

**Cardinal Local School District
Special Meeting
June 24, 2015**

The **Special Meeting** of the Cardinal Board of Education held at 5:00 p.m. on June 24, 2015, at the Cardinal Middle School was attended by Ken Klima, Wendy Anderson, Nancy Ferguson, Andy Sefcik and Katie Thomas.

Meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Forum:

KSU Forum – Mr. Klima announced to the public the way the forum was going to run. This is your opportunity to give your opinion on the consolidation of Cardinal, Burton and Newbury to a new facility to be built on Kent State - Burton property. This is not a debate or a discussion with the Board nor a question or answer period. You have a list of the known facts and if the answer to that question isn't on that paper that means we don't know the answer either and if we tried to answer questions we would just be speculating adding more rumors to the rumor mill out there. When you step up to the microphone, please state your name, address and if you are a Cardinal resident. If you are not a Cardinal resident please identify what your District is. You have 3 minutes to speak so that all who wish to talk have the opportunity to do so with this forum lasting no longer than one hour. *Mr. Wayne Komandt – Cardinal resident – He doesn't know if this consolidation is good or bad but having time to read the Board minutes he must say that the Board minutes read like little kids fighting. He does know that you don't have all of the information and if you don't have all the information you cannot make a educated logical decision. If the Board would nix this before anything goes forward would be a disservice and if anyone comes forward with information as elected public officials you have a responsibility to look at it. Get the information first before you decide to pull out, it is your responsibility to gather the information, so do it.* Mr. Chuck White – graduate of Cardinal and Kent State University and a lifelong resident of Middlefield – he thinks that we all have an interest in what happens to the school because it has a vast effect on what happens not only on the community but the well being of all of us. The educational basis of a community is the guiding light and how that community progresses in the future. We have a declining student population in Geauga County. You've got an old facility and old facilities start to cost you money. He thinks that what we need here is a new building that will inspire enthusiasm and inspires new technology that we are not going to get if we decide to stay as one independent Geauga school. We need larger classes in order to have more courses offered. In speaking with a former Cardinal student who transferred to Kenston one good part of a larger school is the quality of the instruction and there are more courses available particularly in the area of business. Another thing he wanted to mention as well is the economies of having a quality school system. Communities that have good school systems attract quality industry. Industry is looking for a place that not only they can obtain qualified employees from but a place where the people like the executives and managers, would find housing and schools for their kids that are top notch like Kenston. We can never be a Kenston unless we do a project like the Kent consolidation. The biggest issue he has right now is that nobody has the answers, you don't know because you haven't gone that far yet. This is an idea that is just now conceived and together, hopefully we can make it work because it gives us the opportunity to have a quality education in our community which affects your home values as well as the job opportunities. *Al Preston – Parkman resident – he just wanted to say at this point that he feels that what the Board is rushing into something that has not been really discussed or articulated through Kent State or through the Legislature. Right now we don't even have an actual bill that has been passed by the Legislature. You are going to say let's go ahead and do this without having anything that has been passed by the State. The second thing he had to say is that we do have aging buildings here and as a former Board member we had to deal with the roof, the facilities, the sky lights in the High School and that's just continuing and again. He feels that what you are doing is throwing good money after bad. How many times are you going to redo the roof? His wife and he moved here because of the school district and they hope that you will take it into consideration to slow down a little bit and look at all the details. He thinks after that time you would have a little more data to make an educated judgment. If you don't do something here, you are going to have a nice school district up on the hill. Our kids are going to want to go to that new school and we*

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will be here preparing for what to do next. He does feel that we have good educators here; he doesn't think it's a matter of school programs. He thinks it's a matter of the buildings themselves and what you are going to do with them. Thank you for the opportunity. Joyce Peters – Parkman resident and retired Cardinal employee – was hoping the Board would be able to clarify the costs, if the State is going to cover 50% of the cost of the new building, how is the other 50% going to be paid for? It is her understanding that Newbury, Berkshire, and Cardinal would cover a portion of it with Cardinal being in the 80% range of total cost. Mrs. Thomas stated that is not true it will be 50% for everybody. Mrs. Peters asked if the 50% that the State doesn't pay will be divided between the three Districts equally. Mrs. Ferguson said this consolidated school district will be made up of nine townships and two villages and each of these will be responsible for 50% based on their tax rate. Right now this is just preliminary information. The taxes don't look like they are changing that much. This is preliminary from the consultants that we have had review this with but we will only be responsible for 50%, everyone in the nine townships and two villages that will make up this consolidation. Mrs. Peters stated it is the operating cost that she is talking about. Mrs. Ferguson said the 50% is for building the facility. Mrs. Peters questioned about the bill, it has not yet being voted on, correct. Mrs. Ferguson stated she is correct it's the house bill that is being presented now, House Bill 148. Mrs. Peters stated the school districts will have to have to vote to do this consolidation, right. Mrs. Ferguson replied you are absolutely right. The school districts will have to vote at some point, maybe November 2017, depending on where the House Bill is. There are so many unknowns right now. The House Bill has to pass that's a given. Mrs. Anderson reminded them this was not to be a discussion time. Mrs. Ferguson replied, yes I'm sorry. Mrs. Peters continued that it has not been clarified if it costs \$30 million and the state pays \$15 million, just for instance, then Cardinal would only pay \$5 million, right. Mr. Klima said no everybody divides it up. Mrs. Peters said to finish the discussion; we don't know what the grand total is going to be at this time. So we are being asked to agree to this without any idea what it's going to cost us. Mrs. Thomas stated appreciate you folks coming. She personally thinks that if you have a question about the information that is not clarified she feels it is our responsibility to provide you with some information. She disagrees with the fact that you cannot ask questions because there is some information that she has. She spent a lot of time dealing with the information and she has talked to John Patterson, Jared Tudor, and Tracy Jemison to get some of the information that they know that they may have presented along the way that she didn't know. And so the 50% bill is basically to go through the Congress. Representatives Senator LaTourette and John Patterson are co-sponsoring to move this bill down either side of the isle and the proposal is to then go to the facilities commission. This would be a consolidation and so they would put us at the top. The proposal in the bill is asking for the State to pay for 50% for the construction of this building divided amongst whoever is participating and that would be a vote of the people. Before that would ever happen there would be a vote sometime once the bill is passed. The State Dept. of Education will do their studies and surveys which will not cost us anything. This will be a territory transfer if the bill passes and all things fall into place, there is no guarantee they will pass the bill. The bill may not pass Congress. Ultimately the public will get the chance to vote on whether we as Cardinal want to consolidate into this larger district several years down the road. Not today, not tomorrow but eventually it will come to the voters of this district when the amount is known. All these other questions that we don't know right now will be decided. Does that help in any way? Mrs. Peters replied that it does help and she appreciates that. She had one other point to make. If the State votes to consolidate the districts, you said that the districts involved would then vote. Mrs. Thomas said they would make a recommendation if this is a viable thing and then it would come to our voters. Mrs. Peters said it is her understanding that the vote is a majority across all districts not by separate districts, is that correct? Mr. Klima replied that is correct. Mrs. Peters thanked Mr. Klima, and asked if this should pass and the bond issue does not pass, does anyone have an idea what would happen then? Mr. Klima stated not a clue. Mrs. Thomas added not at this point. Mrs. Peters stated so you don't have enough information at all to make any sort of decision. Mrs. Thomas replied we can continue in the process and continue in the conversation and see where it leads to or we say we want out right now. Mrs. Peters is all for information gathering as long as it stops before it gets too far. Mrs. Thomas told Mrs. Peters in talking to those three individuals she feels she probably has the most knowledge about this. They assured her that we have nothing to lose if we continue. The surveys will all be

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paid for so it's not costing us anything to be part of the conversation. If and when it comes to a point where they make a recommendation, down the road the districts will have a chance to vote on this issue of consolidation. It's not going to be the Board's decision and that's what she understands it to be. *Mrs. Peters appreciated the clarification and did want to say that most of the people that she spoke with didn't move here to attend a big school. They attend Cardinal Schools as that's what they want. Thank you.* Jim Koster, Board President of Berkshire Schools, stated we all did participate in the initial vote and unfortunately what ended up happening is things are moving slower than they originally thought. Ken Klima and Nancy Ferguson have attended meetings and we have only had two official meetings at this point. We think that the overall concept is a program that is going to be beneficial. He grew up here and feels that we are really one community. He is hoping that at this point we still continue looking to the future. Where we are going to be down the road we don't know. But he knows as a school board member and a resident, he hopes the Cardinal School District would discuss the final analysis and will still stay part of the plan. Our aim is that Berkshire wants to see something happen not for Berkshire but for all the kids of eastern Geauga County. The future is what we have to look for, we can do something that we can collectively share our recourses and he thinks that that's going to be tremendous. You guys are on the right tract trying to do a PI levy to improve your facilities which are facilities that can someday be a part of the where everyone will share. He is asking for you to buy into the Kent State program for the future. Whether it's going to happen in the next 5 years, he can't tell you it will but let's buy into the future. *Tracy Layman – Parkman resident – she thinks it's important to get more information about this and she has heard a lot of people say they think this is a good idea. We came here because it is a small school district. There is something about a small school that you can't get somewhere else. There is a family feeling, being able to participate in activities that you may not be able to in a bigger school. In a smaller school you have more opportunity to participate in sports in particular which keeps kids out of other things that they should not be in. Although a big school has a lot of opportunity she also knows that a small school can be amazing. She thinks we should get more information but keep in mind that a small school is good.* Jean Jerina – lives in Lakeview School District, attended Cardinal in the Jordak building, 31 year employee of Cardinal – when she started here we had 101 members of the teaching staff, today we have 82. Looking back at what has been brought up tonight she would like to know if we could look at the consolidation without having Kent State involved in it. *Mrs. Ferguson stated actually Kent State is not involved, they are supplying the services and they are donating the land. This school, if it gets approved, is going to be a stand-alone public school. Kent State right now is donating the land and offering the recourses to help us pull this together and decide what direction to go in.* Jean Jerina asked so none of their professors will be involved at all in teaching students. *Mrs. Ferguson said from what she understands and what has been explained to her along with Mr. Klima and Mrs. Thomas, if we don't have enough kids that want to take a certain class, requirement of 10 students and we only have 3, our kids would walk over to the campus and take that class by a professor there. At that point it would be no different than when we send our kids to Kent State for a college course or Lakeland College or where ever.* Jean Jerina asked if she knew that our push right now is to try to get as many kids involved in our buildings with the college credit plus courses to be offered here. *Mrs. Ferguson replied, yes.* Jean Jerina stated we are raising the rigor to get as much for the kids here at Cardinal. Does anyone have an idea of what resources we would be sharing if this became a consolidated East Geauga School District? *Mr. Klima said that's one of the unknowns.* Mrs. Thomas asked what resource are you talking about, the buildings? *Mrs. Jerina said one gentleman brought up generally sharing collective resources. She didn't know if that meant that we would see a loss of teaching staff or what.* Mrs. Thomas stated she is concerned about our teachers and with the size of this school combining Cardinal, Berkshire, Ledgemont, and Newbury all together. We would keep our elementary schools here. We are talking a 7 – 12 building and with all of the course offerings they do not see our Cardinal teachers being without work. There may be a few things but they are not talking about what courses they will offer but this will be a traditional public high school with the parameters set by the State School Board - so it's not going to be a Kent thing. *Mr. Klima cautioned we are getting off the track here.* Mrs. Thomas stated she is explaining what she was told but really we don't know but she is trying to share what people are saying. *Mrs. Jerina wanted to know if it would be a superintendent, principals, and school board or*

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would it be a charter school. Mrs. Ferguson stated absolutely not a charter school. It is going to be a stand-alone public school district. Mrs. Jerina said ok. She wondered with transportation if anyone thought about a kid living north of Rt. 6 riding a bus that distance. Even though you have kids that drive you still have a vast majority of kids that ride the bus. The uncertainty of athletics means if you double the size of classes you can be sure that cuts will occur on every sports team. You will have to start to narrow the group down so you have the complete athletes playing on that one team. She feels a real passion to keep Cardinal - Cardinal. She just wants to see all these questions answered. She likes the idea that the voters have to vote on it, but at what time. Again, though at any time will it come down to only five people to deciding whether or not we go into this. Mrs. Ferguson said right now this is the only decision we have to make. If we decide tonight, by the majority of the vote, that we will no longer be part of the consolidation at this time. Mrs. Thomas added there's a time line which says November 8th is when the Board of Elections would submit the vote the voters and they would have the say whether we basically go ahead. This will not be a decision being made by the School Board. Jean Jerina's nervousness lies in the fact that any time in her adult life you are asked to make a fast decision, it's because there is some information that she has not being given. She would really like you to have as much information as you can have before you make the decision to move forward. Thank you. Cathy Preston – Parkman resident – she is hearing the passion about small schools but time changes things and while people like to hold onto things that make them feel good in the past we cannot always do that. Maybe the right thing is to keep Cardinal School System small and maybe it needs be consolidated. She would hope that the Board would think very long and hard tonight before they vote. That's all they're doing tonight, whether to do a feasibility study to see whether they should move forward or not. She really thinks you need to move forward and get the information and then we can make a decision.

Mr. Klima ended the public forum and started the special business meeting.

**Superintendent's Report -
Action Items:**

Personnel Matters

Mr. Sefcik moved and Mrs. Anderson seconded a motion to accept the resignation of Amy Caprez as Flag Line Advisor effective June 10, 2015.

Roll call vote:

Ken Klima, aye Wendy Anderson, aye Nancy Ferguson, aye Andy Sefcik, aye Katie Thomas, aye

Band Camp

Mrs. Ferguson moved and Mrs. Thomas seconded a motion to approve band trip to camp at Edinboro College in Pennsylvania, July 26-31, 2015, using school transportation.

Roll call vote:

Wendy Anderson, aye Nancy Ferguson, aye Andy Sefcik, aye Katie Thomas, aye Ken Klima, aye

Middle School Soccer

Mrs. Thomas moved and Mr. Sefcik seconded a motion to approve middle school soccer pay-to-participate fee at \$200.

Dr. Hunt stated this was left off the list at the last meeting since we copied it from last year and it was new this year.

Roll call vote:

Nancy Ferguson, aye Andy Sefcik, aye Katie Thomas, aye Ken Klima, aye Wendy Anderson, aye

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KSU Consolidation

Mrs. Anderson moved and Mrs. Thomas seconded a motion to pass a resolution requesting the State Board of Education to conduct a study of the need for a new district.

Mr. Klima stated the reason for the vote is because Kent State asked us to make a decision ahead of the timeline because it would make a difference in the design of the high school so they need to know if we are participating or not. Mrs. Anderson stated her question is what are we voting on, the time line correct? Dr. Hunt replied the resolution was written to align with the timeline which is listed for participating with the state to conduct a study of districts to determine whether or not a consolidation/territory transfer is feasible. Voting to continue would be an affirmative vote and we would continue to collect information and participate in meetings. If you vote not to participate at this point in time we are out. Mr. Klima clarified we can also join at a later time even if we vote out tonight. Mrs. Thomas asked to add to that statement. She talked to John Patterson about what that exactly means. If we choose to opt out at this point and chose to come back at a later date, the consequences would be that if the bill passed for 50% funding we would not qualify for the 50% funding on the upgrades to our elementary buildings. If we do go out the other schools will continue to discuss this. We do not have a number for the cost of the building because they need to know how many will attend the new school. She talked to John Patterson since he is the writer of the bill. The timeline will probably get moved if things are delayed. This resolution allows us to pursue the study which they will be paying for, about \$18,000. Mrs. Ferguson agreed and had similar conversations with them as well. Ultimately it will be the voters' decision. We have reached the point due to concerns about Cardinal's enthusiasm that we have to make a decision so they can continue to plan the size of the buildings. Mr. Klima added that Cardinal is not a sinking ship, we have a bright future ahead of us. If this timeline is being pushed out five years or more, we are going to be well on our way to a great district. Dr. Hunt and his staff have changed so many things for the better. There is nothing here that we cannot do in our current buildings that they can do in the new building that is yet to be built. We have distance learning and the block schedule. So if we have the three students who want to do one class, they can and it will not cost the taxpayers a fortune. If the taxpayers want to support a new building then we will ask for money to build a new building here at Cardinal and continue to be great. We are not sinking; if we were then he would say this is a great idea. The concept is great but do not think this is for Cardinal. We have a lot of good things going for us and why should we throw them out the window. Mrs. Thomas wanted to share a point. We have a permanent improvement levy on the ballot in November. This consolidation thing is not going to happen for maybe another five or six years. In the meantime we need to take care of our facilities. We have students who we need to continue to educate. We can go down a dual path and see where the future leads us. We can continue to make Cardinal great right now as we do not know what will happen in the future. We do need to take care of our facilities. If this bill does not make it through Columbus we still need to be able to take care of Cardinal and our students. We are committed as a Board to doing the best that we can for our kids and that is why the PI levy is very, very important. We have to support our schools, we have to support our kids whether they are here or down the road. We need to support them as a community right now and continue to provide for them. Mr. Klima asked if they were ready for a vote. Mrs. Ferguson said part of her vote will be her discussion. Mrs. Thomas stated we have the discussion prior to the vote. Mrs. Ferguson then read her discussion piece. In December of 2014, Cardinal, Berkshire, Newbury and Ledgemont school districts voted unanimously to be a part of a collaboration committee at no cost to any of the school districts. The purpose was to see if we wanted to consolidate into a single district. The only commitment on our part was to share our ideas, to listen, be open-minded and develop a proposal to present to the state board of education to evaluate the need for a new district. The state will pick up 50% of the cost of the high school as well as upgrades to the existing elementary schools, which will remain in the existing districts if a consolidation occurs according to HB 148. To deny the voter the right to vote, for us to vote no and pull out of this collaboration committee now is premature. It is inexcusable and irresponsible on our part. This decision should be made by the voters. When the plan is developed and made available you deserve to make this decision, not them. This decision should not be made by the five of them prematurely. She is asking the Board Members to join in

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supporting the process of developing a consolidation plan and allowing you, not the Board, to make the decision on whether to consolidate. Supporting our school now and allowing us to have choices. *Mrs. Anderson asked specifically about the timeline as there are a few words on this timeline that disturb her greatly. When it all started she was all for looking at a proposal to see what they could come up with. Mrs. Ferguson you are correct, we did say we would come up with a proposal that we would present to the state. This proposal says that the state is going to decide what we need and we are to ahead with their recommendations. This proposal also says they may resolve to proceed ahead with a consolidation regardless. Will they do it without a vote? Probably not, but yet she does not know whose decision it was to go to the state legislature and get them involved. But shame on you. We have enough common sense as school boards to come up with what we want for our students. We do not need the state telling us what we need and whether or not they are going to fund 50% of the costs. That is why she got out of the conversation. If you want a proposal and you want to sit down with just the school boards and have Kent be there, she is all about it. But if you want the state to come in and start dictating what we are doing, sorry but they have not done a great job so far and she is not for that. That is what is on the timeline.* Mr. Klima called for a vote.

Roll call vote:

Nancy Ferguson, aye Andy Sefcik, aye Katie Thomas, aye Ken Klima, nay Wendy Anderson, nay

Mr. Klima stated we are still participating and will take our lumps as they fall. Mrs. Ferguson asked for a more positive participation than in the past.

Treasurer’s Report:

Financial Report Conversion

Mrs. Anderson moved and Mrs. Thomas seconded a motion to approve the 2nd year of the service contract with **Local Government Services, Auditor of State’s Office**, for the financial report conversion support, not to exceed \$6,000 for the FY 2015 financial statements and report.

Roll call vote:

Andy Sefcik, aye Katie Thomas, aye Ken Klima, nay Wendy Anderson, nay Nancy Ferguson, aye

Final Certifications and Appropriations

Mr. Klima moved and Mr. Sefcik seconded a motion to adopt the Final Certifications and Appropriations for FY 2015.

FINAL	<u>Beginning of Year Unencumbered Cash</u>	<u>Certified Revenues</u>	<u>Appropriations</u>
General Fund	\$70,934.35	\$13,961,483.00	\$13,874,210.00
Special Revenue Funds	\$24,658.02	\$1,864,829.65	\$1,870,358.13
Debt Service Funds	\$1,168,254.94	\$845,879.00	\$1,030,025.00
Capital Projects Funds	\$81,343.84	\$323,009.00	\$371,775.00
Enterprise Funds	(\$25,585.82)	\$560,666.00	\$522,009.00
Fiduciary Funds	\$64,437.30	\$73,563.00	\$86,570.28
TOTALS	<u>\$1,384,042.63</u>	<u>\$17,629,429.65</u>	<u>\$17,754,947.41</u>

Ms. Knuckles was unable to provide the final figures to the Board with the agenda due to receiving money after 3 p.m. Monday afternoon and having to rerun the budgets. This additional money was not included in the

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budget as it was unexpected at this time. When the beginning unencumbered cash is added to the certified revenues amount and the appropriations are subtracted we are ending our fiscal year with a positive ending fund balance of \$1,257,527.87.

Roll call vote:

Katie Thomas, aye Nancy Ferguson, aye Andy Sefcik, aye Ken Klima, aye Wendy Anderson, aye

Transfer

Mrs. Anderson moved and Mrs. Thomas seconded a motion to approve the Transfer of \$50,000 from the General Fund to the Food Service Fund to cover final deficit cash balance (Y-T-D amount \$130,000 - \$22,500 less than FY 14).

Roll call vote:

Ken Klima, aye Wendy Anderson, aye Nancy Ferguson, aye Andy Sefcik, aye Katie Thomas, aye

Executive Session:

Mr. Sefcik moved and Mrs. Anderson seconded a motion to retire to Executive Session for the purpose of Superintendent's evaluation/contract.

Motion approved at: 6:00 P.M.

Roll call vote:

Mr. Klima, aye Mrs. Ferguson, aye Mrs. Anderson, aye Mr. Sefcik, aye Mrs. Thomas, aye

Time Retired: 6:05 P.M.

Time Returned from Executive Session: 8:00 P.M.

Adjournment:

Mrs. Thomas moved and Mr. Sefcik seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 8:04 P.M.

Roll call vote: unanimous yes.

Kenneth Klima, President

Merry Lou Knuckles, Treasurer