

**RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS**  
**Minutes of Rossford Committee of the Whole Meeting**  
**Held May 7, 2012**

The meeting was called to order by President of Council Larry Oberdorf, and was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL:** Staczek, Oberdorf, Eckel, Marquette, Ruse, Scott all present.

Mr. Oberdorf explained the purpose of this committee of the whole meeting was to take part in a presentation from Leadership Ideas and Mr. Ron Victor who is leading the facilitation process for the Rossford Board of Education regarding school facilities.

Mr. Victor said this would be an interactive presentation used to gather data to gauge the community and that this information would be compiled and presented to the BOE. This will be one of probably 15-18 presentations and meeting. He then gave a brief description of his background and closed by saying one of his proudest accomplishments was being involved in the Scott HS renovation project.

He then began a PowerPoint presentation which opened with the fact that Priority #5 of the process is that the BOE is taking a step back and reconvened a new facilities committee. They would like this to be an honest and positive process involving listening and teamwork and authentic community engagement. He outlined what schools should do and the benefits to the Rossford community before asking each councilman what they thought the school issues are. Mr. Marquette said it is old versus new as in old school renovation and new construction. Mrs. Eckel said it will be hard to convince the community that new is better and that the high school being downtown serves as an anchor for the community. Mr. Oberdorf said there is a feeling in the community that building the new athletic complex at Glenwood was an effort to force the community into a corner, that administrative salaries are also an issue as well as people feeling they are not listened to. Mr. Staczek said the BOE lost the trust and respect of a lot of community members and that the new board is still not transparent. He said the treasurer is still getting raises, and paid mileage to drive to Columbus every week for a reason nobody knows. He said the Board has resisted having a performance audit done by the state auditor's office. Mr. Scott said council passed a resolution last year to not have the high school moved from downtown as it is the heart of the community. He said that things were forced on the community the last time, said the school has not followed through on improvements at the Glenwood complex as far as curb cuts and means of egress and ingress, and that the community felt betrayed as no money was put into existing structures for maintenance which would have kept the high school from deteriorating. He feels there is a real distrust in the community towards the school board and that any plan to move the high school should have a plan as to what will become of the old high school. Mr. Ruse said the city and school need to be on the same page and that currently the schools have some lousy facilities. He said two of his own children left the Rossford school system because of the facilities. He understands problems with renovation and knows that sometimes new facilities are needed. He also feels that the school board does not want to be known or transparent citing as an example the difficulty in contacting school board members. Mr. Ciecka said he is concerned about the long term viability of the city in not being a community of choice. Mrs. Eckel said that taking schools out of the neighborhoods and leaving empty building will also decrease property values. Mr. Marquette said that the city and school compete for the same tax dollars and that if the school takes \$80million it will be hard for the city to pass a levy for city services.

Mr. Victor then passed out an exercise for council to complete ( see attached). He asked council what did they most value and appreciate about Rossford Schools. Mr. Ruse said the excellent rating for academics, and Mr. Scott said the community and the city being built around the school. Mr. Staczek said neighborhood school locations and current architecture. Mr. Oberdorf said high academic achievement and the close relationship with the community. Mrs. Eckel said the high school, and Mr. Ciecka said the excellent quality and family orientation.

Next he asked what should be done to improve Rossford Schools. Mr. Ciecka said to maintain the quality and be exclusive. Mr. Ruse said newer, updated facilities and have a plan and take action on it. Mr. Scott said better facilities and increased cooperation with the community. Mr. Marquette said upgraded buildings. Mrs. Eckel said to take care of the facilities we have and listen to the people who live here. Mr. Oberdorf said improve communication between the city, school board, and citizens, a permanent superintendent who is involved in the community, and greater scrutiny of the school administration. Mr. Staczek said transparency, maintenance, and accountability.

They were then asked how they would like the school buildings to look in the future. Mr. Scott said updated and technology available, Mr. Marquette said with updated plumbing, electrical, air conditioning, and improvements inside. Mrs. Eckel said historic and fitting the neighborhood and not OSSC prisonlike buildings. Mr. Oberdorf would like to see more technology and Mr. Staczek would like all buildings to mirror the architecture of the high school.

Question 4 was what did they foresee if nothing was done. Mr. Marquette said property values would decline, Mrs. Eckel said she wouldn't be surprised if nothing was done, Mr. Ruse said it would be harder to pass operating levies, Mr. Ciecka thought our population and status would decline, Mr. Scott said our community status would go even lower.

The final question was how can we make it happen. Mr. Marquette said to listen to the taxpayers, Mr. Scott said the process would need to be open and transparent to the community, Mrs. Eckel said the plan needed to be affordable and done in phases, and Mr. Ruse said that creative funding structures needed to be looked for.

Mr. Marquette said the two levies just passed were due to not being new money. Mr. Scott also felt that saying that some of the money would be used for maintenance helped with their passage. Mrs. Eckel said that if people are told the school is no good because it was built in 1920 it's just like telling them their house is no good because it was built back then also.

Mr. Victor talked about what is needed for successful schools – condition, culture, and standards.

Mr. Staczek noted that the last two operating levies passed have 83% of the money going to salary and benefits and that Rossford has the highest cost per pupil in the area. Mr. Ruse said that maybe the cost effectiveness needs to be looked at and that the high cost per pupil could be due to the high number of special need students.

Two summary slides showed that the risk of inaction is loss of value in the community, a negative message to future residents, and that children lose faith in the community. If something is done Rossford will be different and while most communities do nothing Rossford wants to be successful and that working together will make it happen and that we need to change our thinking, expectations, attitude, and behavior.

*Mr. Ruse moved and Mr. Oberdorf seconded the motion to adjourn. All ayes. Motion carried.*

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Larry Oberdorf  
President of Council

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Robert P. Watrol  
Clerk of Council