

Board rejects offer of purchase of old high school; approves abatement bid

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The Thursday night Galion board of education meeting included honors, reports, opinions, offers, rejections, approvals, and abatements.

Honors

Zach Mathias was honored for his achievement at the Thursday night board meeting for being a state cross country qualifier. The Galion board of education honored the girls cross country team for their achievement of the year — being 2007 Northern Ohio League Champions.

The board thanked David Kuns and honored him for his service to the community. He was a loyal board member, said president Marge McCumber, and loyal to the district. "He made a difference." Thursday was Kuns' last meeting. Dennis Long will fill the position in January.

Reports

Galion High School principal Fritz Caudle presented an update of the first few months in the new school. Teacher absence- is down 30 percent from last year, he said. The faculty and students are positive. Caudle believes the clean, fresh, safe learning atmosphere has contributed to the overall performance of students and staff. Positives are campus wear and closed lunch. Caudle reported 25 percent fewer suspensions,

no expulsions, 35 percent less use of Thursday school, only one fight and no issues with vandalizing.

Assistant superintendent Sandy Powell reported on the Ohio Graduation Test (two seniors have one test to pass) and the PSAT (one student may qualify as a national merit semi-finalist).. Third grade reading achievement test results were up from last year.

Superintendent Kathy Jenney presented the results of the community survey thus far. Seventy-one members of the community attended the community engagement meeting, which was very positive, she said, and 20 questions were posed by the board in the following telephone surveys. Results from the telephone surveys are forthcoming.

The board went into a brief executive session in the middle of the meeting for the purpose of considering the sale of property at competitive bidding.

Opinions

Witt Martin spoke to the board about the public auction of the high school contents and was disappointed that valuable furniture and equipment went so quickly and at so low a cost. He said he wondered how the schools could walk away from such valuable property "the feeling of waste."

Dick Ekin said the Galion advisory group brings the community thoughts to the board and includes community members, organizations

and business people to work together with the schools. The group has developed a vision for the future. The practical business side is that the demolition money is in the budget.

Dan Derfler said he has heard the goals of cultural arts group as being a pipe dream. "The entire world enjoys pipe dreams of other people,' he said, offering air flight and space travel as the pipe dreams of his childhood. Renovated historic buildings are the jewels in Galion's crown, he said. "I thank God for people of vision. I thank God for those with pipe dreams."

Thomas Palmer said he wishes the business advisory group had been at the cultural arts and conference center's meetings this past summer. The petitions are not an exact science, but they convey a general sense of unease and the extent of that unease. There were 120 more signatures added to the 626 on petitions from last week.

Dave Smith prepared a statement that he read, in part, to the board. He is concerned with the environmental problems with the high school property and referred the board to the CTL engineering phase II study. He went on to offer the board \$58,000 for the buildings and property, saving the \$192,000 in demolition cost and giving the board a net gain of one quarter million.

In response Marge McCumber read a prepared statement of the board in

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regard to the petitions saying there wasn't enough information on the petitions to make them valid and the board could no longer afford the upkeep of the old buildings.

Approvals

The board approved the retirement of Donald P. Faulds, Jr. as custodian. Hoi-lie Murphy was hired as part-time cook. Mary Morris was hired as substitute cook. Philip Harris' resignation as head softball coach and Cheri' Laughbaum was approved for fall drama.

Intervention instructors were approved: Megan Kuns, Marianne Thorpe and Marsha Garverick. Marsha Rundell was approved as reading volunteer coordinator. Roxann Ramsey was approved for special education noon run bus driver.

The high school SADD advisor was approved a stipend of \$1,800. Melissa Defendoll was approved as a student OWE worker for two hours a day.

The board accepted the gifted supplement grant for \$5,402.12. Advances from the general fund included \$5,400 for IDEA, \$6,300 for Title I and \$1,800 for Title II

The treasurer's 13 vacation days were carried over.

The board approved the auctioneer services of Craig Miley Realty and Auction for the sale of the middle school, Dawsett and Renschville

Elementary contents, furniture and equipment. Miley will receive 10 percent of gross sales and \$10 per hour clerk fee.

Also approved was the contract with Northwest Ohio Computer Association, Crawford County Drug and Alcohol Testing and Ohio School Board Association membership.

David Spraw was approved a regular teaching contract for the remainder of the school year.

Donations were accepted: \$40 for the entryway project, \$400 for the title searches for school properties, \$500 for campus wear, \$500 for the Challenge Day and \$30 for the school library.

Bid packages were approved for the abatement for the former Galion high, Galion middle, North, Dawsett and Renschville schools.

The board approved the bids received at the auction for the tractors — \$4,950 and \$2,300.

Rejections

The board rejected the high bids for the annex property and for the Wilma Crall property. Those properties will be contracted with Miley to be sold.

The organizational meeting of the Galion board of education will be Jan. 10 at 6:30 p.m. with the regular meeting to follow. President pro-tern for the organizational meeting will be Carl Stough.