

As Birmingham schools chief

Peckinpough says he won't resign

By BARBARA UNDERWOOD
 Donald Peckinpough, Superintendent of Birmingham School District which includes a part of northern Southfield, has withdrawn as a candidate for superintendent of Syracuse, N.Y., schools, he said Tuesday evening.

"I notified the Syracuse Board of Education today that I no longer desired to be considered for their superintendent," he said and did not elaborate.

Peckinpough said just before the Birmingham board met on Tuesday.

It was "just a personal decision," he said and did not elaborate.

Janel Edson, Syracuse board president, said Wednesday morning that she received Peckinpough's decision while the Syracuse board was meeting Tuesday with Dr. Eugene A. Daggis, who also was being considered for the post.

Peckinpough and Daggis were among four final contenders for the Syracuse superintendency last week. Peckinpough and Sidney Johnson were the two finalists. When Johnson withdrew as a candidate on July 28, the Syracuse board called Daggis back for another interview "so we would have two finalists to look at," Mrs. Edson said Friday.

"WE ARE very unhappy that he (Peckinpough) has pulled out," Mrs. Edson said Wednesday morning. "He was a very fine candidate with many strengths and a lot of experience." The Syracuse board plans to meet again Thursday to resume its search.

Peckinpough said last week that he was being considered by two other large Midwestern school districts but indicated Birmingham was his first choice, as well as others and therefore am not considering any.

The status is the same with regard to the other possibilities, he said.

Peckinpough cited circumstances surrounding the renewal of his contract in May as factors that influenced him to consider other offers. The board extended his contract for two years in a 6-3 vote. He received no salary increase.

A board statement at that time noted that an evaluation of Peckinpough's work showed "areas of strength as well as areas of difficulty requiring intensive remedial efforts."

Peckinpough said last week that Board President Donna Hartwig had indicated to him recently that there was a "general feeling of improvement in certain areas of the district."



DONALD H. PECKINPAUGH

Birmingham board sells Valley Woods school

Birmingham School District which includes a portion of northeast Southfield accepted Tuesday the purchase offer of \$500,000 from the Valley Woods Retirement

Apartments Associates for Valley Woods Elementary School.

Until closing a year ago, Valley Woods was attended by some Southfield children in the Birmingham district.

The offer is contingent upon receiving zoning approval from the Beverly Hills Village Council and mortgage approval.

The Hel-Win Development Co. Inc. of Pontiac, which made the offer through Proctor Home Warren, Inc., asked for 180 days in which to resolve the zoning question and to arrange financing.

The project would provide residences for 100 senior citizens.

The offer was one of three received by the board for the school, which has been vacant since being closed in June 1975.

EFFORTS to lease the building during the past year failed, and the school building was placed on the market in the spring.

One of two of the purchase offers were received by the July 29 deadline set by the board. The second was from the St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church of Detroit.

One of those offers was made to those of the Valley Woods Retirement Apartments Associates—\$550,000 with 180 days to arrange zoning and financing. The district also planned to convert the school to a retirement residence with the possibility of constructing additional buildings on the property later.

The third offer, received after the deadline, was from Yeshiva Beth Yehuda of Southfield, which planned to use it for a religious school.

Among the criteria considered in selecting the Hel-Win proposal, Trustee Sylvia Whitmer said, included future plans to add buildings, local parking needed, whether the plans would serve the total community or a selected group and the return of the property to the tax rolls.

TRUSTEE Bruce Van Duem said he thought the \$500,000 offer was reasonable. The school was built in 1967 for \$600,000. An addition was built in 1968 for \$243,000. The outstanding debt on the building is \$380,000, said Richard Perry, school district finance manager.

Two residents of the Valley Woods area expressed concern that the board was not considering the third offer for the property building, which would maintain its use as a school and not require a zoning change.

The board also approved changes in school starting and closing times to provide one-half hour between dismissal times for elementary, junior high and senior high school in order to reduce the bus fleet by 10 buses.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS where a majority of students are bused will start at 8:15 a.m. and dismiss at 3:30 p.m. Elementary schools classified as walk-in will start at 9 a.m. and close at 3:30 p.m. and will have one hour for lunch.

Walk-in schools are based as Melvale, Pembroke, Pierce, Westchester, Quanton and Terry. Of these, Pembroke, Pierce and Terry, with no bus students, have the option of continuing their 1975-76 schedule of starting at 8:45 a.m. and dismissing at 3:15 p.m.

Junior high schools will start at 8:15 a.m. and end at 3 p.m. and senior highs will start at 7:45 a.m. and end at 2:30 p.m.

The board will not hold another regular meeting until Sept. 7. An open study session on short-range goals will be held Aug. 17.

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