

Coalition For Community Schools Meeting Minutes

Tuesday May 11th, 2010 Cook, Mn

Item 1. Update on Legal Complaint

Extensive discussion took place with Marshall Helmberger sharing history and summary of complaint. Details were provided re: 211B.06 and 211A.05. Group consensus was to proceed with complaint 211A.05 and table further action on 211B.06. Attorney is optimistic and very committed to accountability issues.

Item 2. Update on strategy on P&Z process for school sites.

The preliminary EAW for the south site is being reviewed at the May 13th meeting of P&Z. There will then be a 30 day comment period with a possible decision in July.

Nothing is in place for the north site yet. Review not likely until late August. General agreement of group is that both sites must be blocked. Some are willing to assist the south in getting more organized to effectively express their opposition to the EAW. Dennis U. agreed to act as coordinator with the P&Z organizing efforts. Barry P. and Jim S. will also be involved.

Discussion of internal culture and politics of P&Z Dept. There are signs that early in the process, discrepancies in the plan were overlooked or allowed in order for the staff to recommend to Board to approve. Attorney will be approached for their analysis of the ethical and legal purity of the P&Z process so far.

Items 3 - 5. Discussion on status of Feasibility Study Funding; Formation of an Association and JPB

David Dill introduced legislation to fund a feasibility study to split the district in the amount of \$150,000 and reported to some that it had passed in the House. Jim S. shared an email from Tom Bakk stating that there is "no money for the north" in S2510. So now there is confusion as to the status of this legislation. Follow-up needed.

Discussion took place re: who should be placed as the conservator of the funds should this bill pass. It looks like it would go to St. Louis County and some speculated that then St. LC Planning Dept. would oversee the money and the process. Alternative route would be for a Joint Powers Board (JPB) comprised of local govt. entities to approach the IRR for a direct grant of \$150,000 which they would oversee. A discussion then took place re: the formation of a Joint Powers Agreement that would carry some "clout" and act as an co-organizing body with the citizens coalition for future activities. Nancy Larson agreed to coordinate the efforts to form the JPB. Ideally, it would be comprised of the towns of Tower, Cook and Orr, the surrounding Townships and Bois Forte Reservation.

Discussion then focused on the formation of an association/citizens' coalition to represent our views and take action on behalf of "keeping the schools in our local communities". All present agreed to

move forward in its formation. The name "Coalition for Community Schools" (CFCS) was chosen as the formal name. The following "officers" were appointed by group consensus: Tim Kotzian - Chair, Treasurer – Currently Vacant, and Communications – Troy Swanson and Kathy McQuillan, shared. A website link will be established at the City of Tower website. All information gathered by members of the group will be sent to Tim Kotzian who will then get it to Troy to post on the CFCS site. Everyone is encouraged to consult the website, send new information, get on the email list and attend meetings. Meetings will be rotated among the three cities and also day and evening times to accommodate diverse schedules. Next meeting likely to be on a Thursday evening. No specific date yet.

Item 6. Other Business

The upcoming District #2142 School Board Elections were discussed. The group agreed to find candidates representing our views to run in November election. Candidates must file their intent to run by July. Everyone is encouraged to seek strong candidates from their areas for consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy McQuillan