

**THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CIVIL CITY OF NEW ALBANY, INDIANA,
HELD A WORK SESSION IN THE THIRD FLOOR ASSEMBLY ROOM OF THE
CITY/COUNTY BUILDING ON MONDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2015 AT 6:45 P.M.**

The meeting of the **New Albany City Council** was called to order by President Pat McLaughlin at 6:45 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Coffey, Mr. Caesar, Mr. Phipps, Mrs. Benedetti, Mr. Blair, Mrs. Baird, Mr. Gonder, Mr. Zurschmiede and President Pat McLaughlin.

OTHERS PRESENT: Mr. Lorch, Police Chief Bailey and Vicki Glotzbach

Mr. Zurschmiede introduced Dr. Hibbard.

Dr. Hibbard introduced Dr. Snyder as well and stated that the history starts in 1955. He explained that at that time Green Valley Elementary was built and a year later the Sherman Minton Bridge was finished and by the end of the '60s Slate Run and Prosser were built. He stated that their district is very fortunate to have Dr. Snyder as part of their team because he was a part of the renovation of New Albany High School and that mortgage will be paid off in 2017. He explained that phase 2 is a total renovation of Scribner and Hazelwood and a brand new Highland Hills Middle School and mentioned that Floyd Central was renovated in 2010. He stated that now as debt falls off they are looking to see what they can do for the community to ensure that the school children of New Albany and Floyd County have 21st Century facilities.

Dr. Brad Snyder stated that this event is a watershed event and explained that if you want to do something for the schools or the community the rules have changed and now you have to go through a ballot so this won't be the last time that they see school officials stepping forward to ask for their support. He explained that NAFC hopes to improve the education of their students by issuing bonds in the amount of \$79,950.00 to replace a portion of their retiring debt. He stated that in 2018 22 cents of NAFC debt will be retiring and they are proposing to replace 19 cents which they think is a responsive relief and it will advance their community. He gave an example of how this would show up on the ballot for vote. He went over the programs that would make this worth it such as free full-day of kindergarten, outstanding fine arts, above averages on several test scores, and higher than average instruction spending all while being under funded. He stated that they do what they can when they can and they have bounced around the district with these projects. He explained to the board how they got to where they are now and stated that it involved 2 separate studies regarding the facilities and demographics and detailed how much money they would like to spend at each facility that includes three major projects and two minor projects. He explained what they would like to do in the smaller projects that included finishing up the Greenville project and expanding cafeteria/renovating kitchen at Floyds Knobs. He stated that Green Valley, Prosser, and Slate Run are the centerpiece to this proposal and detailed what they would like to do at each location to sustain them for the long run. He explained that schools remain a local decision and at the end of the day it will be the community's decisions. He detailed the timeline leading up to the referendum and explained that if they are successful they will immediately move to design and bidding documents and will competitively bid out the project which will be followed by a period of construction with an anticipated completion date in 2017. He stated that voting yes will lower the tax rate, improve the education of our children, stimulate the local economy, and make Floyd County a stronger community.

Dr. Snyder's PowerPoint proposal is on file with the City Clerk's office.

Mr. Caesar asked when the other two pieces of debt fall off.

Dr. Snyder stated that middle school is 2026 and Floyd is 2028.

Mr. Zurschmiede asked if the referendum doesn't pass can they put it back on next year.

Dr. Snyder stated that they would have to wait at least 365 days.

Mr. Coffey asked why the school out in the Knobs was torn down instead of selling it and putting that money towards the project.

Dr. Hibbard stated that part of the reason is because it sits on Floyd Central property and it makes selling it problematic.

Mr. Coffey stated that he would like to know what amount of these jobs have been left to local companies as opposed to someone outside.

Dr. Snyder stated that they will have to go through the proper bid process and hope that it is someone local and they are doing their best to make sure a local business has an opportunity.

Mr. Gonder stated that a few years ago there was a discussion regarding Silver Street School and while he applauded what they are doing he wonders why there wasn't a similar effort made to save that school.

Dr. Hibbard stated that situation was about operational efficiency because they didn't need them and they are now in the black for the first time. He explained that if they had kept Silver Street they wouldn't be talking about Slate Run or Green Valley, they would still be talking about Silver Street and sinking a bunch of money into a site that can't be improved.

Mr. Gonder stated that he is concerned about other schools being on the chopping block because of this like Fairmont and SEJ.

Dr. Hibbard stated that none of those schools are on the chopping block.

Mr. Phipps stated that he asked about that as well.

Mrs. Baird asked if the referendum passes, when the construction would begin.

Dr. Snyder stated that realistically it would be about February/March of 2016.

Mr. Zurschmiede asked what the length of the bond is.

Dr. Snyder replied 20 years.

Mr. Blair asked Dr. Snyder to explain a little about the distinction of funding for capital projects and operation costs.

Dr. Snyder stated that in Indiana there are two types of referendums, construction and operational and they are proposing a construction referendum and it would not impact the general fund at all.

Mr. Blair stated that he thinks that it is important that the public understands that teachers' salaries would not be mixed into this.

Mr. Zurschmiede asked if the two new schools would house more students.

Dr. Hibbard stated that it would.

Mr. Caesar asked how the general fund is trending.

Dr. Hibbard stated that there was a slight increase in the per pupil average but they are still \$400 behind state average and they were supposed to gain that over the next three years. He explained that there has been further change in the legislature which would mean they wouldn't get any more and thus become state average so they won't necessarily be helped with the new funding program.

Mr. Caesar asked if they are looking at a tax hike in the next few years.

Dr. Hibbard stated that they understand that they closed 4 schools and it wasn't something he personally signed up for, but it was made out of necessity and the right thing to do for their kids. He explained that they have had unheard of improvements in academics so the changes have been beneficial and they were spending in the red, which they no longer are.

ADJOURN:

There being no further business before the board, the meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Pat McLaughlin, President

Vicki Glotzbach, City Clerk