

**Dickinson Public Schools**  
Unapproved Special School Board Meeting Minutes  
November 30, 2017; 4:30 p.m.  
Central Administration Office Board Room

The Dickinson Public School Board held a special meeting on November 30, 2017, at the Central Administration Office. Board members present were: President Sarah Ricks, Vice President Brent Seaks, Mrs. Kim Schwartz, Mrs. Tanya Rude, and Mr. David Wilkie. Others present were Superintendent Douglas Sullivan, Business Manager Kent Anderson, Dickinson High School Principal Ron Dockter, Dickinson High School Assistant Principal Jay Hepperle, Dickinson High School Assistant Principal Guy Fridley, Southwest Community High School Principal Kristy Goodall, Dickinson Middle School Principal Marcus Lewton, Roosevelt Elementary Principal Henry Mack, Jefferson Elementary Principal Sara Streeter, Prairie Rose Elementary Principal Sherry Libis, Heart River Elementary Principal Susan Cook, Director of Instruction Melanie Kathrein, Director of Student Services Dorothy Martinson, Board Secretary Twila Petersen, Mr. Brian Stark, Mr. Ryan Anderson, Mr. Lyle Smith, Mr. Scott Schmidt, Ms. Melissa Gjermundson, and Mr. Iain Woessner from The Dickinson Press.

**Call to Order:** Board President Ricks called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

**Public Participation:** There were no requests for public participation.

**Dickinson High School** – At the November 13 School Board Workshop, the Board received an update from Mr. Chris Gibbs with the DLR Group and feedback from the focus group meetings. President Ricks invited Director of Instruction Kathrein, Dickinson High School Principal Dockter, Assistant Principal Hepperle, and Assistant Principal Fridley to join the Board at the table.

Superintendent Sullivan explained there have been multiple meetings with focus groups, high school leadership, and administration regarding moving forward with Dickinson High School and the District wishes to maintain the momentum. The District continues to see a trickle of families moving in which is reflected in the enrollment. Dr. Sullivan expressed the importance of the discussion regarding the future of Dickinson High School (DHS) as it prepares for projected enrollment increases.

An email from Mr. Gibbs with the DLR Group had been forwarded to Board members for review. Mr. Gibbs participated in the Board meeting via conference call. Mr. Gibbs addressed the Board and explained the three pathways for DHS. He noted all pathways were received well by the focus groups. During the many meetings, there were more questions regarding Pathway Two (2) and Pathway Three (3) and less questions received regarding Pathway 1 (building a new high school). The question that came up with Pathway 1 was what to do with the existing high school. Principal Dockter explained he would like to visit with some of the existing student body to get their opinions. In the focus group discussions, a possibility of blending some of the pathways was brought up with the inclusion of a Career and Technical Education (CTE) Center. There is still some room at the current high school location possibly for a CTE Center. Mr. Gibbs responded that he thought cost was a real concern and one of the ways to validate some cost implications is to get more details regarding an additional facility, a remodeled facility, and to what extent a remodel would include. He suggested getting some feedback from the staff on some options and how that might look. This could be done by looking at two or three options that could include utilizing the existing campus. Mr. Dockter said in his conversations with staff, administration, and community

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**Dickinson High School (cont.)**

they would like to see a CTE Center. If the Center would be off campus, it would require transportation. That could be a challenge with scheduling because everything would revolve around the transportation schedule. At the current high school location, it would be more centrally located, it would be easier to partner with Dickinson State University, and to also include adult learners at the CTE Center. The CTE Center would be a great opportunity for education for adults. Mr. Gibbs said those were great points. He said the CTE Center could also be expanded to not only include one class per day for the students, but also have the possibility to integrate the technology into more than one class where the students could utilize the CTE Center for possibly half a day. There are different learning activities in all different departments that could utilize the CTE Center.

Mr. Gibbs suggested the high school staff review some pros and cons with the District administration to make some informed decisions. Keeping in mind, the evolving changes will need to be practical in 20 years. He felt that there are great things that can impact students in the world in a CTE Center and it can be beneficial to all types of learning in all types of departments in many different ways long term. He added now is the time to have those conversations instead of five years from now thinking back that it should have been looked into. Mr. Dockter agreed that opportunities like this do not come very often. He felt that the community input was very important. Mr. Gibbs agreed that community members and business owners are going to be looking at professional educators for the next 20 or more years. Mr. Gibbs suggested determining a goal; what does the District and community want this to look like in 20 years and use that process.

President Ricks questioned where the District was going to find the balance of addressing the needs now and for the future. She noted there are some pressing needs at the high school that need to be addressed. Mr. Gibbs responded that he did not know how the process would unfold. The conversations to date by the different groups for pathways 2 and 3 were centered around implementation over a period of time. More than likely pathways 2 and 3 are not going to happen all at one time. He added that over time is very beneficial. He felt that during this process, the things that are most important, the highest needs, are going to become a prioritization and the challenge will be to make sure those things fit within the parameters. During the process, some of the steps may help alleviate a current need.

Mrs. Rude said she felt the community was not going to support a new high school at this time based on conversations she has had with individuals. She was concerned with doing things in phases as there is not a lot of time to extend this out as the high school is already pushing at capacity. She added some things are going to need to be changed before fall 2018. Mr. Gibbs agreed there are some challenges and felt that the school board in conversation with the administration and the high school staff could be done sooner than later. He added that he felt a number of things could be done without disrupting the long-term development of the vision. Having something built by fall 2018 was not something Mr. Gibbs felt could happen since there are many parameters.

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**Dickinson High School (cont.)**

DHS Assistant Principal Jay Hepperle said he had sat through all the focus group discussions and one thing he took away from those sessions is that everyone was willing to go through some temporary discomfort for the benefit of the long-range vision and added they wanted to do it right and do it right the first time. Mr. Hepperle asked Mr. Gibbs what he thought would be the #1 barrier in getting the process done in a timelier fashion. Mr. Gibbs responded the development of the program. He did not mean any disrespect for the high school staff and the programs that are in place. He felt the programs could be enhanced to be richer and better for the students of Dickinson. It will be a hard process and there could be some risks. He said the District could say they want to make a commitment to plan the program design and implement by fall of 2018 or it could suggest to implement by 2019 and then have more time to figure out the financing. The solution could be well more thought out. A lot of conversation needs to evolve and to be careful not to go too quickly and then five years later wonder why they had not thought of something that was now surfacing. He knows the District has gone through this process before and knows it takes a great deal of time.

Mrs. Kathrein noted in other conversations there is an interest from Dickinson State to partner with the District. That will also take some time to frame that partnership for the CTE Center. She noted that Mr. Dockter has been working on some of the constraints at the high school. Mr. Dockter stated that he has discussed for the past several years how to utilize the space at the high school if it should be necessary to add one or more teachers due to the enrollment growth. Starting next semester, DHS will be adding another science teacher to address that growth. The faculty and administration have worked together to plan how to have the space for the added teacher. Mr. Dockter noted his staff are willing to do what needs to be done to make it work. He added there are other options available, such as the Hagen building. It may not be ideal, but there are classrooms there that could be utilized. Mr. Dockter said they continue to plan during the interim until whatever is decided is completed.

President Ricks shared her appreciation for the discussion with Mr. Gibbs and the high school and Central Office administration. Mr. Gibbs said if there were any questions to send them to Superintendent Sullivan and Dr. Sullivan would forward them to Mr. Gibbs. He added this is a really exciting time for the District and excitement in the community. The District and the high school staff want to push forward. Mr. Gibbs said he wanted to make sure it was done right. He added DLR Group has many resources available. This agenda item was informational only. No action was requested.

**Berg Elementary** – At the November 13 School Board Workshop, Superintendent Sullivan shared that a Berg Planning Team had been formed. This team has met four times and made some great progress in its discussions of the renovation of Berg Elementary in preparation to reopen in fall 2018. At its most recent meeting, the committee reviewed some concepts from the DLR Group and the costs. The concepts were emailed to the Board members and are available upon request. Information about the concepts was presented to the Budget Development and Input Committee.

Due to a potential conflict of interest, President Ricks requested to recuse herself and joined the audience and Vice President Seaks chaired the meeting during the Berg Elementary discussion.

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**Berg Elementary (cont.)**

Superintendent Sullivan explained that Mrs. Schwartz represents the Board on the Berg Planning Team. He noted the planning team had done some excellent work. The team recommended grades K-2 be on the ground floor with grades 3-5 on the upper floor. At this point, the recommendation was not to have 5<sup>th</sup> grade at Berg Elementary in 2018. The question remains what grades will be served when the building reopens. That response will partially depend on the attendance areas. The consultants, RSP & Associates, have scheduled a final public open forum for December 14 at DHS to continue the discussion regarding attendance areas.

At today's Budget Committee Meeting, the committee received a recommendation from the Berg Planning Team regarding the renovations at Berg. Based on those recommendations for phase I of the Berg renovation and a consensus for approval from the Budget Committee, a recommendation to the Board of \$3.5 million was requested. Superintendent Sullivan distributed handouts with the costs for the renovation. It was noted the \$3.5 million did not include professional fees nor the playground. Mrs. Rude requested to look at Berg Elementary in its current state (and tour the facility) and discuss some of the items on the list from the Berg Planning Team before making a decision. She also requested that an administrator and teachers be included in the discussion regarding the proposed renovations.

At 5:11 p.m., Vice President Seaks declared a recess so that Board members, administrators, and the audience could tour the Berg Elementary building.

At 5:45 p.m., Vice President Seaks called the meeting back to order. He noted his appreciation for the Berg Planning Team for all the work they have done and for their projections for the renovations. Mrs. Rude inquired what Superintendent Sullivan was requesting. Dr. Sullivan referenced a handout and explained the items in the red boxes are the items the Berg Planning Team was proposing for repairs. He noted in addition to the items in red, the broken acoustic panels would need to be replaced and the ceiling panels in the kitchen need to be replaced. The planning committee also recommends the casework be removed and replaced. The lockers would probably be sandblasted and repainted. The fire alarm, intercom system, clocks and a key fob entry to the building are also recommended improvements to the building. Mr. Seaks added that the Budget Committee met and listened to the proposal for the renovation at Berg with the understanding that \$3.5 million would be the maximum budget. If for some reason more funds would be needed, it would need to come back to the Budget Committee for approval. He noted the items in the boxes were not a complete listing of what will be done to the building but the maximum would be \$3.5 million.

Mrs. Rude said she was hesitant because she would like an administrator in the building and perhaps the faculty in the building, to have a grasp of the building, and give input on what needs to be done with the renovations to the building. She agreed the committees work was well done. She felt the focus should be on the items that have to be done in order for the building to reopen in fall 2018. She listed some items she favored and other items she felt should be left up to the building administrator to decide. Vice President Seaks appreciated her comments and liked the idea of flexibility to new ideas. However, with respect to time constraints and wanting Berg to open as a school in 2018, he felt the funds were needed to get the school ready to open. He asked for input from Mrs. Schwartz who serves on the Berg Planning Team. Mrs. Schwartz felt the items in the red boxes were for

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**Berg Elementary (cont.)**

phase I of the project to get the school up and running. They were bare minimum items that were needed and felt now was the perfect time for the updating. She did not feel the list had many frills in what was needed to open again. Mr. Wilkie moved to authorize a \$3.5 million appropriation from the Capital Projects Fund for the administration to move forward with Phase I of the Berg Elementary renovation. Mrs. Schwartz seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. A roll call vote was taken on the motion: ayes-4 (Schwartz, Wilkie, Rude, Seaks); nays-0; abstain-1 (Ricks); absent-0. The motion carried.

Presidents Ricks joined the Board members and chaired the remainder of the meeting.

**Construction Management At-Risk (CMAR)** – Available on the website is information from the North Dakota Century Code pertaining to the selection process for a construction management at-risk (CMAR). Superintendent Sullivan explained the CMAR process was used in the construction of Dickinson Middle School. The purpose of a CMAR is to provide an opportunity for the District to negotiate a guaranteed maximum price on the project. The contractor and the school district become partners and it ensures the project comes under the budget. With the Board setting the budget for phase I of the renovation of Berg Elementary, the next step would be to secure a CMAR. Superintendent Sullivan explained after the Board authorizes the administration to move forward with a CMAR, Business Manager Anderson would put together a selection committee. The selection committee would review the requests for proposals and have an interview process for the proposals. The selection committee's recommendation for the company would come before the Board. Mrs. Schwartz asked what was the criteria for the selection committee members. Dr. Sullivan responded the North Dakota Century Code is very specific. There needs to be an administrative individual from the governing body, a registered architect, a registered engineer, and a licensed contractor. Mrs. Schwartz inquired who picks the selection committee members. Dr. Sullivan responded during the last selection process, the selection was done by the assistant superintendent. He added that Business Manager Anderson has a list of potential individuals for the selection committee.

Mrs. Rude inquired if there could be a stipulation in the agreement that whichever CMAR that was hired, that the District would retain the extra funds if there are any extra funds. Dr. Sullivan responded that the District only pays for the services that are billed, therefore there should not be any extra funds. Vice President Seaks inquired if the selection committee members were compensated. Dr. Sullivan responded that as far as he knew, the members of the previous selection committee were not compensated.

Mrs. Schwartz moved to authorize the administration to move forward with the process to seek applications for the Request for Qualifications in the selection of a Construction Management At-Risk Company for the renovation of Berg Elementary Phase I. Mr. Seaks seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. A roll call vote was taken on the motion: ayes-5 (Wilkie, Rude, Schwartz, Seaks, Ricks); nays-0; absent-0. The motion carried unanimously.

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**Adjournment** – At 6:00 p.m., President Ricks declared the meeting adjourned.

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Sarah Ricks, Board President

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Kent Anderson, Business Manager

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Twila Petersen, Secretary