



LIVINGSTON BOARD OF EDUCATION AND LIVINGSTON TOWNSHIP COUNCIL FIVE-ON-FIVE MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, April 23, 2019 – 7:00 p.m.

A **Five-on-Five Meeting** of the Livingston Board of Education and Livingston Township Council was held on this date at the Township Hall Municipal Building. The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. by the LBOE President, Charles August and Township Mayor, Alfred M. Anthony, who announced that adequate notice of this meeting has been provided by amendment to notice approved at the Board's reorganization meeting on January 7, 2019 and posted at the Board of Education office and communicated to *The Star Ledger*, *West Essex Tribune*, *TAPinto Livingston* and the Livingston Township Clerk.

Township Council: Alfred Anthony, Rudy Fernandez, Shawn Klein, Edward Meinhardt, Michael Vieira

LBOE: Charles "Buddy" August, Pamela Chirls, Ronnie Konner, Samantha Messer, George Shen

Also in attendance:

From the Township: Barry Lewis Jr., Russ Jones, Glenn Turtletaub, Shari Weiner

From LPS: James O'Neill, Steven Robinson, Jamie Perrette, Toni McLaughlin

Workshop Items

Mr. Anthony opened the meeting and thanked all for coming; thanked Buddy and the members of the Board of Education for participating. Stated that this group has had the best working relationship ever.

1. Shared Services

The two groups pointed out the following areas in which the two governing bodies share responsibility, both parties save money when there are joint contracts:

- Snow removal and salting of parking lots
- Field maintenance, tree cutting removal
- Sweeping of parking lots
- Sharing of maintenance personnel (plumbers, electricians)
- Utilization of Township and school facilities for various meetings and programs
- Fleet maintenance/repairs of district owned vehicles
- Gasoline co-op with Township
- Madonna Parking Lot
- Utilization of Township lots to park bus fleet at various times of the year
- Ball Fields
- Fiber Optics

Mrs. Konner stated that we are saving money but also making a better community for our residents. Also pointed out the number of joint committees between the Township and LPS.

Mrs. Chirls stressed the programming for parents and community members and the number of joint activities.

Mr. Fernandez indicated that the groups talk all the time about joining services, to avoid duplication and for economy of scale.

Mr. Meinhardt stated how the communication has grown significantly with the two groups over the past 4 to 6 years. He commended both sides for the communications.

2. Newer Successes

The group announced the following recently completed projects:

- Safety and Security – the police and school relationship is outstanding as they work together to protect our residents. We have invested a lot of money in our procedures and facilities. Police officers go through our buildings every day.

Mr. O'Neill stated that Chief Marshuetz is receptive to every request and call. There is a police officer at every drill; they help make suggestions. We are well prepared for an event we hope never happens.

Mr. August thanked the police, fire, first aid and LPS staff for all they did during the November 15th storm. Donate to these volunteer organizations when possible.

- Monmouth Court Campus – the Township gave up using the space and allowed LPS to expand their programs; the goal to be to attract out of district students and have a revenue stream.
- Madonna Field – The St. Barnabas Medical Center Community Field is open to LPS during the school week at no charge. In turn, LPS stopped charging the Township clubs to use fields.
- Tennis Courts and Pickleball Courts at LHS and HMS – huge success and is getting much use.
- Baseball & softball fields – at the oval were redone. Much of the work was done in-house; donation was received from the Livingston Soccer Club. Part of HMS was also done.
- Right turn only on Foxcroft Drive – helps alleviate backup on Foxcroft.

3. Turfing Fields

- The group discussed how bad the condition of the fields were years ago and how far we have come in recent years in terms of drainage and overall field conditions.
- Mr. Robinson said that the groups are looking at possibility of turfing some of the main areas in town; the pit, Mt Pleasant complex, Heritage and the top field on Okner Parkway.
 - Mr. Fernandez stated that Heritage was seriously looked at about 10 years ago and that any area would need engineering services.
 - Mr. Anthony stressed that the township fields are a big issue and are in constantly being discussed. Mr. Lewis received an estimate from *Field Turf* for the top field on Okner parkway. It is a good location because it has lights and there are no residents nearby that can be disturbed.

- o Ms. Chirls asked if this discussion was had with the various sports councils. Mr. Meinhardt said there were beginning discussions, but suggested that, independent of the sports council, maybe a fields committee would be beneficial. The committee could conduct a study, devise a plan and then find funding. The funding could be a combination of private and public funds along with fundraising. The suggestion was made that each side choose five residents to be on the committee along with one council member and one BOE member.

Closing/Additional Comments:

Regular 5-on-5 Meetings – All were in agreement that these are great meetings; should have them more than once a year.

Coordination of Meetings – Many Town Council and BOE members suggested that the two groups coordinate their Monday meetings once a quarter so that residents can attend both meetings. The Town Manager and Business Administrator to follow up.

Traffic Study – Mr. August requested that a traffic study be done around our schools by the LPD. Also requested that the road work to be done on Knollwood Drive after school is out being it is a major throughway for school traffic.

Wardell Walking Bridge – Walkers and community members to walk and have access to Livingston Avenue. Mr. Lewis got an estimate of between \$175-200k. Township engineer confident in that estimate due to the pricing for the 2008 Sherbrook Parkway bridge. The Township and BOE applied for a grant a few years back for this Wardell bridge and did not receive it; there are no grants available at this time.

- Mr. Robinson would like to research whether a bus route can be eliminated if this bridge were to be built.
- Mrs. Konner thinks it needs to be looked at; might need to find a way to pay for another program that falls under the schools purview.

Public Comment ~ up to 15 minutes

Joyce Gore, 7 Claremont Avenue. Happy to hear about the fields; but was concerned about the arts. Fine, performing arts, theater, etc. Need to be concerned for all LPS students, not just the athletes. Other communities investing on their kids and in the arts.

Mr. Fernandez: Arts Council was supposed to put a fundraiser together. His understanding was there was a plan in place; we need an update on where the plans stand.

Mr. Lewis attended four meetings of the Arts Council within his year in the Town Manager position. The engineer had plans for review at a recent meeting; there is movement and the discussion is ongoing.

Mr. Anthony invites the Arts Council to a workshop meeting in the near future.

Carla Cheeseman, 25 Montgomery Road. Spoke in support of the Wardell Road bridge. It is a safety issue; deterrent to living in the Collins community; promotes healthy exercise.

Rob Stecklow, 1 Westgate Road. Thanked the group for the traffic change on Madonna drive; huge improvement. Brought up the busses parked at HMS. Pointed out that in the safety audit, it was noted that busses are unsafe in open parking lots. Asked if there were any updates and timelines, realizing it is a large expenditure. Asked about temporary space for busses and also brought up that a resident complaint of the lights in the new Central Office parking lot.

Mr. Anthony said that they are looking at locations for both the Township DPW and the LPS busses that is centrally located. In order to accommodate both needs, we need 5 acres of property. They were looking at Circle Fire House, but that only has 3.1 acres.

Mr. Fernandez said this has been looked at over the years and is still being looked at; hoping to get to a result to alleviate the problem, but hard to give a timeline.

Mr. Robinson said that he looked at the Livingston Mall property but there was a cost associated with it; chose not to spend taxpayer dollars when there is no cost now to house the busses. He has not heard any concerns about the parking lot lights.

Robert Ehrlich, 6 Melrose Drive. Thanked everyone for the dedication. Personally invited everyone to an educational event: *Cannabis as Medicine* next Thursday night (studio 355).

Jason Albert, 56 Amherst Place. Thanked the Council and Board for having the 5-on-5. At this time, LPS is not projecting student growth. Need to plan for growth; especially the areas around our schools.

Mr. August announced that the ratables went up 1.5%.

Mr. August stated that the groups get along fabulously. Livingston is a great community; it is great to be a Livingston resident.

Mr. Anthony and Mr. Fernandez thanked for all that participated, and all who attended. Mr. Meinhardt thanked all and stated that was a great meeting; look forward to doing it more often.

Mr. Vieira: One team; one Livingston.

Mr. Klein announced the "Clean Up Livingston" event; info on the Township website.

Mr. Anthony announced "Summerfest" on the oval on 6/9; food trucks, bands, etc.

Mr. August asked for a motion to adjourn; Ms. Konner moved.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Steven K. Robinson
Board Secretary