



**Township High School District #113 & City of Highland Park
Highland Park High School Advisory Group**

Meeting Minutes

January 13, 2016 – 7:00PM

SD 113 Admin Offices, 1040 Park Avenue West, Highland Park, IL

- 1. CALL TO ORDER by Chairman Jenks 7:02PM
- 2. MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Jenks, Shafer, Sassen, Tellone, Holleman, Wehner, Friedman, Kornberg, Small, Coretti and Behrens(All members present)

113 School Board President Lidawer and School District Facilities Director Mortensen

Sergeant O'Neill HPPD and Transportation Supervisor Lee Overholser

Members of the public – please see the attached sign in sheet.

- 3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES - Motion by Kornberg; second by Wehner. Motion approved.
- 4. REVIEW OF OUR MISSION AND PROTOCOLS – Jenks

COMMENTS - Ms. Weingart – Ryan – Why is there confusion about the landscaping around the south Vine lot? Read the ordinance and review the code to improve the landscaping

- 5. BUS PRESENTATION - See attached power point from Dr. Sassen.

JENKS- Discussion about the data?

Who counts the riders? Bolek - The bus drivers.

School District 113 has 53 total routes; 26 are HPHS routes.

This Saturday, for example, due to school athletics etc. the buses will provide 24 trips to off-site locations.

JENKS - The High School has a low ridership on its buses.

The question is, if the bus is not full, why not open it up for use by others who do not qualify or can pay?

SMALL – What are we doing with overcrowded buses? Buses are re-routed to pick up overflow.

How do we inform students about buses that are not full? (no answer)

Students are requesting cleaner emission and quieter buses.

HOLLEMAN- Are the 5 early bird routes counted? – Yes

BOLEK – there are 23 to 24 students on these early bird routes per bus; the ridership can pull the average down from the other regularly scheduled routes.

Each bus route costs the District approx. \$120,000 to \$150,000 annually.

HOLLEMAN- What about the PACE Routes?

OVERHOLSER - The 213 Bus runs on Green Bay to the Metra Station from south Highland Park. Students can then transfer to the 472 bus which goes north on St Johns.

The student rate is \$1.00 per ride; transfers are free. They need the Ventra Card.

JENKS – What is the frequency?

OVERHOLSER - Every 20 minutes until 9AM; then cut back. Buses are added again to increase the frequency from 2:30PM to 6:30PM or 7PM depending on the observations of the drivers as to the customers present.

JENKS- Could PACE change to accommodate students?

OVERHOLSER- Not likely due to other customer purposes.

HOLLEMAN – How about a “hybrid” route for a north to south feeder?

SMALL- There are no additional funds from the District for bus transportation; not one dollar. We have a 2.5 million dollar deficit. The question for us is how do we make improvements within the current budget parameters.

JENKS – Your comments inhibit the discussion that we hope to accomplish; look at the cost of one route.

HOLLEMAN – No one is rolling in the dough; can we adjust one early bird route to be used more productively?

BOLEK – Early bird route buses return to duty for a regular 2nd route.

CORETTI- Can we experiment with pick-ups with six blocks distances from stop to stop to create efficiencies?

BOLEK – Interested in the PACE model; walk a little further but decrease the bus stops.

(PUBILC COMMENT) Bus ridership should cost less than the student parking pass.

WEHNER – Discussed a model used at New Trier based upon prior planning of pick-ups by the ridership that registers for the bus routes.

JENKS – We need to reduce the number of students who drive to school.

CORETTI – Perhaps students who have to pay could purchase vouchers as punch cards so you are paying per use.

WEHNER – There is a way to use the current RFID cards to capture better usage data.

HOLLEMAN – That is what we are lacking; specific data such as how many freshmen are riding the buses. If we move to an arterial system it may be more appealing due to frequency and less riding time.

WEHNER – Notes that doubling the walk to the bus stop will likely make the use of the bus less appealing and decrease ridership.

SMALL- Interested in the RFID use issue.

BOLEK- Added technology associated with the product was cut from the budget due to costs. Note that drivers cannot turn kids away who forget their pass.

SMALL – Let's check on the costs again and reconsider this.

WEHNER – Is there a program specific to transportation system tracking?

SMALL - He knows of one he has seen which show where the buses are on their routes in real time.

SASSEN – Yes, it lets you know your bus is five minutes away.... A large portion of the student population is choosing not to ride the bus. Perhaps looking at the non-eligible population to see what they would use if buses were made available would be worth the effort.

CORETTI – We need new student information.

SASSEN – That's been provided but the data is not encouraging.

KORNBERG – Is there a need for a bus fee reduction for the non-eligible population?

SASSEN – Does not know of a situation that presented itself to support that consideration.

CHAY – Paid \$1760 per child per year for four years; she has three children; \$5200 cost. She asks that the District look at reducing the fees.

LIDAWER- Please clarify the requirements; Students outside the 1.5 mile radius of the high school do NOT pay for school bus service; those within the radius do. She expressed an interest in a voucher card or pre-paid ride ticket within the bus pass system to pay for those within the radius.

MOORE and SANTUCCI – Expressed that if we wish to reduce the cars traveling with students to the school, we need to look at the current 1.5 mile radius rule. 1.5 miles is TOO FAR to walk. Why is the bus more expensive than student parking?

6. VINE LOT

JENKS – Brief review of last meetings remarks. Do members that were absent agree with additional evergreen plantings at the south west side of the lot?

CORETTI, KORNBURG and BEHRENS – Yes!

SMALL - the District is 100% in concurrence with the agreement reached with the City and will comply.

MORTENSEN – Reviewed the slide of re-submitted plan from December 7th; adjustments were made and they are awaiting approval from the City.

JENKS – When will the changes to landscaping be made if approved?

MORTENSEN - Depends on the weather.

CORETTI - What is the timeline for maturity?

MORTENSEN – Uncertain but their initial height will be 36”, similar in height to the silk fence currently in place.

JENKS - Wished to appear at the School Board.

LIDAWER– It will be on the agenda and Mr. Small will report as a member of both groups.

JENKS – Comments on the Vine lot...at night the lights are not on, so the sensors are working.

CORETTI – Agrees; at arrival and dismissal the drivers are not using the cueing in the Vine lot.

JENKS – Concerned that traffic cueing has moved to the “H” lot.

SMALL – Expressed that the sensors do not react until a person is very close and therefore in this weather of ice and snow it is not safe for those walking.

MORTENSEN – We will look into the sensor issue; the City has not signed off on them yet.

WEINGART-RYAN - Why did they not plant evergreens along the lot?; look at the zoning code.

DECKER – (High School teacher) showed a video to demonstrate that the lot is too dark; motion detectors don't go on until you are six feet from your car. This is a different perspective than what has been expressed by the neighbors; this is for the safety of our teachers who park there. This concern included the street light that serves the entrance to the lot.

SHAFER – Will ask Public Works to look at the bulb; it may be old.

7. WOODPATH CROSSWALK

MORTENSEN – On track and fully operational as of January 4, 2016.

TELLONE – Being used, but not by everyone; school staff attempts to move them; it does slow traffic down; there are some impatient drivers though; the warning lights do alert approaching vehicles and they are good.

SHAFER - discussed e-mail from Ms. Weissman who lives on the corner by the light, voicing her concerns with the sign size; too large. The signs are to remain until the school year is over and accident data is reviewed along with the school staff and police department feedback.

BEHRENS – recommends that we consider extending the sidewalk between entrance “H” and the buses to St. Johns to encourage and increase use of the crossing.

KORNBERG - Likes the crosswalk and she can now safely walk to the school; school buses still going too fast northbound on St. Johns.

8. RE-MEASUREMENTS OF THE TRAFFIC DATA

Passed for discussion until the next meeting.

9. POLICE UPDATE

See attached statistics.

O’NEILL - Enforcement trending down; more drop offs during inclement weather.

SMALL – Is the police presence consistent?

O’NEILL - Yes, two CSO’S every day; have applied pressure on Maple for staging there; we mail many citations due to the situations encountered; has seen an improvement with the south Vine lot opening.

10. TRAFFIC PATTERNS, PARKING AND SAFETY

SASSEN – Increased traffic and drop offs due to colder weather which extends the traffic congestion time; drop offs at “H” entrance area exit onto St. Johns southbound and creates a que of cars while exiting onto St. Johns.

SASSEN – Notes that the construction at the High School is not finished yet; we need to wait until it’s done before we tweak the traffic plan.

11. OTHER BUSINESS

None noted.

12. ADJOURN

Motion to adjourn by Shafer; second by Tellone; motion approved - 9:15PM