

**Allegheny Valley School District
Special School Board Voting Meeting
April 18, 2017**

A special voting meeting of the Allegheny Valley School Board was held Tuesday evening, April 13, 2017, in the Acmetonia Primary School Forum for the purpose of approving PlanCon Part D and E for the renovations and additions to the Acmetonia Primary School Project and authorize their submission, along with the Act 34 hearing documentation, to the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Roll Call: Eight (8) members in attendance

Mr. Salvatore Conte
Mr. James Gaschler
Ms. Kathleen Haas
Mrs. Annetta Jursa
Ms. Elizabeth Moretti

Mr. Stephen Puskar
Mrs. Glenna Renaldi
Mr. Donald Rocco – NOT PRESENT
Mr. Larry Pollick

Also in attendance were Dr. Janice Nuzzo, Mr. Gavin Robb, Mr. Peter Camarda, Mr. Cesareo Sanchez, representatives from the Foreman Group Architects, Massaro Corporation, Mr. Brian Rittmeyer, and community members.

Mr. Pollick asked for a moment of silence due to the passing of Mr. Patrick Graczyk's father-in-law and long-time school board member and past board president, Mr. Alfred Trempus.

AGENDA ITEMS:

2.0 OPERATIONS/FINANCE

2.1 Mrs. Jursa made a motion, seconded by Mr. Gaschler to approve PlanCon Part D and PlanCon Part E for the Renovations and Additions to the Acmetonia Primary School Project and authorize their submission, along with the Act 34 hearing documentation, to the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Voice Vote: 7 Ayes, 1 Opposed (Ms. Moretti) Vote carried.

2.2 Update from Massaro Corporation.

Mr. Camarda announced that this is not an item for a vote, it is for discussion purposes only and should have been indicated on the agenda under discussion item.

DISCUSSION ON PROJECTED RENOVATIONS AND ADDITIONS TO THE ACMETONIA PRIMARY SCHOOL PROJECT

- Mr. Foreman, President of the Foreman Architect Group, began the discussion with an update to the Board of the PlanCon Part D already receiving board approval and forwarded to the state. An Act 34 hearing was held, with time for community remarks through April 18. PlanCon E represents the drawings and documentation derived from meetings with various groups within the school district including administration and teaching staff.
- Mr. Gaschler questioned if this process is keeping with the timeline set by the board.
- Mr. Camarda responded that the timeline has been discussed in great detail during the architect meetings and with the Massaro group and the project appears to be on time.

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Representatives from the Massaro Group provided the following updates:

- Meetings were held with the Foreman Group to review drawings, budget, and phasing plans.
- These meetings were very productive and also included discussions on access to the construction site due to the layout of the facility, allowing for only one access in/out of the area. There has to be ample space and access for local deliveries, etc. during the time of construction.
- Under budget concerns are the incorporation of ‘soft costs’ within the plan. These costs include specific inclusions into the layout of the facility as well as costs for the Massaro and Foreman input. It appears that the costs are in line with what is being projected; however, the two groups will formulate alternative plans for the board consideration to possibly reduce costs or provide further information.
- The Massaro/Foreman ‘team’ is working with the district team to develop a strategy for bid day. It is common to expect actual bids to come in lower than anticipated; however, to protect the district, alternative plans will be available.
- The team is also working on phasing plans to work around the school schedule. Since construction is slated to begin in July, there will still be staff within the building and deliveries made.
- To date, the two groups have a very good working relationship and there are a lot of discussions back-and-forth in a respectful manner that is leading to significant progress. There are a lot of gaps to fill, but Massaro is optimistic that all will work well to the benefit of the district having a facility that will provide excellent academic and aesthetic value to the community.

Dave Parker, Project Manager for Massaro added remarks:

- At the May 9 Board Planning Meeting, alternative and phasing plans will be presented for board review.
- PlanCon F will be proposed for approval – allowing the release of information to begin the bid process. The team does not want to rush the bid process to allow those companies who will be bidding on the project to carefully consider their proposals.
- June 19 is the next meeting to include the issue of contracts for the project.
- Construction is slated to begin in late summer, possibly July.
- The biggest issue with the construction so far is the site utility, which will pull, replace, and align all the utility lines for the project.

Mr. Camarda added that the process to date is not off-track and he is thrilled with what he is noticing about the work ethic and respectfulness between Massaro and Foreman. These two groups are serving the board and constituents very well with the utmost professionalism. He is confident that as the project continues, the district will realize the project they have worked on over the past several years.

Mr. Pollick questioned how long it will take the Massaro Group to see if the estimate provided by the Foreman Group is in the ballpark presented to the board.

Mr. Camarda responded that in looking at the preliminary work, he is confident in the numbers provided by Foreman and Massaro.

The Massaro representatives agreed with Mr. Camarda’s observation that they have a high level of comfort with the numbers working out and have sat with the Foreman Group and went line-by-line for all expenditures. Comments included how forthcoming Mr. Terry Thompson of the Foreman Group has been and that he facilitates an easy meeting, even when faced with difficult questions. Massaro added that when they entered this endeavor, there were many assumptions that were quickly eased by the openness of the Foreman Group.

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Mr. Puskar asked if there was any ‘wobble room’ in the budget due to the lengthy discussion held several months ago when the board was informed of the extreme cost for additional footing area in the new construction area. Since the initial meeting on that subject, the board has not gotten any updates. In addition, at that same meeting, discussion was held regarding expansion and placement of additional parking, with no further updates available to the board. He questioned who was making those decisions on parking, etc. since it is obvious that the board is not.

The Massaro representatives responded that their team is looking at the budget and ‘testing’ ideas that will lead to alternative plans for consideration. There are tough decisions that will need to be made without losing sight of the ultimate goal. They want to present alternatives to the board to facilitate these tough decisions.

- Mr. Gaschler asked about the concerns of the borough in regard to the project.
- Mr. Foreman added that they met with the Harmar Township Supervisors and addressed all their concerns.
- Mrs. Jursa asked if addressing their concerns added any expense to the project.
- Mr. Foreman responded that no, their concerns were all procedural in nature and did not cost anything additional.
- Mrs. Jursa asked if the process continues as planned, will construction begin in July.
- The Massaro representatives responded that more discussion will be held during the next Board Agenda Meeting in May.

No further discussion ensued on the Acmetonia Primary School Renovation Project.

Additional discussion items not included on the original agenda:

DISCUSSION ITEMS

- Mr. Puskar brought forth another subject of an audience community member and candidate for the upcoming School Board election, Alexander Conte, video recording the board meeting without any notification to board members. He questioned if there was a policy in effect, or if one could be drafted to address this type of activity.
- Mr. Gavin Robb, solicitor, explained that in accordance with the Sunshine Law, anyone is permitted to video tape any public meeting at any time. The Board could construct and approve a policy that would outline the parameters and use of such video, including prior notification of the filming. He will work with the Board Policy committee and Mr. Hoffman to develop a policy as per the request of the board.
- Mr. Gaschler responded that he wrote to Mr. Graczyk and explained the state laws and his intention to video the meetings.
- Discussion ensued from several board members regarding the lack of respect to the fellow board members and the presenters from Foreman Group and Massaro. As a courtesy, and since it was pre-arranged with Alexander Conte through the use of Mr. Gaschler’s phone to video, board members should have been alerted.
- Mr. Pollick commented that he takes considerable offense to the fact that Mr. Gaschler found it necessary to video the meeting without notification to the other members in that he is implying that the board is not being transparent, something that this board is dedicated, this board has nothing to hide and conducts all discussions in an open forum.
- Mr. Gaschler repeated that he notified Pat (Graczyk) and that is what he did.
- Ms. Haas questioned if the video will be posted to the website created and managed by Mr. Gaschler. He responded that yes, it is being streamed live.

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- Mr. Pollick continued with his disappointment in the way Mr. Gaschler handled this matter, which he should have been open with the board and alerted them. Not that there is anything to hide, or isn't a matter of public interest; however, to prepare properly for videotaping would have been courteous to the presenters.
- Ms. Moretti added that although the act was not in violation of state and sunshine laws, there is an element of courtesy and respect between and among board members, which he clearly does not understand. He had ample time before the meeting and during the meeting to state that his friend was using his phone to video and facebook stream the meeting.
- Mr. Sal Conte added that the board needs to understand Jim's personality of being very vocal; that he did not mean any harm, just wanted to provide another means for those who can't attend the meetings to get the full picture of what happens at the meetings. He added that the minutes do not often reflect the conversations held regarding the matters brought before the board.
- Mr. Pollick added that he is highly offended, not of being videoed, but to be shown no respect.
- Alexander Conte stood to be recognized and stated that the videoing and streaming of the meeting was not done to be disrespectful and that he understands the board should have been notified. Their intentions were to share the entire meeting with the public.
- Mr. Puskar concluded the conversation by insisting that the board policy committee work on development of a policy to further define the parameters of any video and/or taping of board meetings.

Hearing no further discussion on this or any other matter concerning the board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:26 through a motion made by Mrs. Renaldi and second by Ms. Moretti.

Respectfully submitted,

Paula Jean Moretti
Administrative Assistant