

Good Evening and welcome to our District Five School Board meeting.

The purpose of tonight's meeting is to start a dialogue between the Reidville Town Council and the District Five School Board. This is not a forum for public input. We had a public input meeting back in May and the Board has heard from numerous interested parties through cards, letters, emails and personal contacts throughout the summer. We know that there are at least two competing visions for the future of the current Reidville Elementary and that both sides are passionate and committed to their cause. We respect your passion and know that it is the collective love for the Reidville community that makes this hard. If people didn't care, we probably wouldn't be having this meeting.

The Mission of Spartanburg District Five Schools is to provide every student quality educational experiences in a safe, nurturing and engaging environment. The District Five School Board School Board has taken no position on the future of the current Reidville Elementary. My points to follow are not intended to indicate any preference to this process. We hope that Reidville can continue to grow and prosper for many years. No member of this board has any financial interest in any of the proposals for Reidville. Each trustee serves as a volunteer and receives no compensation for their service to District Five.

District Five Schools are currently in the process of building a new, \$28M school at the east end of Main Street in Reidville. This investment, by all taxpayers in District Five, will build upon and strength the long, rich history of public education in the Reidville community. I would like to thank the Town of Reidville for their cooperation in this construction. We are having to adjust the town's road plan and add a new road to connect the east side of the property directly to Reidville Road for bus access to comply with SCDOT requirements. Additionally, in 2010, District Five taxpayers invested \$524,000 in a sewer line that runs along the south side of town. This line can be accessed by future developments.

Our key strategic focus now is to ensure District Five is prepared for the growth that we are experiencing. In the last school year, enrollment grew 362 students or 4.6%. This is stretching our fiscal resources and will require continued investment. We want to be good stewards of the District's resources.

Therefore, our desire has been and continues to be to sell the current Reidville Elementary School property once it is no longer needed. To this end, we had the property assessed and the result is a valuation of about \$650,000. The deed on the property is free and clear of any claims or restrictions.

The District Five School Board asked for a complete legal statement about what laws and regulations govern the sale of excess property. This was published at our June meeting and the full text is available at spart5.net.

The key findings include:

1. Charter Schools: *If a school district declares a building surplus and chooses to sell or lease the building, a charter school applicant or a charter school operating in the district must be given the right of first refusal to purchase or lease the building under the same or better terms and conditions as it would be offered to the public.*
2. The school trustees of the several school districts may sell or lease school property, real or personal, in their school district whenever they deem it expedient to do so and apply the proceeds of any such sale or lease to the school fund of the district.
3. The District has the statutory and constitutional power to dispose of its real property for a consideration that the Board of Trustees considers adequate. When determining adequate consideration, the Board may consider indirect public benefits from the transaction.
4. The Board is charged with properly managing the property and operations of the District and must be mindful of the best interests of the students and the District.
5. In considering the disposal of unneeded school property, a public school district has several options, as follows:
 - a. Public auction;
 - b. Direct negotiation for a sale;
 - c. Lease; or
 - d. Barter or exchange.
6. The Board, acting as a steward of the District's financial affairs, must consider what is most beneficial to the school district. A decision to dispose of the property in a manner that is not seen by the public as being advantageous to the District could result in a legal challenge by a taxpayer.

The last point I need to address before the Reidville Town Council speaks is the origin of District Five's ownership of the properties in Reidville. There were over 100 school districts in Spartanburg County in the early to mid-1900s. The current 7 were created by consolidating all those smaller ones in the early 1950s. All the properties of the smaller districts were transferred to the consolidated districts.

1. Academy Park Property: This is where the new Reidville Elementary School is being built. As Tyger River Park was completed, the question of maintaining Academy Park and its ball fields came up. Spartanburg Parks did a title search to find out who owned the land. The deed from November 12, 1858 identified "trustees of Reidville High School" as the owners of the property, acquired from J.M. Wakefield and A.P. Wakefield, for \$1. Therefore, by the district consolidation law of SC, District Five Schools was determined to be the successor and inherited the property. District Five then bought properties adjacent to the Academy Park with an eye towards building a new school there. To the best of our knowledge, there is no challenge to District Five's ownership by any party with legal standing. If there were, District Five would address the issue.

2. The current school was built in 1948. Based upon available records, it appears that District Five acquired the school property in the early 1950s upon the consolidation of school districts.
 - a. In 1923, the current Reidville Elementary School property, comprised of approximately 11.62 acres, was conveyed to the Trustees of Reidville Graded School by the "Trustees of Reidville High School, a corporation" for a stated consideration of Ten and 00/100 (\$10.00) Dollars.
 - b. In deeds dated February 17, 1858, July 10, 1858, February 10, 1858, and October 26, 1859, the Trustees of Reidville High School received conveyances of properties from J.M. Wakefield and A.P. Wakefield, Ann M. Gaston, and James N. Gaston (two separate deeds), respectively. Consideration paid for such conveyances was \$1.00, \$1.00, \$1.00 and \$615.87, respectively. These deeds contain obsolete descriptions (that refer to various stones, fences and trees, for instance) and reference plats that were never recorded and, presumably, are no longer available. It is impossible to match the property descriptions and acreage mentioned in these deeds with the property conveyed by the Trustees of the Reidville High School to the Trustees of Reidville Graded School mentioned above.
3. The above stated deeds and these comments will be published with the minutes of tonight's meeting for the public to review.

I hope these points clarify the origin of District Five's ownership. We have received many questions about this.

Next, I will recognize the Reidville Town Council to speak. They can either speak collectively or each speak individually. I will ask the Town Council to please limit their remarks to 20 minutes total.

Once the Town Council has finished, I will recognize each Board member to speak individually. The Board member may address questions to the Town Council. When each board member is finished with their comments or questions for the Town Council, I will recognize the next board member.

Finally, no action will be taken tonight on this matter. Once our discussion is finished, we will have a short recess and then conclude our meeting with our regular action agenda.

I will now recognize the Reidville Town Council and ask whoever is speaking to please use the microphone so everyone can hear them.