



Wisconsin Rapids Board of Education

510 Peach Street · Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494 · (715) 424-6701

MINUTES

John A. Krings, President
John Benbow, Jr.
Larry Davis
Sandra K. Hett
Mary E. Rayome
Anne Lee
Katie Medina

October 24, 2016

SPECIAL BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING BOARD WORKSHOP

LOCATION: Thomas A. Lenk Educational Services Center, 510 Peach Street, Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494
Conference Room A/B

TIME: 4:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Katie Medina, Anne Lee, John Krings, John Benbow, Sandra Hett, Mary Rayome, Larry Davis

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: Colleen Dickmann, Daniel Weigand, Ryan Christianson, Kathi Stebbins-Hintz, Matt Green, Phil Bickelhaupt, Ed Allison, Kevin Yeske, Tracy Ginter, Casey Drake, Rod Henke

OTHERS PRESENT: Steve Kieckhafer, Plunkett Raysich Architects; Timothy Andrew, Miron Construction

President John Krings called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

Roll Call

Approval of Financial Institution for Health Savings Account (HSA)

Daniel Weigand, Director of Business Services, explained that since the Board has approved a change in the employee health insurance plan to incorporate a Health Savings Account (HSA), he has been in contact with four financial institutions having a regional presence in order to find out about their services and options in this regard. WoodTrust would be unable to handle the volume of the program at this time, given their manual process. US Bank has spun off their HSA accounts to a different bank which would charge a \$3.00 monthly fee to each employee. Associated Bank would waive all fees for the first year, and then charge a \$3.00 monthly fee to each employee having less than a \$1,000.00 balance in their HSA account. BMO Harris was the only bank that he contacted which would charge no fees to the employee. As a result, the administration recommends approval to utilize BMO Harris as the financial institution for employee Health Savings Accounts.

The Board questioned how long BMO Harris would maintain the zero fee offering for employees. Mr. Weigand explained that as of this time, no fees would be involved and there was no indication from them that they would assess a fee at any particular time in the future.

Motion by Larry Davis, seconded by Katie Medina to approve of utilizing BMO Harris as the financial institution for employee Health Savings Accounts. Motion carried unanimously.

District Facility Restructuring, Grade Alignment Options, Performance Contracting

Superintendent Dickmann stated that the administration has been working with Steve Kieckhafer from Plunkett Raysich Architects in order to develop potential facility restructuring options that would include performance contracting. It is possible that there would be some facility closures as well at some point in time in the future, based upon what the Board approves. Other than the performance contracting topic, the administration is not requesting Board action at the meeting. They would instead bring back some of the items discussed to the November, 2016 Board meeting for possible action.

The multi-year project plan for facility upgrades and restructuring would occur in three phases, with everything reaching completion by the end of the 2018-19 or 2019-20 fiscal year. The District student population has continued to decline, and the District has positioned itself financially to be able to renovate certain facilities in order to shift the student population to deliver programs more effectively. At the same time, the condition and

feasibility for all District buildings to continue to remain open has been considered. For example, students in 9th grade could now be moved to Lincoln to make it a grades 9-12 campus; 8th grade could shift to WRAMS to make it a grades 6-8 building; and other buildings could potentially be closed with the programs being moved elsewhere in the District.

Mr. Kieckhafer reviewed the various construction plan phases as follows:

Phase 1 (2016-17, 2017-18 fiscal years)

Phase 1 would actually break out into three construction phases as follows:

- 1a: Lincoln High School Wrestling and Gymnastics - \$2,800,000 approximate cost (November, 2016-August, 2017)
- 1b: Lincoln High School Lockers and Restrooms - \$2,050,000 approximate cost (November, 2016-August, 2017)
- 1c: Lincoln High School Pool and Lockers - \$3,550,000 approximate cost (November, 2016-December, 2017)

TOTAL APPROXIMATE COST: \$8,400,000

The modifications from Phase 1 would bring the pool into compliance with WIAA regulations, upgrade it from its current leaky condition, provide adequate girls locker room space to include a team locker room which they currently do not have, and expand restroom space near the fieldhouse for state competitions, shift the wrestling room to the east end of the building and provide for adequate gymnastics space, and expand the kitchen/serving/concession line area. Under Phase 1, the 9th graders would move to Lincoln High School in the 2017-18 school year, or this could be delayed to the following year to correspond with the 8th grade move to WRAMS, should that be approved.

Phase 2 (2017-18 fiscal year)

Phase 2 would consist of adding gym and classroom space at the Wisconsin Rapids Area Middle School, with the construction phase running from April, 2017 through August, 2018 at an approximate cost of \$7,900,000. With the 9th graders moving to Lincoln, the administration would recommend moving 8th grade to the WRAMS facility. Green space around the East facility will be diminished once the city pool is in place as the track and football field will be gone. The WRAMS facility would be ideal for absorbing the 8th grade population and meet their curricular and co-curricular needs. The student population at WRAMS as a 6-7-8 building would be just over 1,000. Eighth grade students could move to WRAMS in 2018-19.

Phase 3 (2017-18 fiscal year into 2018-19 fiscal year)

Phase 3 would consist of adding an indoor practice facility at Lincoln High School and include turf replacement and track resurfacing at an approximate cost of \$7,456,000. Turf replacement would allow the District to host competitions that it currently is unable to, bringing dollars into the District and community. General amenities would also be added by way of toilets, concessions, etc.

The District has been paying down debt from its General Fund in an amount over \$20 million in the last several years, which has freed up dollars. There is no additional Fund 10 debt owed by the District; only QZAB and 2006 Referendum debt is still owed. It behooves the District not to pay off the QZAB debt of \$2,820,000 since this is a no-interest loan. The Fund Balance has also been built up to a more comfortable position. As a result, the amount available in the upcoming years is projected to be \$4.7 million for 2016-17, with close to the same amount again in 2017-18. If the District were to move toward performance contracting, the dollars available for the projects would increase. For example, it is possible that the pool and locker room projects could be covered under performance contracting. The administration projects that if performance contracting were able to be used, it is likely that the District would be approximately \$1 million shy of what would be needed to complete the Phase 2 project which extends into the 2017-18 fiscal year.

Dr. Dickmann suggested that if the District ends up \$1 million short in funds for Phase 2, Fund balance could potentially be used to finish the project and then be put back in the following year. There are potential revenue sources through fundraising, naming rights, and donations.

There could also be some savings recovered from any potential school closures in the future. Since the 2006 referendum was approved, the District has spent the dollars very wisely and will likely be able to squeak out another year or two in the technology and curriculum areas with the dollars available.

While a consideration might be to go to referendum to complete the facility pieces, the administration would suggest that the Phase 1 and 2 projects can primarily be funded through dollars available in conjunction with performance contracting. Phase 3 could be pared back as appropriate to only do the projects which are absolutely necessary, such as the track replacement. The primary focus by the administration is to complete Phases 1 and 2, and the Lincoln track replacement. The construction phasing would align closely with the school year so as not to disrupt instructional programming to the extent possible.

Timothy Andrew from Miron Construction shared information about construction project delivery methods and the pros and cons of each. The methods covered include “Design/Bid/Build,” “Design-Build,” and “Construction Manager At-Risk.” For the past 20 years, the District has utilized a “Construction Manager At-Risk” model for its building projects. Advantages to this model include the District having more control; the architect and construction manager at-risk having to work together and challenge one another for best outcomes on the project as they maintain a system of checks and balances; the District would reserve the right to utilize local suppliers and vendors to the extent possible; and any savings from the collaborative efforts of this construction delivery model would go back to the District.

Dr. Dickmann shared possible uses for the East Jr. High facility since it would be left vacant if 8th and 9th grade moves out, except for Central Office and Technology which would remain in the building. Ideas shared include:

- possibly moving River Cities High School to East;
- moving the entire project based learning program from Vesper (both students and teachers would move intact) to East;
- potentially developing a K-12 STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics) school at the East location to focus on STEM and Art & Design in the curriculum;
- moving the virtual program into the East facility;
- opening up the East facility for potential Boys & Girls Club programming, should they be interested – it may be a good fit with the city pool being nearby.

Other ideas shared might be to move the project based program into the Pitsch facility since the Boys & Girls Club plans to vacate it. Should the Vesper and River Cities program move, these buildings could then potentially close for some savings. Both buildings are showing their age and wear, and would need dollars invested into them to maintain each building.

Mr. Weigand reviewed the Request For Qualifications (RFQ) that would go out to approximately ten vendors for the infrastructure improvement performance contract. Should the Board approve of sending out an RFQ, a recommendation from the bidding process would most likely be brought back to the Board in December, 2016 for approval.

The Board had questions about current Fund balance, available green space at WRAMS for physical education programming, science lab space at Lincoln, how the restructuring might affect staff relative to certifications and reassignment, and how the District could spend money on projects when staff members are being asked to do more and more with less.

The administration shared that the current Fund balance is at 14-15%. WRAMS sits on 69 acres of land, so there is plenty of green space available at that location to accommodate the physical education curriculum. Principal Ronald Rasmussen from Lincoln, and Principal Kevin Yeske from East Jr. High did a mock schedule of what science lab space might be necessary, should the 9th graders move to Lincoln. They have determined that there should be ample space due to trimester scheduling and the fact that the CNS9 science curriculum does not require as much lab time as other science classes do. The administration expressed confidence in the fact that there

would be 1.5 years of planning this time around when compared to the restructuring that happened as a decision was made in spring, 2010 to have WRAMS become a 6-7 facility and East became an 8-9 facility beginning with the 2010-11 school year. Staff will have time to process and prepare for the move. Ninth grade teaching staff would likely go to Lincoln, with some potential travel time if they would be needed at WRAMS to teach some grade 8 coursework. Dr. Dickmann shared that she has been in conversation with Kathi Stebbins-Hintz, Director of Instruction, about the development of a staff compensation model that will continue to attract and maintain staff. There will be more information to share on this in the future.

The Board expressed interest in the projects without the need to borrow, and lauded the efforts of the administration to bring proposals to the Board in recent years which allowed the District to pay down significant debt. The administration explained that technology, curriculum, and safety initiatives may be something that the Board will need to consider a referendum for within the next couple of years as 2006 referendum dollars are nearly exhausted.

The only item the administration is requesting Board action on is to begin engaging in the process to select a performance contractor. The Request For Qualifications would not obligate the Board to move forward with performance contracting, but would bring back information about which contractor the Board might work with should it decide to move in that direction. Board members can take their time considering and processing the other restructuring/construction phase items discussed. These items will be brought back by the administration in November for further discussion and possible action by the Board.

Motion by John Benbow, seconded by Katie Medina to have the District engage in a process to select a performance contractor. Motion carried unanimously.

President Krings adjourned the meeting at 5:59 p.m.



John A. Krings – President

Maurine Hodgson – Secretary

Larry Davis – Clerk