

Unapproved School Board Workshop Minutes

Dickinson Public Schools
Board Workshop

October 13, 2014; After Board Meeting
Board Room, Central Office

The Dickinson Public School Board held a workshop on October 13, 2014, at the Central Administration Office. Board members present were: President Kris Fehr, Vice President Jason Hanson, Ms. Leslie Ross, Mrs. Tanya Rude, and Mrs. Sarah Ricks. Administrators present were: Superintendent Douglas Sullivan, Assistant Superintendent Vince Reep, Mr. Ron Dockter, Mr. Jay Hepperle, Dr. Marcus Lewton, Dr. Becky Pitkin, Mrs. Susan Cook, Ms. Tamara Praus, Mrs. Melanie Kathrein, Ms. Sherry Libis, Mr. Shawn Leiss, Mrs. Dorothy Martinson, Mr. Henry Mack, and Mr. Thomas Barr. Others present were: City Administrator Shawn Kessel, Mrs. Twila Petersen, and Ms. Nadya Faulx from the Dickinson Press.

Call to Order - Board President Fehr called the workshop to order at 6:15 p.m.

District Plans for Future

DLR Group Final Report – Superintendent Sullivan distributed individual binders that included information regarding the DPS Facility Master Plan. The superintendent and assistant superintendent have reviewed the material in depth. Dr. Sullivan called attention to the increasing number of students requiring English Language Learners assistance. These numbers are up 13% from last year. He also noted in 2011, the school district added 11 classrooms to two elementary schools, in 2013 a new school opened, and in 2014 the district is in the process of expanding the new elementary school. Since the superintendent's arrival in 2009 there has been an increase of 1,000 students to the district. The school board had foresight and prepared with the expansions and building of the new elementary school. The focus continues to be enrollment growth and the number of students.

City Growth/Planning Overview – City Administrator Shawn Kessel was invited to provide information to the group regarding the growth the city has seen and future planning. Mr. Kessel congratulated the school district on the passage of the school bond. He reported in 2011 a study was done that projected the population in Dickinson to be approximately 42,000 by the year 2025. In 2013 those numbers were revised estimating the population to reach 42,000 before 2025. Professionals at Kadrmas, Lee and Jackson are estimating 9,500 new housing units in the next seven years. This would require a large increase in building permits. The City has kept the number of building permits low the last 18 months at an attempt to have the infrastructure in place to keep pace with the demand. Mr. Kessel anticipated in the year 2015 there would be a record number of building permits. At a meeting, CHI-St. Joseph's Hospital President Reed Reyman shared the number births. Based on those births it is estimated the City's population is currently 30,000. If this trend should continue, the population could grow to 55,000 within the next seven years. Administrator Kessel noted that infrastructure expansion is very expensive. There will be an \$80 million sewer and water treatment plant going online in the near future. Part of the tax money the City collects must be used towards infrastructure.

City Administrator Kessel used Google Earth to plot approximately 35 land developments that are anticipated in and around Dickinson. These subdivisions included not only low density, single family homes but also high density, commercial and multi-family projects. He also briefly discussed annexations, park land included in developments, and ratios of single family homes vs. high density. President Fehr inquired if the companies bringing in new businesses, such as new restaurants, are also bringing people with them. Mr. Kessel responded that the business plans for the new companies

City Growth/Planning Overview (cont.)

coming in are based on a different business model. Their prices reflect a salary that commands attention. Today's economy is different than what it was when some of the established businesses started. The City of Dickinson had 100 employees when Mr. Kessel came here. It now has 250 employees. Hiring people and retaining them is the biggest challenge. The unemployment rate in this area is the lowest in the nation. There are currently only 311 people looking for a job. Labor markets are tight.

Future Planning

Enrollment Projections – Assistant Superintendent Reep distributed two handouts. One handout showed enrollment projections through fall of 2019. The second handout provided enrollment projections more specific to grade levels. Mr. Reep estimated enrollment to increase by approximately 1,005 students from the years 2014 to 2019. This is an increase of 29%. It is projected the elementary schools will reach capacity by the time the middle school opens in 2017. The new K-5 capacity will be 2,500 students. Ms. Ross questioned the capacity at an elementary school that would dictate an additional assistant principal. Mr. Reep responded, according to the Picus report, an additional assistant principal should be added when there are 450 students.

Dickinson High School Building – Board President Fehr said that one of the contentions in the recent bond election was a new high school building. The Board is keeping its promise to have a discussion regarding this topic. Superintendent Sullivan reported that he and Mr. Reep will have a conference call with the DLR Group tomorrow to move forward with the discussion regarding the high school. Now that the plans have been set for the K-8, it is time to begin addressing the 9-12 building.

Hagen Junior High Property – Superintendent Sullivan said he had met with representatives from NDSU today to discuss a possible location for the new middle school. The District will continue to look at other options. There is also a meeting on Friday to discuss another possible site for the new middle school. He added it would be ideal to have a location decided by the end of November. The NDSU site will require action by the legislature. It is possible the school district may look at buying more than one site. There was discussion regarding repurposing the Hagen Junior High building and Hagen football field.

Transportation – Superintendent Sullivan explained a letter regarding the shuttle bus service was being sent home with K-6 students today and mailed to grades 7-12 students. The implementation date has been pushed back to November 12. There is a larger, restricted (ineligible) area. There will be two enrollment periods for parents to sign their children up for a shuttle service. President Fehr inquired how the service would work. Superintendent Sullivan responded that there will be designated bus stops. Parents will be able to take their children to stops where the students can get on the bus. There may also be exchange zones. Harlow's Bus Service will not be able to determine the bus stops until they gather all the information from those interested in the service.

Funding Sources – Assistant Superintendent Reep reported there have been conversations with the park district as new land acquisitions become available. The Meyer Group has 30 acres available for a middle school near the South Heart School District boundary which is the Dickinson School District's far west boundary. There also has been conversations regarding building an elementary school in Sundance Cove. The administrators continue to work with the park district since its options would be in lieu of cash. Mr. Reep added the District has applied for a construction loan through DPI for \$10 million. If DPS receives the loan, the balance of the \$65 million bond for the new middle

Funding Sources (cont.)

school would be \$55 million and those bonds could be sold over a two year period. There are fees that the District will need to absorb when building a school in a new development, such as sewer, water, curb, and gutter.

Adjournment - The workshop adjourned at 7:33 p.m.

Kris Fehr, Board President

Vince Reep, Business Manager

Twila Petersen, Secretary