

To prepare students for lifelong success through excellence in education



info@scasd.org — 814.231.1042

To: Board of School Directors

From: Bob O'Donnell, Ed Poprik and Randy Brown

RE: **High School Track lighting update**

Date: February 14, 2019

On September 24, 2018 the Board approved the preparation of preliminary documents related the the pursuit of lighting at the High School Track.

The track is currently located in the State College Borough R3B zoning district, which only allows light poles to 25 feet. Because 25 foot light poles are not conducive to sports field lighting, permission was received at the October 8, 2019 meeting to request a text amendment of the Borough Zoning Ordinance allowing lighting (up to 70 feet high) be permitted in the R3B zoning district. The 25 foot light poles allowed in the current R3B zoning would be conducive for lighting the field to allow marching band practice to occur, which is also a requested use of the track field due to the elimination of the South Building front parking lot and the location of the new band facilities.

Pursuant to the action, district administration presented information regarding the potential text amendment to State College Borough Council at the their meeting of November 19, 2018. They referred the item to Planning Commission (PC) who heard the request on December 5, 2018 (rescheduled from the originally planned date of November 28). Among other items, the PC requested that the district have an informational meeting with the neighbors of the track area. The district notified the neighborhood associations in the area, as well as all adjacent property owners of an informational meeting, which was held on January 14, 2019 at the High School. Following this meeting, the district met again with the PC on February 6, 2019. The PC requested additional information as well as specific language and conditions that would be sought in the text amendment.

Moving forward, the district will meet again with the PC on February 21, 2019. At that meeting, we hope the PC will make a non-binding recommendation to State College Borough Council.

## VI-A2

Borough Council could potentially review the recommendation and debate the issue on either March 18 or April 1, 2019. The desired outcome of this meeting would be for the Borough to set a date for a public hearing, which would be required prior to taking action on the proposed text amendment.

If both entities take action on the previously mentioned dates, a public hearing could be scheduled by the Borough Council for either May 6 or June 3, 2019.

Based on the above dates, the earliest that lights could be expected for the track would early August. This would be a best case scenario, delays in approvals or construction could extend this date into the fall season.

In preparation for the upcoming PC meeting, the Borough has requested the following:

1. Draft amendment language that would stipulate:
  - a. The Facility would only be used for SCASD events (and not outside groups).
  - b. A specific time that lights would be shut off
  - c. Any contingency for events that might run over the shut off time
  - d. Frequency and type of events when public announcement system would be used
2. Specific data as to why the districts needs sports field lighting at the south track including specifics on events (who/what are the users, and schedules/frequency of use)
3. Information regarding the *implications to SCASD if the lighting height amendment is not approved*
4. Information from the lighting manufacturer regarding the performance of 40 foot light poles vs. 70 foot mounting heights