

**MINUTES OF PRELIMINARY DETERMINATION HEARING OF THE BOARD OF
EDUCATION OF THE FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP
COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATION
MARION COUNTY, INDIANA, HELD MONDAY, MAY 22, 2023**

PRESENT: Zachary Smith Howard, Larry J. Walker, Dawn A. Downer, Kelly L. Foulk, Bruce Hibbard, Jill Britt, Chase Huotari, Sharon Kight, Tyler Knight, Fred McWhorter, Jeff Murphy, Kent Pettet, Kaitlin Porter, Lynlie Schoene and Toni Stephenson

The Board of Education of the Franklin Township Community School Corporation, Marion County, Indiana, met in Regular Session at 6:00 P.M. at the Administration Offices, located at 6141 South Franklin Road, Indianapolis, Indiana, 46259, on May 22, 2023. All Board Members and news media had been duly notified and the agenda properly posted.

President Zachary Howard called the Preliminary Determination Hearing to order at 6:00 P.M.

PRELIMINARY DETERMINATION HEARING (FCHS ADDITION/RENOVATION PROJECT)

President Howard welcomed everyone to the Preliminary Determination Hearing on the proposed FCHS Addition/Renovations Project and stated that if anyone is interested in speaking at the Hearing there is a sign-up sheet on the table. Mr. Erik Long with Ice Miller (Bond Counsel), conveyed that pursuant to Indiana Code 20-26-7-37 and 6-1.1-20-3.5, a school corporation must hold two public hearings to discuss and hear objections and support regarding the proposed addition/renovations construction project at Franklin Central High School. Mr. Long shared that the second hearing is scheduled for June 26, 2023 for the purpose of discussing the project and hearing objections and/or support of the proposal as well as consider the adoption of a resolution making a preliminary determination to enter into a lease agreement relating to the project and to issue bonds to finance the project. Mr. Fred McWhorter II stated that over the last few months we have met with several groups regarding this project such as Department Chairs, teachers, Administrators, and community members to address the overcrowding issues. He noted that while we understand that the public is not in favor of a tax increase, this project can be completed underneath the Property Tax Cap and homeowners will not see an increase in their residential tax bills. Mr. McWhorter shared that the project will vastly improve the working and learning conditions for FC staff and students, bring our STEM (science) classrooms into the current century, allow our Performing Arts students the space to practice, and provide expanded options for Physical Education classes. Mr. Tim Funston with The Skillman Corporation shared the proposed construction project timeline and estimated costs broken down by areas (ex. STEM, Performing Arts, Cafeteria, etc.) and stated that the project will entail renovating 300,000 square feet of the facility. Mr. George Link with VPS Architecture provided renditions of the proposed additions and renovations to Franklin Central. He commented that it is easy to build classrooms onto an existing building, but it is very challenging to renovate a building while school is in session. Mr. McWhorter added that he is confident that the staff and students will be accepting of the construction inconveniences knowing that the end results will be wonderful. Dr. Hibbard stated that the proposed Science and Activity Center will seat over 5000 people which will be a terrific space to hold Commencement without having to worry about inclement weather. Mr. McWhorter also noted that the parking lot will see an increase of 500 spaces. Mrs. Jenni Matasovsky, Franklin Central High School Principal, spoke to the Board about various Pathway Programs that we are currently unable to offer due to the lack of science equipment and classroom space. She added that without sufficient space for our Performing Arts students we are limited to program enrollment and while the students are using hallways for practices, she feels it is not a safe environment for them or the instructors. Mrs. Matasovsky conveyed that it is our job to provide extra space and programs for our students thus keeping them off the street which encourages unhealthy choices. Mr. McWhorter stated that a representative from Baker Tilley (Municipal Advisors) could not attend the Hearing this evening, so he will be presenting the information. He presented the School Corporation's existing annual debt service/lease rental payments and shared that the estimated cost of the FCHS Addition/Renovations Project is \$99.9 million dollars. Mr. McWhorter noted that we are still working through the financing piece due to the fact that the Legislative Session has just concluded and the State Budget is yet to be finalized. He assured the Board Members that we will continue to pursue the best possible terms and rates for financing the proposed project and hope to issue bonds by the end of 2023 or the beginning of 2024. There were no questions or comments from the Board Members.
(Exhibit No 23-50)

COMMENTS FROM THE COMMUNITY

President Howard opened the Public Hearing for anyone who wished to speak regarding the proposed Franklin Central High School Addition/Renovation Project.

1. Mary Ann and Joseph Palus, 6962 Rutherford Drive, shared that they have been homeowners in Franklin Township for 16 years, currently have four students in our schools, and do not want to see the property values in Franklin Township decrease. They conveyed that they are extremely happy with their children's education, but they feel that the FCHS Music Department needs extra space. Mrs. Palus stated that the orchestra students do a wonderful job, but deserve a dedicated orchestra room to be able to enhance their talents. Mr. Palus conveyed that students benefit emotionally from being involved in music and it also teaches them self-discipline which will be helpful throughout their lives. Mr. and Mrs. Palus thanked the Board for considering the FC Addition/Renovation Project.

2. Amanda Stevenson, stated that she teaches music in our elementary schools and has three children at FCHS who participate in the Music Program. She conveyed that our top notch organizations need top notch facilities and as our Performing Arts Programs continue to improve, we should improve our facilities as well. Ms. Stevenson thanked the Board Members for their time and effort in considering the proposed project which will benefit the entire community.

3. Derek Mittendorf, 7615 Inverness Drive, shared that he has been assisting with the FC orchestra for seven years and conveyed that all of the students are energetic and are determined to do their best. He stated that, unfortunately, they have to share rooms with all of the Performing Arts Groups and feels that our students with their beautifully creative minds need to have an expanded space in which to flourish. Mr. Mittendorf thanked the Board Members for considering the expansion of the Performing Arts Department at FCHS.

4. Suzanne Wolski, 6948 Acton Road, stated that she is an employee and a FCHS Orchestra Booster and is amazed with the successful work that continues to be done each year by the Performing Arts students with the current cramped conditions they have for class and practices. Ms. Wolski added that the number of students and staff that use the Performing Arts space far exceeds the safe capacity numbers for those areas and asked the Board to vote in favor of the FCHS Addition/Renovation Project.

5. Mitchell Douglass, 4450 S. Carroll Road, noted that he is a FC orchestra student and stated that the current facility does not accommodate the demands. He stated that the orchestra shares a room with the choir and they are always looking for rehearsal space for all of the groups as well as for individual practice. Mr. Douglass added that the instrument storage area also needs attention as it lacks the property humidity controls for safe storage of the instruments. He thanked the Board Members for allowing them to voice their concerns and for considering the proposed project.

6. Derek Sutton, 7050 Stones River Drive, stated that while the referendum which included major renovations to Franklin Central High School failed, he asked why the addition of an Activity Center wasn't included in the referendum project as it is in this proposed project. He stated that he feels the community would have supported the referendum had it been included in the plans. Mr. McWhorter replied that this proposed project was discussed with several groups including the faculty members to get their perspective and will address the enrollment growth, while upgrading the infrastructure which includes the HVAC. He noted that he feels the referendum failed because the community does not want a property tax increase and this project will not increase their property taxes.

President Howard thanked everyone for coming to the meeting. He expressed his appreciation to them for spending their time to learn about the project and the future of our community. President Howard stated that the Board will hold a second public hearing on this project at 6:00 p.m. on June 26, 2023.


ADJOURNMENT

President Howard adjourned the meeting at 6:53 p.m.

APPROVED



Zachary Smith Howard, President



Larry J. Walker, Secretary



Kelly L. Foulk, Member

ABSENT

Doris L. Gowan, Vice President



Dawn A. Downer, Member

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP
COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATION
MARION COUNTY, INDIANA, HELD MONDAY, MAY 22, 2023**

PRESENT: Zachary Smith Howard, Larry J. Walker, Dawn A. Downer, Kelly L. Foulk, Bruce Hibbard, Jill Britt, Chase Huotari, Sharon Kight, Tyler Knight, Fred McWhorter, Jeff Murphy, Kent Pettet, Kaitlin Porter, Lynlie Schoene and Toni Stephenson

The Board of Education of the Franklin Township Community School Corporation, Marion County, Indiana, met in Regular Session at 6:00 P.M. at the Administration Offices, located at 6141 South Franklin Road, Indianapolis, Indiana, 46259, on May 22, 2023. All Board Members and news media had been duly notified and the agenda properly posted.

REGULAR MEETING

President Zachary Howard called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:55 P.M. He also led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

President Howard called for a motion to approve the agenda as written. Ms. Downer made a motion to approve and Mrs. Foulk seconded. The motion carried 4-0.

COMMENTS FROM THE COMMUNITY

President Howard opened the floor for comments from the community.

1. Bill and Lacey Pierson, 6709 E. Thompson Road, shared that his grandson's babysitter has moved from an address in the Thompson Crossing boundary to an address in the Acton Elementary boundary. Ms. Pierson stated that she has legal custody of the child, owns two separate properties in the township and would like her son to continue at Thompson Crossing. Dr. Chase Huotari replied that he would speak to them after the Board Meeting regarding the residency issue.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

President Howard asked for a motion to approve the following list of Consent Agenda Items. Mr. Walker motioned to approve the items and Mrs. Foulk seconded. Ms. Downer conveyed that she has some concerns and questions regarding some of the hiring practices which she feels are inconsistent. She stated that she has voiced her concerns and for those reasons, she will not be supporting the Personnel Report this evening. President Howard replied that he has spoken to Mr. Jeff Murphy regarding the issues and commended the Administration for their hard work in creating a positive and successful hiring process. There being no additional questions or comments, President Howard called for the vote to approve the Consent Agenda Items. The motion passed 3-1 with President Howard, Mrs. Foulk and Mr. Walker voting in favor and Ms. Downer voting against.

- A. Board Meeting Minutes
 - 1. Regular Board Meeting – April 24, 2023
- B. Fund and Expenditure Summary Reports (Exhibit No. 23-51)
- C. Accounts Payable Vouchers and Payroll Claims (Exhibit No. 23-52)
- D. Personnel Report (Exhibit No. 23-53)
- E. Donations (Exhibit No. 23-54)
- F. Fundraisers
- G. Surplus Equipment for Disposal (Exhibit No. 23-55)

DISCUSSION ITEMS

CENTRAL NINE REPORT

Ms. Dawn Downer reported that Central Nine has been working on finalizing their budget for next year and it appears that Franklin Township will see an increase of 11% which equates to \$110,000. She added that Mr. McWhorter has been in contact with her regarding the budget and she has been gathering the information for him. Ms. Downer conveyed that Central Nine is doing their best to keep the increase to a minimum while trying to fairly compensate their teachers and staff. She added that C-9 is still in need of a welding instructor if anyone knows of someone who might be interested. There were no questions or comments from the Board Members.

FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP EDUCATION FOUNDATION REPORT

President Howard reported that the Franklin Township Education Foundation Board met most recently on May 16th at which time they recognized the Franklin Central Seniors that were awarded various FTEF scholarships and the 2023 recipients of the Elisabeth Good Fellowship Award: Madison Odendahl, teacher at Arlington Elementary and Michelle Alcoe, teacher at Kitley Intermediate. He also shared that the FTEF Board welcomed two new members: Ryan Thomas and Vanessa Smith. President Howard was happy to announce that for the second year in a row Adams Elementary won the Pennies for Projects Fundraiser with Bunker Hill finishing second. He reminded everyone that the Fast Flash and Back-to-School Bash is scheduled for Saturday, July 29th and the Golf Fore Kids Event is planned for Friday, September 29th at Back 9 Golf Center. President Howard thanked the Administration for their support of the Foundation and Mr. McWhorter for securing two Platinum Sponsors for the golf outing at \$5000 each. There were no questions or comments from the Board Members.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION REPORT

President Howard reported that the Legislative Session ended on April 28th and there were over 1000 bills introduced with 223 of those tracked by the Indiana School Boards Association and 252 new laws were enacted. He shared a summary of various bills that directly pertain to K-12 education which include funding and textbook fees. President Howard asked Mr. McWhorter to offer his opinion on the funding issues. Mr. McWhorter stated that he was disappointed with the Legislature's decision regarding the increase of funding for private school vouchers and conveyed that the circuit breaker changes will definitely affect our financial situation as well. He added that as a result of these new laws, IASBO will be working on the language changes and definitions for textbook fees as it pertains to consumables, supplies, etc. A discussion followed. President Howard stated that Mr. Murphy will be working with our legal counsel, CCHA, to make the necessary updates to our Board Policies with regards to the new legislation.

ACTION ITEMS

APPROVE FT LEARNING CENTER PROJECT BID

Mr. Fred McWhorter II referred the Board Members to their copies of the Franklin Township Learning Center Project Bid that was included in their packets and recommended approval. He explained that the project includes replacement of the HVAC, tearing down the older two wings of the building and the old tennis courts. He added that Shuck Corporation was the best responsive and responsible bidder with a bid of \$4,862,630. Mr. McWhorter also noted that the demolition sites will become green space for now with a possibility of additional parking spots and/or an access road in the future. Mr. Walker made a motion to approve and Ms. Downer seconded. Ms. Downer mentioned that she was informed that the new tennis courts are locked and asked if this was normal practice. Mr. McWhorter replied that they were locked while they were being repaired, but they are generally open for public use. There being no further comments, President Howard called for the vote. The motion to approve the FT Learning Center Project Bid passed 4-0. (Exhibit No. 23-56)

APPROVE TRANSPORTATION AGREEMENT

Mr. Fred McWhorter II recommended approval of the Transportation Agreement with Hop Skip Drive, Inc. that was included in the meeting documentation. He explained that the service will be used on an 'as needed' basis for transporting single students when it does not make sense to send a full size bus and it has been reviewed by our legal. Mrs. Foulk motioned to approve the agreement. Ms. Downer seconded the motion and it carried 4-0. (Exhibit No. 23-57)

APPROVE NEW ELEMENTARY NAMING RECOMMENDATION

Dr. Kent Pettet stated that we are recommending that the name of the new elementary school be 'New Bethel Elementary School'. He shared that he and Mrs. Meli Drier, Principal of the school, visited the Franklin Township Historical Society to gather information regarding the history of the location of the school which is near the intersection of Senour and Thompson Roads. Dr. Pettet explained that in compliance with School Board Policy G450, a Naming School Facilities Committee was formed consisting of students, teachers, administrators and community members. He added that naming suggestions were submitted via a community on-line form and then voted on by the committee. Dr. Pettet recommended the Board Members approve the name of the new school as proposed by the committee: New Bethel Elementary School. Mr. Walker made a motion to approve the name recommendation and Mrs. Foulk seconded. Mr. Walker stated that he thinks New Bethel is a perfect name for the school. Ms. Downer and President Howard conveyed that they love the choice of names for the new elementary. There being no additional comments, President Howard called for the vote which passed 4-0. President Howard thanked the Administration for sending construction updates for the current projects throughout the district and asked when the name of the new elementary will be advertised and posted at the site. Dr. Pettet replied that we are hopeful the social media page for New Bethel Elementary will be ready by the end of summer and signage at the construction site should be soon to follow. (Exhibit No. 23-58)

APPROVE RENAISSANCE SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL

Dr. Lynlie Schoene referred the Board Members to the Renaissance Subscription Renewal that was included in the meeting documentation and recommended approval. She explained that this product is renewed annually and is currently being used at Thompson Crossing Elementary. Ms. Downer motioned to approve and Mrs. Foulk seconded. The motion carried 4-0. (Exhibit No. 23-59)

APPROVE NEW TEXTBOOK ADOPTIONS & PROGRAMS FOR 2023-2024

Dr. Chase Huotari recommended the Board's approval of the New Textbook Adoptions and Programs for 2023-2024 which were outlined in their packets. He stated that there are no longer any fees for textbooks, but he along with Dr. Toni Stevenson and Dr. Lynlie Schoene have compiled a list of new novels and textbooks for approval. Mr. Walker motioned to approve the items and Ms. Downer seconded. President Howard asked if we are receiving digital copies of the textbooks. Dr. Huotari replied that we are getting most of the textbooks digitally, but it does not save us any money as we are paying yearly fees for the software. Dr. Schoene shared that since the new law regarding textbook fees has changed we have had several meetings to discuss and outline new procedures and subsequent added costs for the district. There being no further questions or comments, President Howard called for the vote. The motion to approve the New Textbook Adoptions and Programs for 2023-2024 passed 4-0. (Exhibit No. 23-60)

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

SUPERINTENDENT COMMENTS

Dr. Hibbard thanked the students, staff and teachers for a wonderful school year. He reminded the Board of the luncheon tomorrow at Transportation to celebrate the new addition to their facility. He also reminded them that Commencement is next Tuesday, May 30th at 7:00 p.m.

BOARD COMMENTS

Ms. Downer thanked the staff for a great school year and also thanked South Creek Elementary for inviting her to the recent Endangered Species Event.

Mr. Walker extended his appreciation for our Police Force for all they do to keep our students safe throughout the school year.

President Howard thanked the Administration and the staff for another successful school year. He added that his favorite event of the year is Commencement.

ADJOURNMENT

President Howard adjourned the meeting at 7:37 p.m.

APPROVED



Zachary Smith Howard, President

ABSENT

Doris L. Gowan, Vice President



Larry J. Walker, Secretary



Dawn A. Downer, Member



Kelly L. Foulk, Member