

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

October 14, 2019

PRESENT: Joel Ongert, Tonnie Schmidt, Chris Zwygart, Kurt Rebholz, Paul Fischer, Erin Dove, Nancy Justman

Board President, Joel Ongert, called the meeting to order at 5:31 pm.

Moved by Mr. Ongert, seconded by Mr. Zwygart, to approve the following consent agenda:

- i. Minutes of the September 9, 2019 Regular Board meeting
- ii. Ratification of Contracts
- iii. Resignation

Motion carried 7-0.

Facility Study by the West Bend School District Private Task Force

Mr. Ongert explained that as a result of the failed referendum in April, a group of district residents and business owners (sponsors: Kevin Steiner and Tim Schmidt) was formed. The task force was not funded or commissioned by the district. Members of the task force provided a report on their facilities review.

Kraig Sadownikow began by thanking the task force for their work and district staff for providing information and answers to their questions in a timely manner. Mr. Sadownikow stressed that the information/findings presented is the work of the task force and not the School Board.

Background

The task force toured Decorah, Fair Park and Jackson elementary schools and the high schools. They felt these were the most facility-challenged schools. They also discussed room sizes, roofing, IT, asphalt, etc. and feel they now have a good understanding of the current conditions of these schools. The task force requested maintenance budgets, the future district-wide capital maintenance plan, operational costs at these sites, and the April referendum information and assumptions used.

Findings – High Schools

In reviewing the district's 25-year facilities plan, the task force felt that current decisions may be being made on old data/information. They suggested that the plan be updated annually and presented to the School Board. The task force felt that the district has multiple school sites/campuses in wide geographical locations.

The group also feels that external communications in relation to facilities could be better. There is an opportunity for the district to increase overall communication regarding the district's needs to be open and transparent especially in the area of facilities. The task force also indicated that the district's capital budget is underfunded.

Owen Robinson stated that the task force looked at enrollment forecasts and checked with other school districts for best practices and found their benchmarks were accurate. The group found there to be legitimate needs at the high school that need to be addressed.

A high priority is safety; need to create one entrance into the high school (one main entrance). Another priority is to improve energy efficiency (lighting, HVAC). Grants may be available for this type of work. Other areas that need to be addressed: locker/shower rooms, library and study hall upgrades/consolidation, possible utilization of the courtyard area (put a roof over it and make it a common area), rearrange the CTE area into a more useable format (great option to use private money and collaborate with other governmental bodies; i.e. MPTC). Costs of updates to the high school facility were estimated (conservative approach) at \$21.3M.

Findings – Elementary Facilities

The findings by the task force included review of the district's maintenance building, Education Service Center and the Rolfs Education Center. The current elementary enrollment utilizes approximately 79% of the current space. After review, the task force identified four options: 1) do nothing; 2) retain all buildings and make necessary capital improvements at existing sites, 3) build a new Jackson Elementary, 4) construct one new elementary school (783 student capacity) on the south side of West Bend and redistribute students accordingly. The proposal of decreasing the number of elementary schools to three was based on student enrollment trends and projections for the next nine years. Savings were identified within the areas of staffing, energy, LED lighting and sourcing opportunities in the areas of maintenance, custodial, food service, grounds and IT.

Conclusion

Mr. Sadownikow stated that the task force believes they have brought forth the best options for the district to consider.

Mr. Ongert thanked the task force for their investment of time and hard work on their report. Mr. Kirkegaard stated that the board and administration will review the report and a follow up meeting will be scheduled with board members.

Meeting adjourned at 6:40 pm.