

Unapproved School Board Workshop Minutes

Dickinson Public Schools
Board Workshop

November 17, 2014; After Board Meeting
Board Room, Central Office

The Dickinson Public School Board held a board workshop on November 17, 2014, at the Central Administration Office after the regular board meeting. Board members present were: President Kris Fehr, Vice-president Jason Hanson, Ms. Leslie Ross, Mrs. Sarah Ricks, and Mrs. Tanya Rude. Administrators present were: Superintendent Douglas Sullivan, Assistant Superintendent Vince Reep, Mrs. Dorothy Martinson, Mr. Ron Dockter, Dr. Marcus Lewton, Ms. Tamara Praus, Mr. Jay Hepperle, Mr. Thomas Barr, Mr. Shawn Leiss, Ms. Sherry Libis, Mrs. Susan Cook, Dr. Becky Pitkin, and Mr. Henry Mack. Others present were: Senator Rich Wardner, Ms. Leann Mehrer and Mrs. Twila Petersen.

Call to Order – Board President Fehr called the workshop to order at 6:25 p.m.

Legislative Bill – President Fehr thanked Senator Wardner for being present at the workshop. Senator Wardner provided a packet of handouts regarding Western North Dakota Oil and Gas Funding Impacts. He explained the oil money that comes into the State is absorbed into constitutional funds. There are still eight months to go in this biennium as June 30, 2015, is the end of the fiscal year. Next January and February the North Dakota Legislature will look at creating the budget for the next two years. Senator Wardner discussed how the price of a barrel of oil and oil production will influence the oil and gas tax revenue. State funds from the oil and gas tax revenue are allocated to gross production tax and extraction tax. Each of these taxes allocates a percentage of the funds to different entities using a complex formula. The hub city schools funding is part of the large city schools funding and is predicated on the percentage of oil and gas employees living in that district. Some funding for school districts is imputed or discounted as much as 75%. Some members of Legislature are trying to acquire funding for school districts to build new schools at low interest construction loans or zero interest construction loans. There are two state allotments, one from the gross production and one from the extraction. The state general fund gets a small portion of approximately \$300 million. The property tax relief is the money used to pay for the 125 mills that the district is no longer levying. Higher prices of oil generate a larger amount of money into the constitutional funds. If the oil production should decrease there is a cushion in the funding. Funds are being collected this biennium to take care of educational funding for the next biennium. Senator Wardner explained the history of the Legacy Fund and the future for this funding. Constitutionally this money is dedicated to be spent on water, education, and strategic investment and cannot be touched until 2017. President Fehr thanked Senator Wardner for attending the workshop, the time spent in preparing the material, and presenting the information.

Future Planning

New Middle School – Assistant Superintendent Reep said the administration was looking for input from board members for a possible site for the new middle school. There are four sites the District had been researching and has narrowed it down to two sites. Superintendent Sullivan clarified why the four prospective sites were narrowed down to two based on the price. One site is owned by The Meyer Group (Pinecrest addition) and the other site is owned by NDSU (near Menards).

The Pinecrest addition property could be park district dedicated property and therefore may be donated land. The site in Pinecrest has approximately 26.5 acres. This is on the western border of the DPS District boundaries located near 30th and 35th. This land is platted and is in city limits, and therefore has city sewer and water. The Meyer Group and Roers Construction have developed the roads around this area.

New Middle School (cont.)

The NDSU site includes 30 acres and is selling for \$45,000 per acre or \$1.35 million. There are no plans in the near future for city sewer and water for this location. This property is at the intersection of 30th and 21st street. Next spring, 21st street will become a three lane street and later expanded to five lanes. The bypass will be built two miles from this site. Consensus was for the administration to continue working on land acquisition. Due to access to water and sewer and price the Meyer Group property is the first preferred option.

Location for Future Schools – Assistant Superintendent Reep distributed a handout with projected enrollment numbers. Superintendent Sullivan summarized the progress the District has made since he arrived in 2009 and the enrollment has increased by approximately 1,000 students. An addition was made to Lincoln Elementary and also Jefferson Elementary, a new elementary school was opened in 2013, the new school will have a new wing added in 2015, and a bond referendum passed allowing the school district to build a new middle school. Reflecting on the projected enrollment, Dr. Sullivan noted the District needs to consider building at least one more elementary school in the near future. Dr. Sullivan explained the land purchased in 1980 that is now Prairie Rose Elementary was advantageous to the District. Heart River Elementary is placed on a lot that has the capability of expansion; however, the heating and cooling system would need an overhaul. There is a ten acre site located in Sundance Cove east of Dickinson that could serve as a location for a new school. There are other possible sites available for a new elementary school. Restructuring Berg Elementary back to a K-5 building will temporarily help with the enrollment growth.

Construction Management – Mr. Reep provided a handout for Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for Construction Manager Services. The manager will provide a great deal of support as the District looks at its largest financial construction project. In the past 50 years, the projects have been designed, bid and then built. Mr. Reep suggested, when comparing a construction management agency and construction management at risk (CMAR), to utilize the CMAR. If the District would use agency it would have to hold all the contracts for every subcontractor. Mr. Reep requested permission to publish the RFQ on November 25. Some possible responses could be from JE Dunn, Praus, and Mortenson who would in turn possibly hire local subcontractors. Advertising for the position now will provide a timetable that would allow the Board to select the construction manager at its February Board meeting. Due to the large amount of information, President Fehr expressed concern with the timetable. Since the Board cannot take action at a workshop she suggested the topic be further researched and then call a Special Board Meeting to take action on one of the two presented processes. Mr. Reep added there is another possible process if the Board decides to use the traditional method. If the Board should decide to use the traditional method he suggested members visit with contractors who could potentially bid. Mr. Reep provided a copy of the North Dakota Century Code procedures regarding agency construction management procurement. These detailed guidelines describe the timeline for selection. President Fehr thanked Mr. Reep for the information and the handouts.

DLR Group Facility Master Plan

Hagen/DHS Discussion – Superintendent Sullivan explained that the conversation regarding the high school had not been forgotten. At this time, the District is focusing on trying to secure land for the new middle school and contract assignments before moving forward and transitioning into the high school discussion. Hagen Junior High Principal Marcus Lewton distributed several handouts related to

Hagen/DHS Discussion (cont.)

the new middle school. The handouts provided information on a timeline for the structure, stakeholders in the process, and the inner core components of the structure. There has been lengthy discussions with the Hagen and Berg staff regarding the middle school concept and preparing for a new way of teaching a middle school versus a junior high school. Focus has been on “why” things are being done. The Middle School Planning Team will be touring other 21st century schools. The team knows the new school will be built with taxpayer money and therefore wants to make sure it is done right receiving stakeholder input and sharing feedback and communication. The Team will meet with focus groups to discuss how the school works, how the classes are structured, counseling for students and how the schedule would look. Hagen Principal Lewton and Berg Elementary Principal Leiss are working with the State and Dickinson State University to provide teachers with course work needed for the District to implement a middle school. President Fehr inquired how many Hagen faculty remain from when the District did the first middle school concept, which was approximately 20 years ago. Mr. Reep responded possibly less than five. Mr. Leiss added the Planning Team has been working diligently with the DLR Group. This Team’s efforts helped pass the bond referendum. Members have toured a couple of buildings and met with administrators from the buildings. There will be input from the Hagen and Berg staff shared with the architects to use when designing the new middle school. The staff has been working hard to develop ideas. Dr. Lewton noted that the Hagen Junior High building has had an average of 1,000 students (500 per semester) per year in its 79 years of service. That is 79,000 students.

Adjournment – At 7:47 p.m., Ms. Ross moved to adjourn. Mrs. Ricks seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Kris Fehr, Board President

Vince Reep, Business Manager

Twila Petersen, Secretary