick, seconded by Marilyn Wasilewski to authorize DiCara/Rubino Architects, AIA to develop plans suitable for submission to the state of New Jersey Department of Education as part of the referendum.

Upon a roll call vote, the motion passed: 5 ayes

1 aye as qualified (Wasilewski)

1 nay (Kain)

Board discussion ended.

Second Public comment:

Stacey Fuessinger, Ship Bottom, commented, asked questions about the following:

- Asked if an engineer was hired. Mrs. Bott responded that the Board is waiting for the update to the LRFP.
- Asked if changes to the plan will add cost? Mr. Sciarrillo said, "Yes."
- Asked if a Bond Attorney was hired. Mr. Sciarrillo said bond counsel would be hired prior to referendum and explained next steps in process.

Rick McDonough, Ship Bottom, commented, asked questions about the following:

- Thanked the BOE
- Asked if the motion passed. Mrs. Bott said, "Yes."
- Asked where proceeds of sale of LBI School would go if sold today. Mr. Sciarrillo said that if building was sold, proceeds would be set up in annual budget.

Diane Lorrell, Ship Bottom, commented, asked questions about the following:

- Asked Board to clarify motion and was confused about discussion on bringing down cost. Mrs. Bott explained that the motion was for the full project as presented and various alternatives for referendum to reduce costs such as plan to move administrative area.
- Would like to do what is best for safety and security of children.

At 8:28 p.m. a motion was made by Colette Southwick, seconded by James Donahower to adjourn. All in favor.

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Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kathy Sheplin". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the typed name.

Kathy Sheplin, Assistant Board Secretary