

**District to receive \$42 million donation**

Rolling Hills Local School District

**Funds would come from the Guernsey Power Station and the Ohio School Facilities Commission**

**By JOHN LOWE** The Daily Jeffersonian BYESVILLE — The Rolling Hills Local School District soon will have new facilities — at no cost to the district taxpayers — thanks to an energy provider coming to Guernsey County.

During a meeting of the Rolling Hills Local Board of Education on Thursday night, the administration, school board members and officials of the planned Guernsey Power Station announced the agreement which will see \$42 million given to the district over a span of 30 years. The sum will pay 51 percent of the construction tab with the remainder picked up by the state.

“It’s an unbelievable opportunity and it’s super exciting times for us,” Superintendent Ryan Caldwell said as the audience of several dozen district staffers and members of the public greeted the announcement with thunderous applause.

Not only will the power station supply funds for the Rolling Hills facilities’ construction, it also will provide \$300,000 for scholarships to Meadowbrook High School graduates, Caldwell said.

He said the company had applied for abatement and its officials have been in negotiations with the district for almost a year.

Developers Mary and Michael King of Apex Power Group were on hand to witness the board’s unanimous approval of the agreement’s sheet of terms.

“We have had a great opportunity to work with the community,” Mary said. “We have some financial partners — Caithness Energy — who are working with us on this project. We worked very closely with them and with Ryan and [Treasurer] Kandi [Raach] to come up with this.”



**Mary and Michael King, developers of the Guernsey Power Station, speak during the Thursday meeting of the Rolling Hills Local Board of Education.**

John Lowe/The Daily Jeffersonian

“I’ll just add to it and say it’s truly humbling to work in your community,” Michael said. “There are so many good people doing so many good things. It just drives us all the more to get this to the finish line.”

Caldwell said the opportunity could not have come at a better time.

“We need new facilities,” he said. “We have one building that is almost 100 years old. We understand that the taxpayers in the district can’t afford [a levy]. We learned that in May [during the primary election].

“We have reached an agreement that will enable [the company] to move forward and we will receive a large sum of money to build new facilities.”

The district will also partner with the Ohio School Facilities Commission, which will provide the remaining 49 percent of the construction costs. Meanwhile, the company, in effect, will provide the local, matching share, said Caldwell, adding that “this is all about the kids.”

“We will have new or renovated facilities for K12,” he said. “We’re ecstatic. This will impact the district for generations to come. It’s going to be transformational for the entire district and the county. We are truly blessed. It’s a great time to be a Colt.”

During the primary election, district officials had sought a pair of levies that would have funded renovations at Meadowbrook High School and the construction of two buildings — a new middle school

and a K-5 building.

As for the plans for the Guernsey Power Station, it will be a 1,100-megawatt plant fueled by natural gas.

Developers hope to have all of the financials worked out and the deal closed by March, Mary said. Groundbreaking would quickly follow and construction would take about three years. Quite a few jobs will be created for the construction phase, she said.



**Michael and Mary King, seated, are joined by Rolling Hills officials — Superintendent Ryan Caldwell, Treasurer Kandi Raach, Board President Bryan Stoney and board members, Karen Wiggins, Darlene Miser, Cheryl Gadd and Tom Kenworthy — after the announcement of an historic \$42 million donation to the district. The funds will be used to construct new facilities in the district.**

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