

MINUTES  
Board Meeting  
**Almont Community Schools Board of Education**

January 18, 2016

**CALL TO ORDER**

President Hoffa called the Board Meeting of the Almont Community Schools Board of Education to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Media Center at Almont High School.

**Present**

Steven Hoffa, Jill O'Neil, John Miles, Scott Kmetz, Jonathan Owens, and Stephan Manko, and Superintendent Joseph Candela.

**Visitors:** 23

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**ROLL CALL:** John Brzozowski absent

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Agenda Approved as Presented

**COMMUNICATIONS**

- Almont Middle School Students did a BOE appreciation presentation and presented each board member with a framed quote and bag of candy
- Jack Bostian – Technology Director made technology recommendations to the Board

**Comments: Audience**

**Comments: Board of Education**

**NONE**

**NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Finance**

**Ratification of Refunding Bonds**

Moved by Kmetz supported by Manko Board of Education adopt the resolution authorizing the issuance and delegating the sale of Almont Community Schools 2006 Refunding Bonds as presented, a copy of which to be mark VII(A)1 and attached to the Official Minutes of this meeting.

Roll Call Vote:

AYES: Manko, Kmetz, Owens, O'Neil, Miles, Hoffa

NAYS: None

**P, 19, 6-0-0**

**Disposition of Property**

Moved by Kmetz, supported by Manko, the Board of Education approve the sale of the Church Street property, Almont Elementary building and land (excluding ballfield property) upon completion of a

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purchase agreement from our law firm. Agreement to be attached to the official minutes of this meeting and marked VII A (2).

**P, 20, 5-1-0**

**(O'Neil – Nay)**

**Discussion:**

Mr. Candela stated that Mr. Soles from Thun Law Firm would stay around to help answer any questions regarding the sale of the property although Gordon VanWieren from Thrun is more familiar with the sale. Our hope is that within 60 days the sale can be wrapped up. Mr. VanWieren has suggested that we keep the down payment of \$5000.00 in case something falls through. He has also stated that the BOE has wide latitude and can accept or reject any of the offers.

Mr. Soles reiterated that the offers were turned in in a timely manner, opened and tabulated for the BOE once the Board accepts an offer they can move forward.

Mr. Hoffa asked Mr. Candela what he recommended

Mr. Candela stated that the Novak offer is the highest and we are trying to get the most money so that we can put the dollars into the OP and MS or save it for the other many projects we are working on. He feels that it is the Boards job to do what is in the best interest of the district and children based on the resubmitted offers that were due Friday. Thrun is ready to write up the purchase agreement.

Mr. Hoffa stated that once we have a signed purchase agreement the property is off the market. He also suggested adding to the motion 'upon completion of the purchase agreement'.

Mr. Owens – once we accept the offer will the BOE have say into the purchase agreement (PA)?

Mr. Candela – we can get it, review it and send it back to the lawyer.

Mr. Owens – is concerned about the use of the building, worried about it getting dilapidated and bad for the community. Can we have discussion on this?

Mr. Candela – does not feel that any of the purchasers would agree to that in a purchase agreement.

Does not even know if we could do this. We need to look at the bids and move forward.

Mr. Owens – this makes him nervous. Does not want the building to be neglected and the BOE have not input.

Mr. Candela – we most certainly can discuss but if it's not in the PA then that's all it is, just discussion. Ask Jeff Soles.

Mr. Soles – The deed could include these types of statements but most buyers would not agree to this. A purchase agreement is only good until the deed kicks in.

Mr. Manko – Zoning and ordinances will take care of these issues when they are enforced. The village and township and been working on these issues in the community. He does not see potential buyers agreeing to those types of terms in a PA or deed. Zoning will dictate use. Really not another way to alleviate this fear.

Mr. Owens – just does not want it to rot.

Mr. Manko – Zoning will take care of this.

Mr. Hoffa – we are just cutting the grass as of now

Ms. O'Neil – with a PA do the letter of intent terms go away? Concerned about the statement in one of the letters about contamination.

Mr. Candela – PA will state they lose the \$5000.00 if they back out because of these issues.

Mr. Soles – most buyers do not have ample opportunity to address some of these issues/concerns until the PA is accepted. They will now get this chance.

Mr. Hoffa – all have gone through the building.

Ms. O'Neil – worried we will be here again. Said she is still uneasy about how we got where we are and with the process. By not returning the check to the first bidder and taking offers from others. This makes her uneasy.

Mr. Hoffa – we had the original sealed bid. Once rescinded, one rejected. Asked both if they wanted to reconsider. One did, one did not.

O'Neil – still concerned we did not return his check, moved offer dates, he met the deadlines feels others did not.

Mr. Manko – after the first bid we put up the for sale sign, it was made clear we were having a new date.  
Hoffa – why concerned check not returned?  
Ms. O’Neil – we did not vote on the for sale sign, we held the check, we were negotiating with him.  
When we denied his bid we should have given the check back and started over.  
Mr. Hoffa – we had a motion to sell the building, we held his check, we did not stop any negotiating.  
Ms. O’Neil – she is entitled to her concerns.  
Mr. Owens – what is the remedy you (Ms. O’Neil) is looking for.  
Ms. O’Neil – she wants it recognized that she is uncomfortable just like she stated at the last meeting.

### **Audience Comments:**

Pam Ferzacca – stated that her exact words from a previous meeting were to inquire whether we had sold the building to Mr. Tencza and that she voiced her opinion on the pending sale to Mr. Tencza (she thinks it was a great idea). She said Mr. Hoffa said that we did not sell the building to Mr. Tencza. She then mentioned that we should utilize the sign as a ‘for sale’ sign. She stated that then Mr. Hoffa said to Mr. Candela to remember that.

Angie Schuster (partner with Mr. Tencza) – questioned the bid process. She said that the list of things that the school is keeping is about \$20,000 which does not make Mr. Novak’s bid the highest. Does not understand that how they could it for sale when they were in negotiations with Mr. Tencza. Can this be addressed?

Mr. Soles – Cannot address this bid process because he is unfamiliar with it.

Mr. Candela – put it up for sale on the marquee. Was previously told to sell the building.

Mrs. Schuster – does not understand this. Negotiations were active and we had a check.

Mr. Candela – explained the previous process.

Mr. Tencza – questioned who brought what bids on what dates.

Mr. Candela – the building was for sale

Mrs. Schuster – you have accepted an offer with no terms, no funding. Nothing has been taken into consideration.

Paul Bowman – asked where we were on the OP roof. What gauge, final price?

Mr. Candela – 24 gauge, does not have final number in front of him but will save on color, price is around \$411,000.

Mr. Bowman – does this mean have money left for secured entrances?

Mr. Candela – yes, architect was out on the snow day to look at all 3 buildings. Plan is too bundle a couple buildings for the bid.

Mr. Bowman – done in summer of 16?

Mr. Candela – that is the plan. With sinking fund dollars from this year and last year as well as the money from the sale of the AE.

Mr. Bowman – Bond question. Will we go over 2032 with the bonds? Tax payers call his office asking. Can we up the 8.45 to pay the School Bond Loan fund down?

Mr. Candela – with the new laws it’s not that easy

Mr. Soles – most bonds will be done in 2027, just one expires in 2032 that will give us a good opportunity to pay things down.

Kurt Schuster – concerned about the quick action regarding the AE building. They (Mr. Tencza) had a business plan that included a community portion, they had been pre-approved, would have provided 20 jobs, and 50-60 residents. Very disappointed because they were so far along with architects and funding.

### **Communications**

- Jack Bostian – Technology Director made technology recommendations to the Board

Jack Bostian presented at this point. Power point included in hard board notes.

Mr. Kmetz asked about cost of filter

Mr. Candela reiterated cost of closets and order of infrastructure updates.

Mr. Bostian – agreed, start with backbone then work our way up.

## **B. Personnel**

### **Approval of PreSchool Aide**

Moved by O’Neil supported by Owens the Board of Education employ Maria Paredes as an Almont Community Schools PreSchool Aide.

**P, 21, 6-0-0**

### **Work Session**

Various informational items were discussed:

#### **Finance**

Items Discussed:

Pulled Random Checks

Discussed Budget Update for January

Discussed Bus Lease

#### **Curriculum**

None

#### **Personnel**

Items Discussed:

New Lunch Aide

Drama Director Position

#### **Policy**

Items Discussed:

School of Choice Students

Thrun Legal Retainer

#### **Building and Grounds**

Items Discussed:

OP Roof – Color needs to be decided on

Secured entrances – hope to go out to bid in February

Gas smell at back of HS – Bob Jones explained its normal depending on how the wind is blowing the gas company has been out

Mr. Owens would like Mr. Candela to check up on Axium at the MS. He has heard there is an issue with cleaning in that building.

#### **Other**

Items Discussed:

Think about Board Goals Workshop meeting date 2/27 or 3/12. Want to avoid the 5<sup>th</sup> because of a band festival

Superintendent’s Evaluation – Mr. Kmetz will get the forms out tomorrow. Will do the evaluation the same way as last year.

Mr. Owens would like the calendar issue looked at. Had a double booking at the HS day of snowcoming.

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**QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS: AUDIENCE**

Sue Fredericksen – inquired about course guide approval

Mr. Candela – we can add it to the agenda on Monday

Mr. Kmetz – please include a separate list of changes

Mr. Bowman – since the Board is looking at a new bus lease maybe this is a good time to consider using less buses, kids in town can walk.

Mr. Jones stated that there are an average of 50 kids on each bus. 50-55 on the HS/MS run. The buses say they fit 70+ people but realistically this is not true. 3 in a seat has most HS/MS kids hanging off in the aisle. We have has about 1100 people sign up for bussing and around 900 ride consistently. The Dryden and Capac buses are not as full. If we have less bus runs you have longer routes some kids are already on for an hour. We have less buses than we have had previously and less runs. If kids walk you will need to have a crossing guard again. He runs the numbers all the time and it can't really be done with less.

Mr. Owens – Can Mr. Jones come up with some scenarios for the Board to look at by this Friday as far as the bus lease goes.

Mr. Jones - Yes

Mr. Bowman – was the June 2015 Budget incorrect? Were errors corrected?

Mr. Hoffa- item adjustments were made

Mrs. O’Neil – wanted to know if the Board received the email from Mr. Immekus.

Response – Yes

Mrs. O’Neil – Wanted to know if parents are aware that coaches are not on buses when attending athletic events

Mr. Candela – stated that the buses not staying at the events was a cost savings decision since the buses were virtually empty when coming home from events. With buses just dropping kids off for many events and kids going home with parents the coach has to drive him/herself there so they have a way home. Mr. Leusby follows the bus with his car and has strict rules regarding the bus. If there is trouble the driver has been instructed to pull over and he will deal with it.

Hoffa – what is Board policy? If it’s that a coach is on the bus then a coach needs to be on the bus.

**QUESTION AND COMMENTS: BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**Adjournment**

Moved by Miles, supported by Kmetz, the Board of Education adjourn the January 18<sup>TH</sup>, 2016 Meeting at 9:17 p.m.

Approved \_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
John Miles, Secretary

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Steven Hoffa, President