

## **Bloomfield Hills School Board Agenda Shuts out Informed Public Comment – Chris Fellin**

Good Evening,

I am Chris Fellin, father of two recent Andover graduates and district resident. My son and daughter were in this district from K-12.

Parts of this community continue to not trust you and I believe community divisiveness is deepening. This is a huge problem for the future of this district and community that you need to stop ignoring. There are steps I think you can take to help move these issues in a better direction.

On the trust issue, you need to take additional steps to be even more transparent in your decision making. On community divisiveness, you need to establish an environment where people talk about pros and cons of issues and don't make things personal. This can only happen when you are completely transparent with information and encourage this discourse. By the way appointing a trustee who calls people liars, who refuses to substantiate her accusations and won't return emails was a huge step in the wrong direction.

Tonight I will present a proposal to encourage informed public input. I believe you think you have done this, but in my view the current agenda and lack of information prior to the meeting is by design shutting out your constituents' voices and limits comprehensive press coverage.

First, you provide some information for the public at the beginning of the meeting, but very little if any prior to the meeting. Both the public and the board should be provided all presentations, documents, motions, etc. several days before the meeting. At 10:15 this morning I was advised that material for several important topics was still work in process and that you had not seen it yet.

Second, you have moved public comment too late in the meeting. If you really want to hear from your constituency, you would design the agenda with that in mind. Honestly, I believe that you are punishing the people who make comments you don't like.

Third, you limit appropriate press coverage because writers have deadlines and don't have access to talk to people who represent both sides of issues.

Finally, public comment is too disconnected from the actual topics and comes after you have already made decisions.

I propose the following:

- Staff and student recognition should be separated from board business meetings.
- Principal's Instructional Showcase should be part of the Staff and Student Recognition meeting.
- Board packets and presentations for meetings and study sessions should be posted on the web available to the public when they are made available to board members. In the 90's the packets were available at the BHT library. Today, they should be on the web.
- Opening comments should be eliminated or significantly shortened.
- The agenda should be timed.
- The agenda should be re-arranged around seeking input from your constituents.

An example of how this agenda might look follows:

- 1) Begin Meeting (on time)
  - a) Safety protocol – Where to seek shelter and how to evacuate
  - b) Attendance
  - c) Pledge of Allegiance
  - d) Introductory Comments
  - e) Consent Agenda
  - f) Superintendent's Report

2) Board Business:

**a) Big Topics:**

- i) High School Project Update
  - (1) Presentation
  - (2) Public Comments
  - (3) Board Discussion
- ii) Four-Year vs. Six-Year Terms for Board Members
  - (1) Presentation
  - (2) Public Comments
  - (3) Board Discussion
- iii) Doyle Center renovations and abatement for Central Office move
  - (1) Presentation
  - (2) Public Comments
  - (3) Motion 1 / Board discussion / Vote
  - (4) Motion 2 / Board discussion / Vote
- iv) Review of Joint Meeting with Bloomfield Township Library Board
  - (1) Presentation
  - (2) Public Comments
  - (3) Board Discussion

**b) Smaller Topics:**

- i) Request to approve purchase of School Buses – Presentation and board Q&A
- ii) Request to Approve Resolution Re: Best Practices – Presentation and board Q&A
- iii) Request to Approve Restatement of BHS Tax Sheltered Annuity Plan – Presentation and board Q&A
- iv) Request to Approve Amendment to BHS 457(b) Eligible Deferred Compensation Plan – Presentation and Board Q&A
- v) FFLA Meeting Report
- vi) Board instruction Committee Report
- vii) Public Comment on Requests
- viii) Motions
  - (1) Motion 1 / Board discussion / Vote
  - (2) Motion 2 / Board discussion / Vote
  - (3) Motion 3 / Board discussion / Vote
  - (4) Motion 4 / Board discussion / Vote

**c) Standard Agenda Items:**

- i) Request to approve minutes
- ii) Request to approve Bills
- iii) Request to Approve Financial Statements
- iv) Personnel Actions
- v) Announcements