

Town of Springfield
SHS BOARD/COUNCIL MEETING
June 1, 2015
6:00 PM
Town Hall

The meeting between the Springfield High School Board Members and Springfield Council was called to order at 6:07 P. M. with the Mayor and all Council members present. Mayor McCormick welcomed everyone and said there have been several citizens and council members who requested the meeting be held. She said there had been a lot of gossip and rumors that the school is being closed, the school is being sold and the school board is being dis-banned. The Mayor said none of this is true. She said she had received phone calls concerning all of this and she was told they said. Mayor McCormick said she would like to know who they is. She said she appreciates everyone that has ever been a part of the school and added that the Town of Springfield has too much pride for everyone to follow through on gossip and rumors. She said she felt everyone deserves a little bit better than that. Mayor McCormick said the meeting would be in a question form and stay in a business-like manner. She said the questions and concerns would be directed to the school board, project manager or the chair. The Mayor said the questions could be answered in the meeting or the next council meeting. She then recognized all the past and present school board members, contractors, donors, individuals and businesses who have given donations, volunteers, events coordinators and she thanked Mrs. Hiers for the numerous grants and work she has put into the school. The Mayor said the main questions brought to her attention were if the donations made to the school for the specific areas in the school such as plaques in the rooms, walls and chairs have been done. She said another question was if there are any new projects or upcoming events but believes this has already been answered in open council meetings. Mayor McCormick said a question was if there are any recommendations for the school board or for a new school board member.

Mayor Pro-Tem Cooper said his questions were who the original board members are, where the money comes from and who gives out receipts for donations.

Council member Williams said he appreciates the school board for what they have done including keeping the school building up and usable. He said he noticed the other buildings the town is in control of are really falling down and need attention also. Council member Williams said the school board does an excellent job on the school and as time goes on the building will need continued upkeep. He thanked the school board for what they have done and hopefully will continue to do.

Mayor McCormick read aloud a memo from 7/10/2014 received from Mrs. Sylvia Hiers listing the school board members as follows:

Sylvia W. Hiers, Chair
Charles Ray Brown, Vice Chair
Timothy Barr, Secretary-Treasurer
Robert Argroe
Richard Phillips

Mrs. Sylvia Hiers said the meeting was welcomed. She named several people who sponsored seat plaques for the school. Mrs. Hiers said that five or six years ago a memo was sent detailing the money in the school account which included \$1,000.00 from Mrs. Rita Brown that was to be held secure to make sure the plaques would be put on the auditorium seats. She said however each time they were right on the brink to address the auditorium plaques something would come along that the school board was held responsible to pay for. Mrs. Hiers said right now approximately \$8,000.00 of auditorium roof repairs is needed and about \$5,000.00 repair work is needed for the auditorium walls. She added that those repairs needed to be done before the seat plaques are put on and when they are obstacle free and can fund raise like they've always done they will be able to take care of the roof, the walls and the plaques. Mrs. Hiers said they have to do the most urgent repair work first. Mayor McCormick asked her if she had a listing of the people who made donations for the plaques. Mrs. Hiers said anything she has the Town of Springfield has a copy of and a good place to start is for council to get their records. Mayor McCormick asked if Mrs. Hiers has the plaques to go on the auditorium seats. She said no due to it being more imperative to spend the money for the roof and wall repairs. Mrs. Rita Brown said she had talked to Paul Miller from Orangeburg and got the name of the business they used to purchase the plaques for the Stevenson Auditorium. A resident asked if the warranty on the school's roof is out. Mrs. Hiers said yes. Mayor McCormick asked if there were any room plaques that have not been placed. Mrs. Hiers said not that she knew of. Mayor McCormick asked if there would be a recommendation for a school board member at any time. Mrs. Hiers said yes. She then gave a brief history of the beginning of the school board. She said this was done in a specific manner to satisfy school district four's requirement that the building was given for the service of the town, the surrounding communities and beyond and to safeguard this the original board members were Bob Pierce from Columbia, Charles Ray Brown from the Pleasant Hill community, Sam Carter from the Morgan town community and five other directors from Springfield. Mrs. Hiers said in following the by-laws to come up with names to serve as directors on the school board when a board member is no longer able to serve for some reason the school board looks at people in the surrounding communities, people who have shown an interest in the school or have worked for the school. She said the school is self-perpetuating. Mayor McCormick asked Mrs. Hiers if she had a copy of the by-laws. Mrs. Hiers said the town should have copies of everything she has.

Mr. Jim Harrison who has served on the state level and regional boards said he was attending the meeting in no official capacity but his heart is in these types of projects. He said he looked at the grants from the town given to the state board several years ago and as he recalled the ones he looked at were signed by the mayor of Springfield.

Mr. Harrison said money was given by the Heritage Corridor to make improvements in the school and it was given because there was a separation of politics and the control of a historic building. He said the grants were very well written and they do tie Springfield down to guarantee that there will be a professional board that would not be influenced by politics. Mr. Harrison said there could be repercussions from the grants that were awarded if this is changed. He said this needs to be considered.

Mrs. Sylvia Hiers said there has been gossip and rumors that it has been stated that she used Springfield's tax identification number without the Mayor's approval. She said under the directive of her attorney she has never used the town's tax identification number without the Mayor's approval.

Mayor Pro-Tem Cooper asked where the grant and donation money comes from and how receipts are given out. Mrs. Hiers said funds come from grants, donations, endowments and fund raisers. She said when any money is given to her in any form she puts the information on a formatted sheet and turns it into the clerk. Mrs. Hiers said once in a while a donor may request a check be held. Council member Cooper asked Mrs. Hiers about a \$5,000.00 check from an individual dated 11/09/2007 that was held and deposited on 12/21/2007 when received at the town hall but came back due to the account being closed. Mrs. Hiers said the check was for room sponsorship and the individual asked her to hold the check which she did. She said evidently the account was closed but the check was redeposited and the \$5,000.00 absolutely came through and was put in the school's account. She said the same donor who is a prominent business man gave her another check for \$3000.00 which was deposited and stands ready to give more. Council member Cooper asked how receipts are given for donations. Mrs. Hiers said a copy goes to the town clerk or a check can serve as a receipt. She said she has had all the information on her computer since the year 2000 and anything generated has gone to the town.

Charles Ray Brown asked what account the rental money from the church went in. Council member Cooper said the money goes in the general fund. Mr. Brown said it would sure help the board if they could get some of that money to help keep up the auditorium because it is getting a lot of wear and tear. Mayor McCormick said the money helps pay insurance, the electric bill and the upkeep of the grounds.

Council member Lackey asked if under the by-laws if there are a number of board members required to be on the board. Mrs. Hiers said they started off with eight and the expectation was to try to keep it close to the number eight. She added that there are two names the board has approved and will discuss with the Mayor.

Mr. Aaron Rudd asked if there is a plan for the Town Council of Springfield to do away with the school board. Mayor McCormick said no.

Janis Reyes asked who keeps the records of the donations. Mrs. Hiers said she has and the new secretary-treasurer, Timmy Barr will do this.

A member of Victory Missionary Baptist Church expressed concern about the comment made about the wear and tear in the school auditorium. She said there would be wear and tear regardless of who uses it. Mrs. Hiers told her the rental money paid by the church goes to the town and not into the school account to help upkeep the auditorium. The member said they would soon have their own place of worship and thanked the town for the use of the school.

With no other business the meeting adjourned at 7:05 P. M.

