

**MINUTES
OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
EDINA CITY COUNCIL AND
THE EDINA SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD
HELD AT CITY HALL
FEBRUARY 2, 1998 - 5:00 P.M.**

Mayor Pro Tem Maetzold called the meeting to order.

Attending from the City Council were Members Nan Faust, Mike Kelly, James Hovland and Mayor Pro Tem Dennis Maetzold. Attending from the Edina School District Board were: Members Frank Bennett, Ernie Fischer, Ruth Gouth, Phyllis Koehler, John Murrin, Tim Walsh, and Chair Idith Almog. Mayor Smith entered the meeting at 5:07 p.m.

Mayor Pro Tem Maetzold thanked the School Board members for their attendance. He briefly reviewed the purpose of the meeting which was to review the status of the Kunz/Lewis property with the School Board, to gather further information regarding the West Metropolitan Education Program (WMEP) proposals, and discuss the School Board's position regarding the WMEP proposals for the Kunz/Lewis site.

Assistant Manager Hughes explained the Grandview Area Tax Increment Financing District was originally created in 1984. Various proposed developments have been reviewed for the site commonly called the Kunz/Lewis property since 1984. An office development was approved in 1992, but never built and the approvals expired. In 1996 Four S Properties acquired the site, then February of 1997 the Edina City Council authorized the acquisition of the site through condemnation, if necessary. However, the City was able to reach a negotiated settlement with the owners. The City solicited requests for proposals from developers which were received on December 5, 1997. Thirteen proposals were received, two that proposed construction of a magnet school on the site and eleven for mixed purpose redevelopment.

Superintendent Dragseth explained that WMEP is a consortium of school districts from Columbia Heights, St. Anthony, Brooklyn Center, Robbinsdale, St. Louis Park, Hopkins, Edina, Minneapolis and Richfield. WMEP has been in existence about seven years and is an attempt to voluntarily develop projects increasing integration in Minneapolis and surrounding suburban schools.

WMEP currently has three projects under way. The first is an elementary school in downtown Minneapolis that is scheduled for completion in about a year, but which will open for students in the 3rd through 8th grades in the Fall of 1998. The second magnet school is located in Robbinsdale and will be a fine arts school. Since the two projects under construction were in downtown Minneapolis and a northern suburb, the south west was the next area targeted for a magnet school. The Kunz/Lewis site met WMEP's selection criteria.

WMEP has secured State site acquisition funding of \$1.8 million and is requesting an additional \$1.2 million in 1998. The State will also fund construction of the magnet school that is estimated to be \$12 million. If the magnet school is constructed in Edina, District 273 then becomes its

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fiscal manager and has authority over programming the facility. Students from the nine participating districts are allocated spots in the magnet schools based proportionally upon population.

Superintendent Dragseth noted that WMEP is the only voluntary organization in the United States attempting to integrate urban and suburban schools.

The City Council and School Board discussed various aspects of the WMEP proposal including:

- The possible programs a magnet school could provide,
- The need for additional elementary facilities in Edina,
- The number of enrollment slots available to Edina students,
- How magnet school attendance opportunities are apportioned,
- The impact on Edina if the Kunz/Lewis property becomes tax exempt,
- Whether or not a magnet school could or would meet any community needs (additional gym space, community indoor pool, theater, senior center), and
- The variety of proposals the City has received for the Kunz/Lewis property.

Mayor Smith requested the School Board draft a resolution outlining the District's position and forward this resolution to the City Council as soon as possible.

There being no further business on the Council/School Board agenda the Mayor declared the meeting adjourned.

City Clerk