

MINUTES
BOARD OF EDUCATION
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 200
April 30, 2016

A Committee of the Whole meeting of the Board of Education of Community Unit School District 200, DuPage County, Illinois, was called to order at Wheaton North High School, 701 W Thomas Road, Wheaton, IL, by Board President Jim Vroman, on Saturday, April 30, 2016, at 8:30 AM.

ROLL CALL

Upon the roll being called, the following were present:

Board Members: Jim Vroman
 Brad Paulsen
 Chris Crabtree
 Joann Coghill (arrived at 8:41)
 Jim Gambaiani
 Barbara Intihar
 Jim Mathieson

Also in Attendance: Dr. Jeff Schuler
 Mr. Bill Farley
 Mrs. Erica Loiacono
 Mr. John Robinson

Perkins+Will Steven Turckes
 Michael Dolter

Legat Patrick Brosnan
 Paul Pessetti

Nicholas & Assoc. Nick Papanicholas Jr.
 Joe Papanicholas

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Steve Turckes led the Board and community in the Pledge of Allegiance.

MOTION

Member Gambaiani moved, Member Crabtree seconded to suspend the rules and adjourn to workshop setting. Upon a roll call vote being taken the vote was: AYE 6, NAY 0. **The motion carried 6-0.**

Business Services

Master Facility Plan Report

Dr. Schuler thanked everyone for coming and distributed a proposed outline for the discussions. The goal is to develop a plan to get from where we are to where we are going.

Round Robin Sharing of Master Facility Plan Summaries by Building

Each Board member provided a summary of the information on the two to three buildings that were assigned to them on the current status of each building and the recommendations from the Master Facility Plan. The summaries included the anticipated cost for any recommended work and information and projected costs from the capital facility needs. Notes were taken on chart paper for each building.

Identify “Components” to Categorize Items

The categories included:

Library Learning Centers

Secured Entries

Specific Middle School Improvements

Board members requested that furniture needs be included in the components.

Discussion focused on the following:

- What work overlaps other work? What work would have to be done together for cost efficiencies?
- Which LLC projects are stand alone and which ones are tied to other projects?
- If some of the suggested work is done now, will it then come off the capital facility list as a priority item which will reduce the costs of the capital needs plan?
- Should the Board prioritize the work first or the funding first and then choose the work that can be done within that dollar amount?
- After reviewing the Executive Summary of the Plan, many of the members of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) said that they believe the two highest priorities are the capital improvements and Jefferson, and furniture was the lowest priority.
- Prioritize individually what is seen as important and then see if that is doable. Get a sense of priorities at this table and then go from there. Talk about financial priorities and then bring the two together.
- Look at Jefferson as the number one thing on the list and look at what the district wants to do academically and what is inhibiting that goal.
- LLC spaces, science spaces at the middle schools, and security
- Probably do not need to replace furniture in every classroom in every building. Staff looks at furniture needs all the time.
- Everything in the report has value but the district cannot do all of it. The impact on learning needs to be looked at and the LLCs, secure entrances, and specific middle school improvements, which would include science classrooms, would be the three areas talked about.

Discussion of how to prioritize the items included:

- Maybe the 21st Educational proposals for Franklin should be a focus similar to the focus on the proposed solutions for the Early Childhood Center.
- Maybe by Elementary, Middle and High School levels
- The first 5 elementary schools listed LLC, building entry, and furniture as their top priorities so maybe those are in one bucket, maybe have 4 or 5 buckets – one bucket would be LLCs, building entries and furniture, one bucket would be Edison and Monroe middle schools, one bucket would be high schools, one bucket would be Jefferson, and one bucket would be Franklin
- Have to be able to justify the selected buckets to be financed by a referendum, it will come down to how it “affects me as a taxpayer” and “how does it affect my kids”

- What is the financial impact based on the average value of a home at \$350,000?
- How much of the \$200 million does the district want to try to do?
- If there is a trust issue in the community, the key piece is to say this is the big number the Board looked at and this is what we brought it down to; need to explain that the Board did not just look at one thing and ask for it.
- It all comes down to what we communicate at the time of the referendum.
- Secure entrances were not always a high priority with the people affected by this
- If secure entrances are chosen as a priority, it may mean that extensive work at Sandburg would have to be done
- Staff may have to look at Sandburg again and see if there are options for doing the secure entrance without doing all of the work there.

Bucket

Elementary School priorities

- Secure entrance (and what does this mean for Sandburg)
- LLC (and what does this mean for Washington)
- Collaborative space small/large group
- Furniture
- Capital Needs

Bucket

Middle School priorities

- Need to look more closely at the dollar figures because it seems like there is duplication in amounts. Look at the projects as grouped, not just as conditions only.
- Are we looking at Franklin because we want to bring it to the Hubble standard or do what really needs to be done now?
- 4 components to the middle school bucket – Franklin capital and Ed improvements (with efficiencies, if any, gained if done together), Monroe capital and Ed improvements (with efficiencies, if any, gained if done together), Edison capital and Ed improvements (with efficiencies, if any, gained if done together), furniture (including Hubble)
- If we are going to say we looked at all options we need to have looked at all options. Should we consider looking at what a new Franklin would cost?
- What does parity mean? Does it make sense to look at new versus renovation with respect to Franklin?
- Need to look at a lesser plan at Franklin like Sandburg to be fair.

Bucket

High School priorities

- South – LLC
- North – tech labs
- Both – furniture
- Both – capital needs
- There will need to be discussion about Jefferson, and the future plans for Woodland and SSC
- Could Jefferson be put onto Whittier, dispose of the SSC and lease space for the offices? Also could Woodland be eliminated? Talk about selling some of the spaces to reduce costs of what we need to do?

Discuss the possible parameters that we may want to consider in developing program scenarios

- Staff can bring information on ways to prioritize the capital work and the condition levels
- How do we prioritize and also how do we make sure we are not in this same position 5 years from now with no money for the next condition 1 items?

Early Learning Center

- There are two big items left to discuss – Early Learning Center and funding of all of this work.
- The early learning program will be discussed further at the May 11 Board meeting.
- Question that we need to come back to on the Early Learning Center:
- Remodeling and Expansion – need to know how many years it would take to complete and what the plan would be to move the students during the work
- What are the operating costs going forward if we use an old building versus savings from costs of a new building?
- If option 1 (renovation/remodeling) is viable we should have the architects and construction people come with a phasing plan, recognizing that costs may inflate if work is phased over several years. Operating costs attributable to phasing need to be included.
- Illinois does not have a formula for deciding the renovation vs. build new decision. The numbers in D200 ECC compare with the Ohio “formula” that if renovation/remodeling costs exceed 2/3 costs of building “new”, default to building new. Why spend \$16M to renovate if we can have a new building for \$19.
- Board cannot just address the physical needs at Jefferson, but also must address the educational issues.
- Board wants to continue to look at all viable options for Jefferson and not just the building issues and they do not want to take the Ed pieces for Jefferson off the table
- Franklin conversation is the same thing with respect to the 2/3 formula when comparing costs of renovation/remodeling vs. building new.
- Owe it to the community to be able to give them enough information to tell them why we decided that renovation was the right thing to do or not to do.
- Based on cost considerations discussed, six Board members felt as though it was no longer worth exploring the option to renovate/expand the current building, and that option should be removed from consideration.
- Harder to explain why the building is going from 28,000 square feet to 50,000 square feet.
- Enrollment numbers drive that facility more than square feet.

Option 2 – find another site

- Acquire property as a learning center site
- Warrenville site – the previous site is off the table due to the location, but maybe the concept of another site that would work for the program similar to the location previously looked at that was sold before the Board could act on it.
- Loretto site – Proceed or not? Board agreed to proceed with consideration of that site
- Loretto and Community Center options would both be in conjunction with another government entity
- Board agreed to keep the Loretto site on the table for consideration and would like to get costs to make that work.
- Request to have two perspectives on that site and welcome Legat and Perkins+Will to develop plans and ideas
- There is a commercial realtor working with staff to help find options for consideration

- Is there an interest in finding out more details about what the Community Center option could look like?
- Are there other two story early childhood centers in the area? – not that anyone knows of
- Could the Loretto site house the early childhood program, the SSC offices and Woodland ? – Yes
- Would like to hear if adding an Early Childhood Center onto Whittier would work and what it would look like and cost
- Whittier property would have water issues
- Whittier, Bower, Lincoln, Sandburg, Washington, and Wiesbrook might have green space to add onto for the early childhood program. All would have water issues and other ground issues and would require water detention areas.
- SSC is on a flood plain.
- Staff will work with the architectural firms to see if those are viable sites.
- This would be one more thing the Board looked at before making a final recommendation.

Community Center Option

- Need more information on the plan. In particular – entrances, multi-floor, not sufficient outdoor green space, safety and security, and traffic flow.
- Like partnering idea but not at this site
- Doubt you could add a secure entrance and would have to use the main entrance to the facility. Play space would have to be indoors due to lack of green space to add play areas.
- Board thinks this site should be eliminated but other options to work with governmental entities is still of interest.

Other Comments

- Diana Rauner is coming to District 200 on May 19. She runs Ounce of Prevention and that organization supported the West Chicago Early Childhood Center. Should we ask her about the funding options through EduCare?
- Staff has asked them if there are any entities that would be interested in funding an early childhood center and were told no.
- EduCare runs the program if they build/fund it, not the school district. That is basically outsourcing the program. It also does not address the special needs population.
- Request to investigate any owners of commercial property that would like to lease property to the district.
- Timing will be important for expressing interest or intent on the Loretto property. The Board might have to publicly express an interest.

Dr. Jeff Schuler summarized that what he heard was that the Board wants to look at 1) a test fit for Loretto, 2) new building options, 3) addition to a current District 200 site, 4) open to another piece of property if one becomes available.

- Is building a new early childhood building on the Woodland site a viable option?
- There is a flood plain issue on the Woodland property that would have to be addressed
- The location of the Woodland property is a deterrent to that option
- Why not sell Woodland now?
- Not a bad idea to talk about at a Board meeting.
- Is eliminating the one classroom on the Early Childhood design worth the savings?
- Staff looked at issues that could drive enrollment in early childhood and determined the number of classrooms needed.

- Preference might be to have one extra classroom rather than just what we need and then come up short of space.
- Why do we not have cost estimates for new construction?
- The numbers for the previous new building were used and we did not request conceptual design and cost estimating.
- The district needs to gather more current cost estimates on new construction based on today's dollars if we are going to continue considering a new building option.
- Do we need to discuss capital funding before we talk about how we fund the needs identified through the educational assessments?
- Should look at middle schools first because they are the highest cost and also would eliminate the elementary students going into construction during the school year then again in middle school.

Funding Topics

- The Board has already been given the viable funding options, what is left that needs to be talked about now?
- The excess money from the budget needs to go into the fund balance so that we have money to fund capital projects moving forward.
- How long would this work take if all proposed projects in the buckets were approved? Do we stage the bonds as the work takes place or are we trying to do this all at once?
- The cost estimators said this will take time to accomplish and it will be a multi-year project.
- Do we raise the money by selling bonds as we need them or all at once?
- If the amount were to be \$150M can the bonds be sold in increments? – Yes
- Are there restrictions on how we do this?
- Yes, there is a time limit from the time of issue of bonds to spend the money. There is no time limit on how soon the bonds have to be sold after a referendum was to be passed.
- Need to develop a dollar amount for the capital improvement program and show how it will be spent over time and how it will be subsidized with capital money from the fund balance. Ask for the entire amount but tax impact would be incremental as the funds are spent.
- Board expressed an interest in asking for all of the money at once but only taking the amount necessary at the time it is needed.
- This is an investment in the community.
- Where will the money come from for a fund for capital projects that is often talked about? Want to make sure we are straight with the community about this. Make certain that it is clearly understood that this is not the last time the district will have to come for money because some day the district will have replacement needs again.
- The Board needs to talk about the amount that is appropriate for the working cash fund balance.
- The district has to either raise the tax rate or start eliminating costs.

Dr. Schuler stated that the Finance Committee will need to look into the future and talk about how we are going to answer the question of how to keep this from happening again. Also, they will need to talk about when this happens and when do we ask the community for input on the options we are putting out there.

- A key piece we need to do with communication is that even if we don't do the referendum, we are still going to have to do some work anyway. If we have to fix without a referendum – where will the money come from? What will be cut to free up money? We need to help the community understand what is at stake.

- Maybe it would be a mistake to single out Jefferson. It is one of the many buildings in this district that all need to be addressed.

Dr. Schuler asked if the Board was comfortable with the Finance Committee beginning the work to develop a plan on how a referendum might look. Also, if it is OK for the Community Engagement Committee to begin looking at companies that can help with conducting public opinion research on potential projects. The Board was in agreement for these two Board committees to begin this work.

- There was a request for data that indicates how District 200 compares to other districts around us on what a homeowner pays on a house valued at \$300,000?
- There was a request that when the plan is rolled out it includes all building sites.
- Moving too quickly or giving wrong or not yet finalized information is not going to help the district. This is a project, not an individual school and the number has to be real.
- An engagement survey would not be conducted until the district is very close to a finalized plan.
- There was a request that the summary of this meeting circle back to the Board to give a nod before there is a meeting of the Community Engagement group to make sure we all agree with what they are being told.
- Staff will do some informational communications to the community that will contain general information about where this is going.
- The message needs to be personal from the Board, not a news article. Lots of emphasis on the message that the Board is looking out for the community.
- What is the most positive timeframe to put this on a ballot? The November election or the April election? The district needs to get guidance on this.
- When we are talking about this big of a plan we cannot be driven by the calendar.
- The April election will also be a school board election and so maybe the consideration should include the possibility of going for the referendum a year from November, however, there is not an election in November 2017.

This topic will be discussed many more times and there will be opportunities to ask more questions, get more clarification and narrow the plan down.

Dr. Schuler and President Vroman thanked everyone for their time and hard work at this workshop. Staff will continue to gather information and report back on all of the topics discussed today.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – Non-Agenda Items

None

ADJOURNMENT MOTION

There being no further business to come before the Board in Open Session, Member Crabtree moved, Member Intihar seconded to adjourn the meeting. Upon a voice call vote being taken, all were in favor and the motion carried 7-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:46 PM.

Chris Crabtree, Secretary

Jim Vroman, President