

City of Barnesville
City Council and School Board Joint Meeting
May 16, 2002

Mayor Gene Prim called the joint meeting of the Barnesville City Council and the Barnesville School Board to order in the Barnesville City Hall chambers at 5:30 p.m. with council members Chad Hagen, Jerry Ames, Kim Simonsen, and Charles Martinson present. School board members attending were Jeff Brown, Loretta Szweduk, Heather Jerald, Randy McEvers, Ellen Smith, Kevin Smith, and Tim Thompson. Also attending were City Administrator Ray Miller, Police Chief Dean Ernst, EDA director Karen Lauer, Angie Ernst, Paula Haugrud and Pam Aakre from the Record Review.

Karen Lauer started the meeting showing a new Barnesville television commercial that started airing a week ago. The commercial promotes the new housing developments as well as the schools. The commercial will air from mid-May to mid-July. The commercial's main objective is to attract new families to Barnesville. The Barnesville Booster Club contributed funds to this year's commercial.

Ms. Lauer stated that when she receives calls from potential new residents, one of the first and most important questions asked is about the school system.

Kevin Smith asked Ms. Lauer what type of questions are frequently asked by potential new families. Ms. Lauer replied that some of the most common questions asked are about special needs programs for both gifted and handicapped students, what sports does the school offer, if the school is considering consolidation with any other schools (no), and student test scores.

Ms. Lauer also talked about the participation of the EDA with their booth at the Fargo Home Show. This year members of the school's new Public relations committee helped man the booth. The EDA and the Public relations committee will continue meeting together and will be putting material together for the packets that are sent out to potential new families. There are about 100 packets sent out a year. Heather Gerald felt it would be a neat idea to put the commercial we have on television on the Internet.

Loretta Szweduk complimented the EDA on the great job they have done in promoting housing and starting the commercial park. She asked what the school could do to help promotions in this area. Ms. Lauer stated that one way to do this would be to send information out to alumni who are in decision-making positions in companies across the country. She said that many people like to support their hometowns and often decide to return there.

Mr. Cameron talked about the alumni association. The EDA and community fund are planning an all-school reunion. They have mailed out information to the last 70 years of Barnesville alumni. Mr. Cameron feels that the reunion would be an ideal time to discuss and promote the alumni association.

Police Chief Dean Ernst was present to represent the Police Department. He stated that the Police Department is in the business of marketing too by keeping our community a safe place to live. The department is very involved in education at the school. The Police Department teaches a Red Flag/Green Flag Program in the third grade and a DARE program in the fifth grade. They are looking at a new program called QUEST that is similar to DARE that stresses more citizenship, self-esteem, and character

development at a younger age. This program is through the Lions organization. Chief Ernst feels that it is important for the teachers to be on the same wavelength as the police. Ellen Smith asked Chief Ernst if there were high school education programs. Chief Ernst replied that there is a Jr. High DARE Program available that has not been used as of yet. Barnesville doesn't have a large gang or drug problem in the school, which is good. The driver's Ed program could be targeted, and we could find a program that would work for each grade level. The meth problem that other communities have will eventually hit us in the future. Random drug checks are done several times a year at the high school. The Police Department saturates the school area before and after school. This makes the students more cautious in their driving and behavior in this area. Fewer smoking tickets are given out as a result too.

Mr. Hagen asked if there were programs that teachers can attend to learn about the warning signs of drugs. Mr. Cameron replied that there is not much in the way of classes available. He said that might be a presentation that Chief Ernst could put on for the teachers.

Ellen Smith asked a question as to whether the school has some type of buckle-up program. Officer Ernst replied that the high school had a program on this subject before. From this year.

Loretta Szweiduk made a statement that our city needs something besides sports for older kids to do. Kim Simonsen had an idea that Channel 12 could be utilized more. Students could do news, weather, and run school programs. Running a TV station would be a great class to include at our school. Jeff Brown agreed but said the equipment needed to run something like this would be very expensive.

Ms. Szweiduk inquired as to whether there are grants available. Ms. Lauer replied that there are, but we really don't have anyone who is trained to write grants. Mr. Simonsen said the toughest part is finding the grants and networking. It takes many, many hours. Chief Ernst stated that the Police Department is applying for a \$125,000 COPS grant, which would pay for a full-time officer for three years, with the city paying for the fourth year. Barnesville did not receive the grant last year and is reapplying this year. He stated that the Police Department's mission is to bridge the gap between kids, parents, and the school.

Community Ed was the next subject of discussion. Mr. Cameron said that potential new families are mailed the summer recreation pamphlets and a school newsletter. The number one question the school is asked by potential residents is what activities do we have? Mr. Simonsen noted that Community Ed started a soccer program, which is very popular in many communities.

Ms. Szweiduk inquired as to whether it would be possible for cleaning and lawn maintenance could possibly be jointly contracted between the school and the city. Mr. Simonsen said that would be something that could be checked into to see if it was feasible.

Meeting adjourned by Mayor Prim at 7:00p.m.

Submitted by:

Attest:

Angela Ernst
Minutes Recorder

Eugene Prim
Mayor