

Unapproved School Board Public Hearing Minutes

Dickinson Public Schools
Public Hearing

August 10, 2015; 6:00 p.m.
Central Office Board Room

The Dickinson Public School Board held a public input hearing on August 10, 2015, at the Central Administration Office. Board members present were: President Sarah Ricks, Vice-president Kris Fehr, Mrs. Leslie Ross, Mrs. Tanya Rude, and Mr. Jason Hanson. Administrators present were: Superintendent Douglas Sullivan, Assistant Superintendent Vince Reep, Dr. Rebecca Pitkin, Mrs. Susan Cook, Mr. Jay Hepperle, Mr. Shawn Leiss, Mr. Henry Mack, Mrs. Dorothy Martinson, Ms. Tamara Praus, Ms. Sherry Libis, Mrs. Melanie Kathrein, Ms. Jarris Bergherr, Mr. Ralph Muecke, Mr. Leon Malberg, Mr. Sean O'Connor, Mrs. Twila Petersen, and Ms. Abby Kessler from the Dickinson Press.

Call to Order – Board President Sarah Ricks called the public input hearing to order at 6:00 p.m. She welcomed all in attendance for the hearing. She said Mr. Reep would provide some information and then the floor would be opened to the audience for input.

Assistant Superintendent Reep addressed the audience. He distribute handouts regarding the 2014 taxable valuation, mill levy comparison from 2014 to 2015, and tax levy comparison amongst class A schools. He noted that the 2015 valuation had not been established yet. Whether or not there is any tax increase depends on several things such as the taxable valuation of the property and the total number of mills levied by all political subdivisions (city, county, park district, etc.) Mr. Reep added that the patrons of the Dickinson Public Schools approved a \$65 million bond in October 2014. The total net increase in mills is 3.6. The increase would generate approximately an additional \$40 a year for a property valued at \$250,000. In comparison to other Class A schools, Dickinson Public Schools is lowest in general fund and total levies. Mr. Reep opened the floor for questions from board members or the audience. President Ricks invited those in the audience to provide public input. Mr. Ralph Muecke addressed the board stating that his property taxes are the highest they have ever been. Mr. Muecke inquired if the school board had considered using the old St. Joseph's Hospital or old Sanford Clinic for the location for the new middle school. The properties are unoccupied. He was also concerned that a school building might set empty if a new building is built or if the oil industry should bust. President Ricks shared that she understood his concern. She clarified that there were numerous public input meetings regarding the middle school and a lot of research had been done. Vice-president Fehr added that the old St. Joseph's hospital building had been sold and was not available and was not an appropriate building for a new middle school. There were many existing buildings that were researched. After all the public forums it was decided to build a new middle school. She assured Mr. Muecke that none of the buildings would be empty after the new middle school was built. Mr. Leon Mallberg addressed the board. He voiced his frustration for his taxes to continually increase even after the legislature has provided tax relief. He stated the value placed on his property couldn't be sold for half of the value. He added that if the property values decrease the mill levies will still increase to make up the difference. Mr. Mallberg thanked the board members for the opportunity to speak. There was no other public input.

Adjournment – At 6:19 Mrs. Ross moved to adjourn. Mr. Hanson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. The hearing was adjourned at 6:19 p.m.

Sarah Ricks, Board President

Vince Reep, Business Manager

Twila Petersen, Secretary