

**JOINT MEETING
LINCOLN BOARD OF EDUCATION
LINCOLN CITY COUNCIL
MAYOR**

Thursday, June 8, 2000 - 7:30 a.m.

**Lincoln Public Schools District Offices
Board Room (E102)
5901 "O" Street**

AGENDA

1. Minutes of April 13, 2000 (attached)
2. Arnold Heights Recreation Center
3. Proposed Letters to County Judges Regarding Fines
4. Update on Stevens Creek, including Scheduled Meetings
5. StarTran Route Changes and Potential Impact on Use by Students
6. Update on Plans for Technology School
7. Continuing Business
8. New Business
9. Future Meeting Date

MINUTES

JOINT MEETING LINCOLN BOARD OF EDUCATION/ LINCOLN CITY COUNCIL MAYOR

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JUN 20 2000
CITY COUNCIL
OFFICE

Thursday, June 8, 2000
Lincoln Public Schools District Offices

MEMBERS PRESENT: **Board of Education:** Shirley Doan-President, Jim Garver, Peter Katt, Lillie Larsen, Mike Nolan, Ed Zimmer
 City Council: Jerry Shoecraft-Chair, Jon Camp, Jeff Fortenberry, Annette McRoy, Coleen Seng
 Mayor Don Wesely

Dr. Doan called the meeting to order at 7:34 a.m.

MINUTES

The minutes of the April 13, 2000, joint meeting of the Lincoln Board of Education, the Lincoln City Council, and the Mayor were approved as distributed.

ARNOLD HEIGHTS RECREATION CENTER

Steve Hiller, City Parks and Recreation Department, reminded everyone that the City has a recreation center in Airpark, but it is not in the best location, and it has a difficult access for children. Former Parks and Recreation Director Jim Morgan had some discussion with various people regarding the possibility that, if the schools were ever able to build a new gymnasium at Arnold Elementary School, the City would be interested in co-locating a smaller recreation center at that location. Currently, there is no City money budgeted for such a project, but it is something that the City would be interested in pursuing at some time, if there is the opportunity to budget money accordingly.

Cliff Dale, LPS Associate Superintendent for Business, reported that Arnold School was one of the schools listed for a new multipurpose room, but it was not presented to the board before April 1, 1996, the deadline for exempting projects for the School District's Building Fund. Therefore, the project is in limbo with other schools on that list and the School District is looking at another possible source of funding that might become available next year. The School District's Building Fund for projects is now gone due to legislation.

Mr. Garver noted that the School District needs some technical legislation from the Unicameral in order to access another funding source. Some of the district's needed projects weren't on the list to "grandfather" in the projects in the Building Fund. The School District has no funds for anything not on that list. Mr. Garver suggested that the City could help the School District lobby the legislature for funding.

Dr. Dale reported that, typically, a multipurpose room addition costs about \$1 million. With joint community centers, the cost would be more.

PROPOSED LETTERS TO COUNTY JUDGES REGARDING FINES

Mrs. Seng advised that the City Council has been approached about the fact that the jails are overflowing and there is a need to figure out how to handle this situation. The Council talked about how some people are sitting out fines in jail, rather than paying their fines. One possibility discussed was to write a letter to county judges, which the City has underway, to try to alleviate this situation.

Mr. Camp noted that what happens is that the fine revenue is lost, which hurts the School District, and, from a City standpoint, the City has to pay the County a daily rate for the jail occupants. Therefore, both entities are losing and the taxpayers suffer the consequences. Mr. Camp reported that the City Council and the County Commissioners are reviewing the situation.

Mr. Fortenberry added there has been thoughts of the Council and the School Board writing letters to the judiciary to watch this type of abuse because there are some who see this as an alternative and readily use it. He indicated that the Council would like the School Board's help on this issue.

Mrs. Seng suggested that the School Board talk to the County Commissioners about this issue, as any letters have to flow through them.

Mr. Katt asked if this is a discretionary function of the judges? Mrs. Seng replied that she thinks it is up to the judge. Mr. Camp advised that it goes back many years as a way for less fortunate individuals to pay their fines.

Mr. Katt asked if it is up to the discretion of the judge or the discretion of the defendant? He emphasized that this is the first question that has to be answered, and if the City and the County Commissioners are reviewing this, the City and County attorneys should be checking this. Mr. Fortenberry stated that he assumes it's at the discretion of both, and the judge can rule a fine or time. Mr. Katt noted that if it is statutory, then it makes sense to put it on the School Board's agenda for the upcoming session of the Unicameral. If the School Board gets on it quickly, it could propose that it goes on the agenda for school districts across the state, and it would have state-wide support from schools.

Mr. Camp stated that the School Board might want to have its staff assess what the impact of this situation is on the district. He stated that he thinks the School Board will find that it's a significant amount of money.

Mr. Fortenberry reported that the Council has a meeting with the County Commissioners next week, and the Council will get a letter back to the School Board.

Mrs. Seng asked Mayor Wesely if a letter has been drafted? Mayor Wesely advised that a letter has not gone out yet, but he acknowledged that this is a serious problem. The City's budget for jailing individuals has increased dramatically.

UPDATE ON STEVENS CREEK, INCLUDING SCHEDULED MEETINGS

Terry Brinkman, Planning Department, highlighted what has been going on for the last few months regarding the Stevens Creek watershed. A letter was sent to the Mayor, the City Council, and the School Board requesting appointments to three different committees on the Stevens Creek process. Seventeen committee members will serve as the primary source of the community effort, but not the single source. Sixty-four people have shown an interest in serving on the committees. There will be 10-12 meetings of the Stevens Creek Task Force between June and February. The first meeting will be scheduled in late June or early July. There have been 4 open houses, with about 200 people who attended. They had different concerns and ideas to express. The issues raised were parks and natural resources, questions about the NRD watershed plan for Stevens Creek, and acquisition of easements. There are concerns about acreage development and annexation issues. There are concerns and questions about the beltway, concerns on roads, and concerns on future increased traffic. There was recognition that there is a strong desire to go into Stevens Creek, and there are questions on whether there should be more urbanization or more acreages. There is a concern about wanting to maintain the area as is and protect the farm land, and there are concerns about the flood plains, increased run-off, and how the development would be financed. There have been many good conversations and discussions. Mr. Brinkman reported that they are just beginning the process of talking to different stakeholders. They have talked to public entities, Public Works, the NRD, the Waverly Public Schools, and the rural water districts. They will meet with LPS staff regarding school issues in Stevens Creek, and they will meet with other governmental entities, businesses, conservation organizations, community organizations, etc.

Mr. Brinkman reported on a meeting with the Waverly Schools Superintendent, who understands that Stevens Creek is an opportunity to grow east for the City of Lincoln. His major concern is that Waverly continues to exist as a viable school system. It is his hope that if the City is looking eastward, that it be done in a way that it doesn't hurt the Waverly School District too much regarding the issue of valuation for the Waverly School District. Dr. Schoo questioned if this means that LPS gets the students, and Waverly gets the money? Mr. Brinkman responded that the Waverly Superintendent doesn't want to lose too much of either.

Mrs. Larsen asked how the meetings of the Stevens Creek Task Force would be communicated, noting that she has asked to be on a mailing list and she has not been notified of any meetings. Mr. Brinkman advised that the task force would be releasing its first monthly newsletter shortly, which will highlight the open houses that have been held and additional meetings in the future. There will also be information on the City/County website, or people can call Mr. Brinkman, 441-0063, for information.

Mayor Wesely stated that School Board members should be on all mailing lists of the Stevens Creek Task Force. Mr. Katt agreed that the School Board needs to be closely involved in the process because the School District will be heavily impacted. Beyond roads, the schools will be the biggest project in urbanizing this watershed.

Mr. Camp noted that there may be other governmental consitutes that also need representation on the committees. Mr. Brinkman advised that the task force would schedule times when different entitites can make presentations.

Mrs. Seng reminded everyone that at the last joint meeting information was handed out about the open houses, and she noted that these have been the only meetings so far.

Dr. Doan observed that even though there is inevitability about those who own farms around the city, the long-range plan of the City and other cities should be considerate of farmers. Agriculture is the state's first industry, and it is important to everyone. There is a need to keep this up front and keep this in mind as planning is done for the future.

Dr. Zimmer noted that as the City looks east, perhaps the School District's costs are not less than roads, but comparable to all of the other costs. He added that Lincoln and the County have both been well served by the law that says the School District will grow with the City. Dr. Zimmer reported that as land has been annexed around the City, the School District has protected those landowners from the district's current bonds. However, it's important to state that the City and the schools are one community, and it is very important to protect that.

Mr. Fortenberry reported that the City Council has had discussion about the land east of the city and its rural character. He stated that there is need for creative urbanization to include agricultural operations. If there is a way to find the right balance, it will have a direct impact on how much the School District needs to provide in this area. It may not be as dense as a normal city.

UPDATE ON PLANS FOR TECHNOLOGY SCHOOL

Mayor Wesely noted that the future technology school ties into the City's discussions with The Gallup Organization to remain in Lincoln. He reported that the City has been having individuals and groups talk to Gallup, and stated that he feels the School District has an important role to play in this. UNL is one of the real attractions in Lincoln for Gallup, and the Mayor reported that he knows that Gallup is very pleased about the technology school. He asked that LPS staff contact Gallup regarding the technology

school, and he asked that the School District help in the preparation of a presentation about the quality of schools in Lincoln and be a part of that presentation. The presentation should include the district's technology plans and the advantages of Lincoln, of which one of the big ones is the school system.

DARE PROGRAM

Mayor Wesely noted a recent newspaper article about the discontinuance of the DARE program. He stated that the City is supportive of DARE, but the problem is with the training and standards that the City had to meet with that program. The Mayor advised that the officers will remain in the schools as school resource officers, and the commitment of the Police Department is not being reduced.

Dr. Schoo reported that LPS staff have been in communication with LPD and they are aware of the discontinuance of the DARE program. He stated that the important thing is that the officers will continue to have contact with elementary students in the schools, noting that this was the main strength of the DARE program. Dr. Schoo added that both he and Chief Casady are committed to this.

STARTRAN ROUTE CHANGES AND POTENTIAL IMPACT ON USE BY STUDENTS

Mayor Wesely advised that there has to be discussion between the Mayor's Office and the City Council, with public dialogue on StarTran services.

UPDATE ON PLANS FOR TECHNOLOGY SCHOOL (continued)

Marilyn Moore, LPS Associate Superintendent for Instruction, provided an update on the plans for a technology school. She reported that it will be the third focus school in the district. The other two are the Science Focus Program (Zoo School), and the Arts and Humanities Program. LPS staff is proposing that the technology school will open the second semester at a site to be determined. The program would provide class opportunities in four different areas. Network Management would be looked at as being offered the first two semesters at the high school, and the third and fourth semesters at Southeast Community College. The other courses for students at the technology school would be taken through the UNL website. The final component of the program would be work study through businesses, and the response from the business community has been strong and positive. The School District has a substantial lottery grant to fund the equipment for the technology school.

Ms. McRoy asked when students would be eligible for the program. Dr. Moore replied that it would be mostly for 11th and 12th graders, but there would also be exceptions.

STARTRAN ROUTE CHANGES AND POTENTIAL IMPACT ON USE BY STUDENTS (continued)

Kitty Miller and Mike Weston, StarTran, provided information on the StarTran Task Force, which was appointed by the Mayor in December, 1999. The task force provided a letter summarizing its recommendations, which include:

Initiate two north-south "shuttle" routes, generally within 27th Street and 48th-70th streets corridors.

Extend/expand service within the Haymarket area, to include an evening "entertainment shuttle."

Improve system efficiency by deleting the seven most inefficient routes, generally the peak-hour "express" routes.

Increase the "mass transit" portion of the StarTran budget by 5 percent, approximately \$252,000, for funding of new transit services.

The only impact on students would be the elimination of the Arnold Heights booster route, which currently has only six-seven riders. Students can still catch the Arnold Heights route, and StarTran is thankful for all of the students that it carries.

Ms. McRoy indicated that the Arnold Heights neighborhood is concerned about the changes and disputes the statement of only six-seven riders on the booster route. Mr. Weston advised that drivers count passengers every day, morning and afternoon. When the report was released to the newspaper, it inaccurately showed the elimination of both the Arnold Heights route and the booster route. He emphasized, however, that this is not so—only the booster route is proposed for elimination. Currently the morning and afternoon routes combined from Arnold Heights have an average of seven passengers. All students would still have bus route service.

Dr. Zimmer asked for a clarification on booster routes. Mr. Weston responded that in order to get students to school on time, StarTran had to use booster buses, but the number of riders has decreased every year. He emphasized that he feels the numbers are very accurate, as they are coming straight from the drivers.

Mr. Garver noted that part of what is happening in the district's high schools is that students from Arnold Heights have a choice. Some students go to Northeast and the district allows them to ride the Dawes bus. Jean Mann, LPS Transportation Supervisor, reported that 9th and 10th graders may ride the Dawes bus, but if older students have a sibling riding the bus, they may also ride if they pay. There are approximately 40 students who ride to Northeast every day. Mr. Garver reminded everyone that in 2003 there will be a new high school in the north part of the city, and students will need service near North 33rd Street and Folkways Boulevard. He noted that this would be

another change that will affect all of north Lincoln. Mr. Garver also reminded everyone that the new south high school would open in 2002.

Dr. Doan reported that Ms. Mann serves on the StarTran Task Force. Ms. Mann advised that it is a hard-working task force, and she has learned much about StarTran's ridership. She added that the booster routes were a concern for the task force.

Mrs. Seng reported that the press received a copy of the task force's recommendations before they were finalized and they were incorrectly printed. She noted that Ms. Mann was very good on the task force, presenting the School District's entire portion to the task force. Mrs. Seng noted that she has to struggle with what's happening in northeast Lincoln, and she is concerned about what happens to those residents who live north of Cornhusker Highway.

Dr. Dale advised that there are many ways the School District can provide ridership. He indicated that he knows that there are federal regulations regarding routes, but if there is some way that those provisions can be eliminated, it would be helpful. The School District can no longer provide staff for all of the ridership out there, so if federal legislation can be changed, there could be additional StarTran passengers.

CONTINUING BUSINESS

There were no continuing business items discussed at this portion of the meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

School Locations

Mr. Camp noted the discussions about a multiplex in downtown Lincoln and stated that this issue might be considered for the School District's legislative agenda, in light of the problems that occurred when the location of the Arts and Humanities Program was proposed near liquor establishments. He stated that it might behoove everyone to rethink what the policy is regarding distancing schools from establishments with liquor licenses. Mr. Camp added that this could be an excellent opportunity to approach the Unicameral to work on a policy that would be appropriate.

Jim Gessford, LPS legal counsel, observed that this issue is both a legal and political issue. While the School District could come up with legislation to change the current law, he would want to think about the considerations of such a political, but legal, agenda of the School District. He emphasized that he sees this as a political issue, not necessarily a legislative issue.

Mr. Nolan stated that, when dealing with a traditional school campus, he would like to see the policy tightened, but with a non-traditional environment, the district might want to look at this as an exception to the norm. Mr. Camp agreed, adding that perhaps the level of students would also make a difference. He stated that there is need to look at

the policies and hope for a common thread and determine what is wanted, adding that the technology school could well be in a structure that also houses a restaurant that has a liquor license.

Mr. Kati noted that on a political basis, the School District will not lead the change—it will not lead the way to do it. Whether the board would oppose any such action would then be the question. The board will respond, but it will not attempt to change state legislation on this issue.

Mrs. Larsen stated that the board might be more willing to address this issue if the board had difficulty locating space for programs. She noted, however, that the School District has had choices, so it is not as critical.

Mr. Camp indicated that he would like to have concurrence up front on this issue, but he agreed that the School District should not lead the charge.

Mr. Kati stated that he could envision a legislative provision for a school board to make a conscious decision on whether it is comfortable locating a program within the vicinity of a liquor establishment. He stated that he would personally support this legislation.

FUTURE MEETING DATE

* There was discussion on future meeting dates and different days, times, and locations for the joint bodies to meet. There were also suggestions that the School Board meet with the County Commissioners and that all three entities meet together.

Dr. Doan advised that she would work with Mr. Shoecraft and the County Commissioners' Chair and report back at the next joint meeting.

On future agendas of the joint meetings, it was suggested that the name of the person requesting the item on the agenda be placed in parentheses after the item. Dr. Schoo reminded everyone that the joint meetings used to take place alternately at the City offices and the School District offices. He reminded Council members that if the meetings are going to take place in the County-City Building, the management of the meetings and the minutes would be the responsibility of the City.

Following discussion, it was decided that the next meeting of the Lincoln Board of Education, the Lincoln City Council, and the Mayor was scheduled for Monday, September 18, 2000, 7:30 a.m., at the County-City Building in Room 113, adjacent to Council chambers.

ADJOURNMENT OF JOINT MEETING

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:55 a.m.