

Since we started the discussion on the Hadden property we have made the public aware of all communications via a public forum to ensure everyone is in the loop and involved with the process. The below email was sent to me by someone that had received it from school board member Tom Hach. A copy was not sent to myself or the other Trustees by Mr. Hach so we appreciated one of the recipients sharing it with us. After reading the email we thought best to share our thoughts on some points in the email because much of it doesn't apply to our situation and/or we had a different opinion and wanted to share those comments. So, below is the email Mr. Hach sent out to a number of residents with our comments.

“To Concerned Residents of the Riverside School District, This is a Blind Carbon Copy (BCC:) reply to the many thoughtful emails I have received both for and against the recent proposal on the Hadden School property made by the Painesville Township Trustees. Below are my opinions which may or may not reflect the opinions of the other Riverside school board members or the administrators thereof.

Why I am against the Painesville Township proposal.

1. There are six communities represented in the Riverside District and the Trustees' proposal creates definitive winners and losers with no overall benefit to the District or its taxpayers. “

**** to make the statement that there would be “no overall benefit to the district or its taxpayers” is not accurate. To say this would mean that only Painesville Twp would benefit if the property were to be transferred to the Township and maintains its current use, which is not***

true. For instance, currently the CONCORD girls softball league calls the Hadden Fields their home. This league has nearly 300 children participating. A recent census provide by the league shows that children from ALL communities in the Riverside school district participated in this league thus showing that taxpayers in the district outside of Painesville Township would benefit from the proposal. In addition to this league the fields will be the home of the under 10yr old fall league with children from across the district playing as well as communities outside the district even further expanding who uses the property. This doesn't even include the other sports that use the fields throughout the year as well as the general public that used the property.

2. The discussion about the Hadden property so far has completely ignored the fact Painesville Township is already the biggest winner within the scope of the changes going on in the Riverside District:
 - A brand new \$17,000,000 elementary school has been built on Madison Avenue
 - The former Hale Road Elementary School is now home to a County run school
 - The former Hadden Elementary School is likely to be home to a Charter school in fall 2020

***this statement is purely based on opinion and not exactly accurate. While the east side of Painesville Township got a new elementary school, the west side of Painesville Township actually saw one tax payer funded facility closed reducing offerings to residents in that area which is actually a big loss for residents on that side of the Township. Not to mention that essentially the children**

and families from the western side of Painesville Twp are the only elementary aged children in the entire district who will not benefit from the new schools and all they have to offer. The fact that Hale Road school will be a county run specialty school provides no real benefit to Painesville Township and it's residents and in reality is really a benefit to the school board because they were able to rid themselves of a outdated building that contained large amounts of asbestos. And while Hadden is likely to become a charter school, it's just relocating a school that already exists and provides no real value to Painesville Twp. Based on these facts taxpayers in the district losing Hadden and possibly the recreation space that was part of it is a very obvious loss rather than a win.

3. A few years back, the Riverside District sold a property to another local community at market price. The taxpayers of this community would rightly feel they were snookered by the District and their own elected officials if Painesville Township were to get a 'sweetheart' deal on the Hadden property.

***it appears the property being referred to is the old school property in Grand River. Recently the mayor of Grand River actually sent an email to the members of the board supporting giving the Hadden property to Painesville Township and gave an explanation of why even though Grand River paid for that property in 2012 Mayor Conley is in favor of the property being given to Painesville Township. Based on that email and discussions with the mayor It doesn't seem that Grand**

River has any negative feelings on our proposal and is actually in favor of it.

4. The Trustee's proposal sets a bad precedent because it rests on the argument all tax dollars are the same regardless of origin. Using the Trustee's 'Hadden' logic, if the buyer of the former Leroy Elementary School turns out to be Leroy Township, which is a real possibility, the Riverside District would be obligated to also sell it at the 'sweetheart' amount of just \$1. Would this be fair to the District taxpayers outside of Leroy Township who have also paid year after year to operate and maintain Leroy Elementary? Answer: NO.

****Leroy Twp wants the entire property of the ex school, including the building and the frontage on a major road (Rt 86)/ throughway to tear down and repurpose for an entirely different use. Whereas the proposal Painesville Township has presented only asks for a portion of the Hadden property with frontage in a small residential neighborhood to maintain the same current use, which is recreation for the general public. The Township has stated many times that if they were trying to acquire the property to use for any other reason than its current use we would expect to pay for the property. Our argument from day one is that we just want to maintain the current use of that property and would even add a deed restriction to ensure it would always remain the recreation use for the general public.***

5. Given the County school and the potential Charter school mentioned above are county and taxpayer supported, the Trustee's 'Hadden' logic would again dictate the Riverside District give away both Hale Road and Hadden schools for the 'sweetheart' amount of just \$1 each. Would this benefit anyone in the District who paid year after year to operate and maintain these two schools? Answer: NO.

****that's correct, the answer is no. However, using that logic to compare the two is really comparing apples and oranges. Our message from the beginning has been that transferring this property to the Township so that the it can maintain its current use would be a benefit of the general public, not just Painesville Twp residents . We've always stressed this park is open for use to everyone and anyone, not just school age children, and not just residents of Painesville Twp. That same logic in no way could be applied to the new proposed uses for the Hadden & Hale buildings. The new uses are a very specific and limited use. These schools are a very specialty type of school which makes the use is even more restrictive in regards to availability to the general public at large, therefor drastically limiting any benefit to the general public, even those with school age children. While expanding educational offerings in Lake County is positive, these proposed schools lack any realized benefit to Painesville Twp specifically. Whereas a park that is open and available for anyone to use benefits the public at large, regardless if they have children attending a school or not, regardless if they live in Painesville Twp or not.***

6. Maximizing the revenue from the sale of the former Hadden School will help delay the next levy request from the Riverside District, which would be in the best interest of ALL District taxpayers.

- ***it is our belief that the relationship between taxpayers and the school board/district is the best it's been in many years. There's trust back in the relationship and rightly so as this current board has proven that they deserve the trust of the public. That being said, the public has been very supportive of the board's recent initiatives by passing boy and operating levy and a bond for new schools. However, as a result of the new schools being built, other facilities are being closed. And, as in the case of Hadden, with the closing comes the loss of public funded recreation facilities. Facilities which are used by residents from across the district, as facts show. Not only are taxpayer funded facilities being closed, the new schools do not adequately replaced the loss of the taxpayer recreation facilities that were part of the closed schools. Parkside school for example doesn't even have one baseball field. Many residents across the district feel that transferring this property to Painesville Twp to maintain its current use is a way the board can give back and show its appreciation for the taxpayers that have been so supportive over the last few years. Many of the emails of support the board has gotten are from taxpayers that live in the district but outside of Painesville Twp only further supporting the fact that taxpayers across***

the district are not only ok with this proposal but actually want it and will benefit from it.

With all due respect to the Painesville Trustees, it is truly a shame they have chosen a 'my way or the highway' approach on Hadden. This approach is dividing our community when there are several potential ways forward which preserve the ball fields and green spaces in question. If the Trustees put as much time into working with the Riverside District as they are putting into their bullying tactics, I believe a solution could be found which we can all live with and would unite the communities we both serve.

****from day one the Township has always asked that the board for the transfer of the rear portion of the property. Based on discussions I've had, specifically the one with Mr Hach, the only option even mentioned was the district making the Township and thus the taxpayers, pay for the property. The only thing that was left in question was how much they wanted to charge the taxpayers for the property.***

It is not fair to create the narrative that Painesville Township is using "bullying tactics". Based on conversations with members of the board that opposed the transfer, a major concern was what people outside of Painesville Township would think about the board giving property to Painesville Twp that "everyone" in the district has paid for, to. So, based on that concern we have simply asked that residents reach out to board members to share their stories or feelings and advise the

board that they were ok with the transfer, even though they may not live in Painesville Township. Not to mention it's hard for that logic to make sense considering when a levy is up for vote the board essentially asks residents that will never use the schools to pay for them, and many do, willingly, and rightly so. This is part of building a strong and vibrant community. A good school system helps everyone in one way or another, just as parks and recreation space do.

You cannot make everyone happy, so what's most important when you're an elected official is to do what's best for the overall good of the community you serve. With that thinking in mind is why Painesville Twp believes the right thing to do is to allow the Hadden property to maintain its current use without making tax payers pay for the property again. Because in the long run, this property being used as a park for decades to come will benefit the general public and the taxpayers in the district a lot more than a flash in the pan onetime payment will do for the district overall. Especially when you consider the entire yearly budget of Painesville Twp for all operations is roughly just 15% of the total Riverside Local School District's yearly budget. So, any price would have a much larger negative impact on the Township and its taxpayers than benefit to the district.

In closing, I suspect I speak for many in the Riverside District when I say I look forward to having a positive and constructive dialogue with Painesville Township to find a solution which works for everyone.

Sincerely,
Thomas Hach
Member, Riverside Board of Education