



Milford Athletic Boosters Club ♦ One Eagles Way ♦ Milford, Ohio 45150

April 20, 2009

Dear Milford Athletic Booster Club Members:

I wanted to take a few minutes of your time to update you regarding the April 16th Milford Board of Education meeting. For those of you who were in attendance, thank you for your support. For those of you who were unable to attend, here is what happened. . .

As president of our organization, I had the honor of addressing the BOE and presenting our donation. The final donation was \$425,500 over five years. Two members of the boosters' executive board (vice-president Mr. Rick Kohler and treasurer Mrs. Nancye Bruck) and athletic director Mr. Mark Trout also participated in the presentation.

The Milford Athletic Boosters Club repayment agreement with the BOE is as follows: The BOE has extended the boosters a 0% interest loan which we will be repaying over the next five years. Equal payments of \$85,100 are to be made on or before August 15th of each year. As president of our organization, I have signed a "Memorandum of Understanding" which outlines the terms of our agreement. Our first payment was made at the conclusion of presentation. Making this first payment four months before it was actually due was a good faith effort on the part of our organization.

Our donation was accepted by BOE president Mrs. Debbie Marques, BOE members Mr. Don Hartley, Mr. Dave Yockey and Mr. George Lucas and Superintendent Dr. Robert Farrell. The fifth member of the BOE, Mr. Gary Knepp, chose to not participate in the presentation. This included a photograph that was taken with everyone holding a giant check which had been made for the occasion. Mr. Knepp's boycott of the "photo-op" was a signal that acceptance of our donation, which was on the BOE agenda later in the meeting, might be contested.

An article will be published in the Milford Advertiser this week regarding acceptance of our donation. It is already available in the on-line version of the Advertiser. I have provided a copy for your review. The on-line article does not provide a picture of the actual presentation. I have included the picture and caption with this article as the Milford Advertiser reporter took a picture which is expected to be included in the print edition of the newspaper.

With the exception of the headline, the article fairly represented what happened during the discussion. It presented our organization's rebuttals to Mr. Knepp's arguments and in the end he voted to accept our donation. I spoke with Mr. Knepp after the meeting and reiterated that the boosters will make sure that we repay our debt in full and on time.

What gets lost in the rhetoric is this: **We have a high level of support from the other four BOE members. The easiest way to change Mr. Knepp's opinion is to pay our debt within the terms of our agreement.**

We all need to stay focused on what's really important. **The students, school district and community all won here. Milford should be proud of our district's schools and facilities.**

My request to the members of our organization is to **send a letter to the editor of the Milford Advertiser showing your support of our donation and the Milford Athletic program. Tell them that you will be volunteering to insure that our debt is repaid to the BOE, in full and on time. Please copy each of the members of the BOE as well as Dr. Farrell.**

Thank you again for your continued support of the Milford Athletic Boosters Club and Milford Athletics.

GO EAGLES!

Dave Meranda, President
Milford Athletic Boosters Club

Milford BOE Member Concerned About Athletic Boosters' Donation

By Mary Dannemiller • mdannemiller@communitypress.com • April 17, 2009

Discussion became heated at the Milford Board of Education meeting Thursday, April 16, when board member Gary Knepp voiced concerns over how the Milford Athletic Boosters would pay a \$425,500 donation.

The boosters presented the donation, which will pay for tennis courts, soccer field upgrades and baseball/softball field alternates, at the meeting and plan on paying the district \$85,100 a year over a period of five years.

Knepp said that after examining the boosters' financial reports and finding there was no five-year forecast, he was worried the organization would not be able to fulfill its promised donation.

"I reviewed the financials and I don't doubt the boosters are very active, well organized people who work very hard, but I don't see a five-year forecast and I didn't see a business plan," Knepp said.

However, Dave Meranda, president of the boosters, said the group is raising about \$100,000 per year and will be able to make payments to the district.

"I don't see your concern, I don't have a concern here," he said. "This organization isn't going anywhere, we've been around since the early 1970s and we're planning on continuing to be around."

Knepp also said the group ran at an operating loss for at least three years and had been close to zeroing out accounts or had accounts which were already in the red.

"I don't like the idea of using taxpayer dollars if the unforeseen scenario happens and they aren't able to make a payment," Knepp said.

While Meranda agreed that the boosters did not have a five-year forecast and had low balances in some accounts, he said the group's CPA advised them to keep their accounts that way.

"As a nonprofit, it's been recommended by our CPA that we don't stockpile money," Meranda said. "What comes in should go out."

Board member Dave Yockey said more credit should be given to the boosters and he appreciated their donation.

"We're going to take the boosters' money and put these projects that have been on the master plan for years and years and years and put those things into practice for the benefit of our students," Yockey said.

Board President Debbie Marques echoed this sentiment saying Knepp's views were not in the majority.

"There are four board members who have every confidence that this will move forward," she said. "We are very appreciative of what (they're) doing and what (they) will do for the school district."

Knepp ultimately voted to accept the donation, but with reservation.

"Frankly, I wish you luck and I sincerely hope I'm wrong," he said.



L-R: Dr. Robert Farrell, Mark Trout, Don Hartley, Debbie Marques, Dave Yockey, George Lucas, Rock Kohler, Nancye Bruck, Dave Meranda (not pictured: Gary Knepp)

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