

APPROVED MINUTES

REPORT OF THE PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR 2006 CAPITAL BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS

Thursday, June 10, 2004
Greenwood

Board Member, Mr. Michael P. Kennedy called the hearing to order at 7:02 p.m. In addition to Mr. Kennedy, the following Board members were present: Ms. Phyllis E. Ettinger, Mr. Thomas G. Grzymiski, Dr. Warren C. Hayman, Ms. Joy Shillman, and Mr. James E. Walker. In addition, Dr. Joe A. Hairston, Superintendent of Schools, staff members, as well as media were present.

Ms. Jung and Mr. Hayden entered the room at 7:04 p.m.

The following speakers addressed the Board:

1. Ms. Lori Ann Valdivia, PTSA President – Advocated for new windows at Stemmers Run Middle School. She presented pictures to the Board of the current conditions of the windows at the school. Ms. Valdivia stated that the exterior of the school is an eye-sore, and the image the school portrays is not positive. Ms. Valdivia noted several windows are boarded up and duct taped together. She stated it is difficult for students to concentrate on classwork when windows cannot be opened in 90° weather, or if windows are opened an individual may endanger themselves on broken glass, broken latches or rusted frames.
2. Mr. C. Michael Johnson, Principal, Stemmers Run Middle School – Concurred with the statements made by the previous speaker. Mr. Johnson desires the school to be safe and conducive to learning. He stated school appearance tells the story. With the community being revitalized, windows would be an excellent addition to the school.
3. Ms. Sharon Ward, Principal, Maiden Choice Center – Requested additional systematic renovations at Maiden Choice Center. Some of the schools current problems are:
 - Building is not designed for special need students (building is 53 years old).
 - Bathrooms and sinks are not handicap accessible.
 - Unsuitable changing facilities.
 - Doors cannot accommodate wheelchairs.
 - Hallways do not include railings or supports to help students.
 - Water fountains are not handicap accessible.
4. Mr. Stephen Lee Levin, Art Instructor and TABCO Representative, Maiden Choice Center – He reiterated the conditions mentioned by the previous speaker. Mr. Levin noted that safety is an issue during routine fire drills. The small doors and existing undersized ramps hinder an appropriate evacuation. Additionally, exterior doors are not wheel chair accessible. Bathrooming and diapering needs of the students are not being met with privacy and dignity. Students are unable to maneuver into appropriate changing spaces. Mr. Levin stated that the school lacks appropriate mobility accommodations to promote independence.

5. Ms. Virginia Setliff, Special Educator, Maiden Choice School – Concurred with the two previous speakers. She noted more students are in wheels chairs and doors are not wheel chair accessible. Changing rooms do not meet the needs of the students. Ms. Setliff stated fire and evacuation drills are extremely difficult, due to unsuitable safety conditions. She appreciated the previous renovations, but requests the Board consider additional renovations to the school to meet the needs of all students.

6. Ms. Charlene Simonds, Cedarmere Elementary School PTA – She serves on the school’s Overcrowding Committee. The school is faced with a serious overcrowding problem. Ms. Simonds stated the school’s enrollment currently stands at 551, while the school’s capacity is only 461. This puts the school at 120% capacity. She noted that according to current projections the school is expected to continue to grow to well over 600 students. She stated that other short terms actions, like boundary changes, may provide some relief, but it is clear that another Northwest area elementary school is needed. Ms. Simonds stated that Cedarmere’s growth projections are not faster than they were in the DeJong study period. She stated that plans and funding for another Northwest area elementary school needs to be a high priority. In the meantime, she requested that relocatable classrooms be better joined to the main building by covered walkways to protect students and faculty. There are also safety problems with respect to transportation by car and buses. The school’s parking lot is not adequate for the growing facility. Finally, Ms. Simonds stated that a separate loop for cars and buses should be created and additional parking added for faculty.

The hearing was concluded at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joe A. Hairston
Secretary-Treasurer

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