

**MINUTES
CSC OF EASTERN HANCOCK COUNTY
BOARD MEETING**

High School Cafeteria
10320 E. 250 N.
Charlottesville, IN 46117
January 27, 2010

7:00 P.M. – Board Meeting

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the CSC of Eastern Hancock County Board of School Trustees was called to order by Teresa Dunlavy on January 27, 2010 at 7:00 P.M. in the Eastern Hancock High School Cafeteria. Present were: Teresa Dunlavy, Bradley Hancock, Scott Petry, Thomas Younts. Terry Jilg was absent. Mrs. Dunlavy explained that Mr. Jilg was unable to attend this meeting due to a work commitment.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Everyone joined in the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

Scott Campbell – What were the results of the straw poll taken last night?
Answer – 94 yes – 61 no – 42 undecided.

Nicki Stine for Sarah Dooley (who was not able to attend tonight) – Has the school set up a strategic plan or looked into grouping with other schools on insurance, purchases, etc. to see if we can get a better price?

Answer – Mr. Harris – The four county schools are investigating this. They will be meeting again in February.

Mr. Harris stated that we have received several emails today – the comments will be put on our website for review.

Cheryl Middendorf – Do you have a profit and loss statement?

Answer – Mr. Harris – Not a profit and loss statement as is used in business, but all claims, revenues and expenses yes.

Cheryl Middendorf – Can I pick one up?

Answer – Yes.

Ron Offenbacher – I reviewed my recent assessment today and my figures do not show what you have listed. Mine is \$1400 - \$1870 per acre.

Answer – Mr. Harris – The person that prepared the information on the farm acres used what was provided to her from the state on that date.

Nicki Stine – At your monthly board meetings can we be supplied with financial updates?

Answer – Mr. Harris – Yes, those can be supplied.

Ron Offenbacher – I don't have a problem with my house being increased but it is not fair to increase the acreage.

Rodney Shelby – Just for information, the state sets the value of the farm ground not the school board. Farm ground cannot be protested or appealed like your homestead can.

Rodney Shelby – What does a certified and a non-certified staff person cost?

Answer – Mr. Harris – Instructional assistant is an at-will employee with no health benefits, unless they have been grandfathered in, costs an average \$15,000. A teacher with twenty-two years experience or longer with benefits and depending on the degree, \$71,000. A first year teacher with benefits costs around \$41,000.

Cheryl Middendorf – If this passes, can you come back in a year and say this is not enough money?

Answer – Mr. Harris – Yes.

Cheryl Middendorf – What is the guarantee that the state will give us the \$400,000?

Answer – Mr. Harris – They by law cannot keep this money from Eastern Hancock.

Cheryl Middendorf – We might be in the hole by the state. Taxpayers need a guarantee. I don't want you to come back next year for another referendum.

Mr. Harris – The state can still cut the revenue dollars.

Leah Shelby – Last night you showed the tax referendum with the \$400,000 amount. Now tonight, you show the figures with 400-500-600 and 700 thousand. Which is it?

Answer – Mr. Harris – The board will decide the dollar amount to be placed on the referendum.

Scott Petry – The worst case scenario would be the \$700,000 amount but we wanted you to know what it could be.

Ron Offenbacher – IPS is in sad financial shape but is giving raises to their administrators. Are there any guarantees about no raises if we get this referendum money?

Answer – Mr. Petry – There will be no administrative raises.

Teri Dunlavy – The teachers wages are negotiated.

Leah Shelby – If the amount is not \$400,000, which you showed at last night's meeting, many people who voted yes would change their vote to no.

Teri Dunlavy – If we proceed with the tax referendum the amount \$400,000 would be the starting point.

Leah Shelby – Will the amount be listed on the referendum?

Answer – Teri Dunlavy – The board would be very clear about the amount on the referendum.

Scott Campbell – We need to know the value to what the extra money coming in would go for. The cost to parents is costly enough and now you are figuring to add these additional things technology fees and full day kindergarten charge.

Mr. Harris answered, a ballpark figure if we charge for full day kindergarten, could bring in \$25,000-\$50,000 depending on the enrollment. There may be cuts to extra curricular activities (ECA) and we have proposals for possible stipend cuts for all coaching positions for athletics and ECA. This could amount to a savings of \$58,000-\$101,000.

Scott Campbell – Some of the information on the list is hard to define.

Answer – Mr. Harris – The break down for school budgets is not easy to understand but he assured everyone that the information is all there.

Scott Campbell – If teachers retire will you fill those positions?

Answer – Mr. Harris – Each position will be studied individually. We will only fill an empty position if it is essential to the education provided to students.

Scott Campbell – Questioned the bus replacement of 2-3 buses each year.

Answer – Mr. Harris explained how the bus replacement is set up to replace buses after 12 years of service. There are Federal and State laws governing the buses and their safety.

Cheryl Middendorf – You have made cuts in the elementary and the high school but what have you done in central office?

Answer – Mr. Harris – We have eliminated a half time position and Dottie Maroska, secretary, is now working four days a week or 32 hours instead of 40.

Teri Dunlavy advised that the board and Mr. Harris are reviewing overall central office to evaluate all cost.

Dan Jenkins – Will you be doing an on-going evaluation of the jobs eliminated to see if there is a work overload and if so will that change?

Answer – Mr. Harris – We made major cuts early to save and we will determine where we need to change or make cuts elsewhere. Non-certified staff are at-will employees and work the school year. Full year employees are custodians, maintenance and central office staff. Certified employees are under a negotiated contract. I have requested those planning to retire to let me know by March 1, 2010. I will then make the teacher recommendations for the 2010-2011 school year. Reduction in force notices would be sent to appropriate teachers to meet the time requirements established by state law.

Scott Campbell – We talked before that \$200,000 is to balance this year's budget, then if we get some dollars in 2011 – will we be balanced next year?

Answer – Mr. Harris – Yes, if the state does not make additional large cuts.

Tom Younts – This is just the tip of the iceberg we are talking about here. We had a tax referendum at Hamilton Southeastern Schools and it passed. Even with the referendum, following another cut, we are still in the hole and will be cut by the government again probably into 2013. We must do what we as a board can do to save Eastern Hancock. The voter has the last say when you vote yes or no on May 4, 2010.

Scott Campbell – What is the advantage to the May 4, 2010 primary?

Answer – Mr. Harris – The advantage is that it would give the school board more time to prepare for the 2011 budget year rather than waiting until the November general election.

Brad Hancock stated he compared the tax rates of all county school districts with us having the lowest tax rate.

Brown, Blue River and Jackson	1.1343
New Palestine	1.2106
Greenfield	1.2683
Mt. Vernon	1.2991

Our buses travel more miles in a day per student than any other school in the county.

We have two principals, one superintendent and no assistant administrators.

Our teachers/superintendent are paid below the state average.

Eastern Hancock is 13th in the state for graduation rate.

We are putting out some good students so we are doing something right.

He stated he has been on the board six years and we are always looking at education and what is best for the kids.

Teri Dunlavy – Is May too early for a tax referendum or should we move it to the November ballot?

Brad Hancock – If the referendum is not on the May ballot – is it a possibility that the Governor could take that privilege away?

Teri Dunlavy asked do we have any discussion on the \$400,000 amount.

The question was asked if the \$400,000 figure is too low.

Tom Younts – My feeling is that we stay with the \$400,000 figure on the ballot.

Cheryl Middendorf – Can the County Council say no?

Answer – Mr. Harris – Yes. However, the law reads the County Council shall vote to place the question on the ballot – it is not a debate it is basically a formality.

Cheryl Middendorf – Shirley has the highest tax rate in the county.

Answer – Mr. Harris – Shirley is the highest rate and the tax cap has affected them.

Tom Younts – We have a nice cross section of the community at this meeting. There are a lot of people in my area who are on fixed income but are interested in saving Eastern Hancock. I advise that we stay with the \$400,000 figure.

Teri Dunlavy – You have a choice on the referendum to let the board know where the public stands.

Mr. Harris presented these options:

1. Adopt resolution to place on the ballot and set maximum levy.
2. Board vote for no referendum.
3. Hold off decision until June or July (time frame) and place on the November election.

IV. TAX REFERENDUM

Mrs. Dunlavy asked if we had a motion at this time.

Mr. Younts moved and Mr. Hancock seconded a motion to approve the Community School Corporation of Eastern Hancock County Board of School Trustees Resolution (Exhibit A) for General Fund tax referendum not to exceed 16.57 cents (\$0.1657) on each one hundred dollars of assessed valuation. Motion carried 3-1. Mrs. Dunlavy voted no.

Mrs. Dunlavy stated that she was not against the referendum but voted no because she was in favor of it being placed on the November ballot.

V. OTHER ITEMS AS ALLOWED BY BOARD

Mike Elsbury asked if we have spoken to the state officials about the financial status. What happens to Eastern Hancock if this referendum is voted down? Can the school generate a signature petition of our own?

Mr. Harris replied yes you can generate a school petition. I encourage you to contact Senator Beverly Gard and Representative Bob Cherry directly. You can also contact the Governor's office. There is a possibility that the property tax cap will be voted in to the Constitution.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned with a motion from Mr. Younts seconded by Mr. Petry. Motion carried 4-0.

Teresa S. Dunlavy, President

Bradley R. Hancock, Secretary

