

Office of the Superintendent
SHEBOYGAN AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
Sheboygan, WI 53081

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
SHEBOYGAN AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
Sheboygan, Wisconsin
SPECIAL SESSION MINUTES
Thursday, February 19, 2015**

A Special Session of the Board of Education was held on Thursday, February 19, 2015, at 6:30 p.m. at Cooper Elementary School, Gymnasium, 2014 Cooper Avenue, Sheboygan, WI 53083.

- I. President Gallianetti called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.
- II. Board Members Present: Mr. David Gallianetti, Ms. Barbara Tuszynski, Mr. John Hill, Ms. Jennifer Pothast, Ms. Marcia Reinthaler, Mr. Ryan Burg, Mr. Mark Mancl, Mr. Larry Samet, Dr. Susan Hein
- III. Moved by Mr. Mancl, seconded by Mr. Burg to approve the agenda noting that Aurora and the Sheboygan Area School District will present their proposal and then allow for community input. All ayes. Motion carried unanimously.

President Gallianetti commented that he will discuss the parameters for community input prior to any community member speaking or making statements to the Board of Education.

IV. Community Input

President Gallianetti reviewed the procedures for community input and noted that personal criticism of the school board, employees, or personal visitors will be called out of order.

Mr. Ken Merrill, 3230 Geele Avenue asked how the five member neighborhood advisory group would be selected and Mr. Graebner responded that they would want representatives of the area so all views are well presented whether they are in favor or not of the sale of the property to Aurora. They will look at geographic and differing opinions and form the group.

Ms. Maureen Kober, 2320 E. Mark Drive moved into a residential area and want it to remain a residential area. She is concerned about another facility, destroyed green space, traffic congestion and does not want to see the value of her home decline.

Dr. Warren Soeteber, 2815 Windepoint Court is opposed to the sale. He asked if the school district did a population projection. He is concerned that it will cost the district millions more if they have to buy property in the future for growth.

Mr. Scott Schaefer, 2503 Rolling Meadows provided the history of the youth football program and commented that for them to have a home is an incredible opportunity. This will allow their organization to apply for other grant opportunities if they have a home for their sport. He also commented that the Field of Dreams is not a city park.

Ms. Judy Straus, 1845 N. 24th Street talked about the community effort on the Field of Dreams and felt it was unprofessional and devious manner by which this was handled.

Mr. Bob Heck, 1720 Elm Avenue thanks the City, Dr. Sheehan and Aurora for a wonderful proposal. He encouraged the school district to approve the sale as it is the right thing for Sheboygan and our kids.

Mr. Scott Lewandoske, 2201 Erie Avenue supports kids having equal playing fields. He supports Aurora building a new facility but not on the Field of Dreams. He questioned who would own the fields once they are built and questioned the process the school board used in making these decisions. Aurora is a multi-billion dollar business and should be paying the full cost of the new facilities.

Mr. Tobi Greene, 2308 North 35th Street asked how many community members want a new facility on the Southside and a new Aurora facility and how many want the Field of Dreams to be destroyed. Let's work together to get it done.

Mr. Jon Bemis, 3612 Saemann Avenue respects business and growth and is not opposed to the school board or the school district or city. He is pro neighborhood and does not want the field of dreams to be destroyed. He is not opposed to the development of growth in Sheboygan, but does not want to lose the green space. Wants the school board to consider not approving the sale.

Ms. Lori Knitt, 2229 North 7th Street commented that her kids would have loved to play on premier soccer fields as well as football fields. There is no immediate plan to build a hospital but they are for the first time seeing active financial investment in their current facility. This will allow Memorial to expand their surgery room and she fully supports it from a parent perspective and a health perspective. It's a win win for everyone.

Ms. Melissa Braesch, 3320 Geele Avenue talked about the script that was sent to Aurora staff members to encourage them to attend the meeting in support. Our constituents do not agree with our decision which is one of the criteria.

Mr. Matt Braesch, 3320 Geele Avenue understands the business needs of Aurora and that the school board does what is in the best interest of kids. Aurora is not accountable to the taxpayer. He would like to see the football fields, etc. Upset that the school board has been in the works on this for a long time and no one was informed.

Ms. Mary Jo Zagozen, 2314 North 7th Street talked about long-range plans and raised issue with Memorial hospital and noted there are no hospitals from here to the surrounding areas. There used to be a better plan between the school, city and community.

Mr. Steve Straus, 1845 North 24th Street thanked the school board for allowing them to speak. He asked when the aldermen were made aware of what was going on. He asked if Aurora owned land on the southside of town and Mr. Graebner said he would not talk about specific land and talked about the challenges regarding the railroad access. Mr. Graebner talked about the hospital and that sixty percent of their activity was inpatient and forty percent outpatient. Those numbers have changed significantly and they are going through a major evolution with medical.

Mr. Jim Hale, spoke in support of Aurora. He is a physician and they have become a vibrant group recruiting more and better physicians. They are beginning to provide care that many would often have to leave the community to receive. He's a soccer coach and involved in the community and sees this as a great expansion because of all the improved care.

Ms. Renee Rusch, 2301 North 34th Street asked if there was approval from the DNR regarding the wetlands. Mr. Gallianetti clarified that if the DNR would not approve of the building plan the work on the west side would not be done as a result.

Mr. Herb Tyler, 3514 Geele Avenue commented there are no villains in this process. The school board was not elected to be advocates for Aurora, rather for the community. On behalf of the students in this community and adults he urges the school board to do the right thing and leave the Field of Dreams alone.

Ms. Tammy Rabe, 2224 North 34th Street talked about how everyone can win and handed out information on various locations that Aurora could build.

Mr. Jeff Welsch, W1784 Highview Court commented this is an excellent opportunity and would be tragic for the community if it did not go through as well as denying the kids great facilities. There are many other places than the Field of Dreams to play soccer. The amount of economic improvement will be difficult to measure but can only be positive. It is fantastic that Aurora has offered this opportunity.

Mr. Bill Thiel, 1703 North 37th Street talked about youth football and the safety issues they have had because of the lack of land. He has received calls for and against the sale and is concerned if the sale does not happen. He is a neighbor to the Field of Dreams and an alderman, but will encourage his fellow aldermen to vote in favor of the sale.

Mr. Mike Vandersteen, 3816 Highcliff Court explained that with every business expansion the City isn't always involved. He commented that 23 years ago the neighborhood didn't want the Field of Dreams when it was first built. Aurora has been a good neighbor and has done the best with what they have. Change is difficult, but change is going to happen.

Kathy Nelson raised concerns about the contaminated soil if approved by the DNR and also talked about the house construction project and how that program will be able to continue. Dr. Sheehan noted that is a self-funded program and they have purchased property on the North side.

Ms. Lisa Conrad commented that she supports the new complex and does not believe any student would complain about playing on new facilities as much work needs to be done on the Field of Dreams.

Mr. Denny Moyer was on the committee to raise funds for the Field of Dreams and commented they need a lighted baseball area.

Ms. Debbie Desmoulin, 1704 North 35th Street felt it was unfair for the community to not have enough time to ask questions and requested additional time.

Ms. Jill Reseburg, 3706 Superior Avenue wants to see Sheboygan grow and fully supports the kids and her community. If that means building facilities then we should do that. It is a win win situation and she supports the sale.

V. Review and Discussion of the Sale of the real estate commonly known as 3306 Saemann Avenue, Sheboygan, WI (NO ACTION)

Dr. Sheehan, Superintendent of Schools opened the discussion providing an overview of the beginning of the discussions with Aurora and the background on the intent of the purchase of the property by the school district which was originally purchased for the purpose of building a new middle school; however, because enrollment has been consistently flat, there is no longer any need for the property. He talked about the criteria that was used by the school district while determining a potential buyer which included: 1) The buyer has to add value to the community 2) The district must receive fair market value or better 3) The existing fields must be recreated

or upgraded 4) The donors and naming rights at the Field of Dreams have to be honored at the new location.

Mr. Dave Graebner, Chief Administrative Officer for Aurora talked about the proposed outpatient surgery center and medical office building and noted that Aurora's objectives are: 1) Improved access to care 2) To create future options for hospital and clinic campuses 3) Develop long-term options to support the health care needs community. He shared the renderings for the new facility and noted they are not finalized; however, an idea of how the building may look. He noted that enhancements to the youth programs are important so they are offering \$5.1 million to the community.

Mr. Don Hammond, Sheboygan Common Council President spoke about the Butzen farm property and that in June 55 acres was donated by the family with a covenant that the land could only be used for recreational purposes. Internally, the City began looking at possible uses after being approached by Lakeshore United and Sheboygan Youth Football independently which lead to their vision of having a premier youth sports facility in the area - A facility that would provide a "home" for youth soccer and youth football with tournament grade fields to attract regional events. Initially a 7-10 year timeframe was determined for completion; however with this opportunity it would allow for an accelerated timeframe for the facility.

Mr. Dave Graebner talked about why other city options would not work and discussed the selected criteria that was used in reviewing land options that included 1) Minimum of 30 acres 2) On public transportation route 3) Connected to city infrastructure 4) Easy access for the county residents. He talked about the option of purchasing the mall; however, there are multiple owners involved so it is not a feasible option. Railway created quite a few issues when considering other location.

He talked about the plans for the existing hospital and noted that constraints with land have been a learning lesson for Aurora. He further commented that Aurora would not be making an \$86.4 million commitment if they were not going to stay in this area long-term. It is important for them to be centrally located for the county and the city. Within the radius there are a number of other health care facilities who chose that location for the very reason Aurora is. Aurora wants to address the concerns raised by the neighborhood. Initial planning considerations will include walking trails, landscaping, and the development of a 5-member neighborhood advisory group to review and advise Aurora as plans develop.

Mr. Don Hammond reviewed the timeline of the next steps with regards to the Butzen Farm, review of the zoning map amendment by the plan commission and vote on the sale of the property by the Board of Education.

Dr. Sheehan added that there is also an additional \$111,000 committed to the baseball community that may be used by the school district at any site selected by the District. He further commented there would be playground equipment on the east side property.

VI. Moved by Mr. Burg, seconded by Ms. Tuszynski to adjourn at 9:43 p.m.



Joseph M. Sheehan, Ph.D.
Superintendent & Secretary of the Board