

Board of Education – Finance Committee Meeting
Keil Administration Building || First Floor Board Room
August 8, 2022 || 4:00PM

Board Members Present: Dan Oakes (President); Andrew Taylor (Vice President); Regan Lewis; Al Scheider; and Jason Dion

Board Members Absent: Alana Banks and Kevin Collins-Brown

Finance Committee Members Present: Superintendent Dr. Rochelle Clark and Dr. Mike Curry (Chief Operational Officer)

Dr. Curry called the Board of Education/Finance Committee meeting to order at 4:00PM and asked for a motion and second. Vice President Taylor motioned, and President Oakes seconded the motion.

Dr. Curry called for Roll Call:

Present: Taylor, Lewis, Scheider, Oakes, and Dion

Absent: Banks and Dr. Collins-Brown

Public Participation

Jacob Jenkins – Mrs. Sommer called Mr. Jenkins’ name at 4:01PM and he was not present

Jerome Peltz

- Spoke at a regular board meeting previously
- Feels confidence of this Board is at a critical point
- Understands Board has many things on the table at this time
- Feels it is imperative to try and make a priority to re-establish trust between the Board and community

Alan Duesterhaus

- President for Millikin Heights Neighborhood – includes Lincoln Park
- Neighbors have expressed gratitude that a school will not be built in Lincoln Park
- Hopes the Board truly looks at Woodrow Wilson Jr High School as opportunity to gain positive PR to use by renovating it rather than demolishing it

Bret Robertson

- Encourages Board to find new ways to engage with the public
- Form some type of public committee that will allow more in-depth discussion to the committee from the public

Approval of Minutes

Dr. Curry asked for a motion to approve minutes from the May 19th and June 7th finance committee meetings. President Oakes motioned and Vice President Taylor seconded the motion.

Dr. Curry called for Roll Call:

Aye: Taylor, Lewis, Scheider, Oakes, and Dion

Absent: Banks and Dr. Collins-Brown

The minutes from the May 19, 2022 and June 7, 2022 finance committee meetings were approved.

Update – Corporate Property Personal Replacement Tax

- DPS received more than double what was budgeted this previous year
- Concept would be to budget for 70% of what is received this year
- Next year would also be a higher number of receipts than the previous years before
- Budgeted \$5.8 million and ended up with \$11 million

Purchasing Co-Op (Maria Robertson & Kent Metzger)

- Maria Robertson – Community Engagement Specialist
 - Exploration of District to join a purchasing co-op for translation services
 - Student Code of Conduct and Health Guidelines documents are currently translated to Spanish and Arabic
 - In the past, DPS has done this on demand
 - Quote – Rate is based on per words and hours it takes to translate
 - For two documents (Student Code of Conduct and Health Guidelines documents) with a 10% discount would \$17,500
- Kent Metzger – Director of Buildings and Grounds
 - Document provided to committee (Cooperatives and Consortiums Approved for use from the Chief Procurement Office)
 - Vendors enroll in purchasing programs and then they are listed as vendors
 - Vet prices to make sure they are getting competitive numbers
 - Attorney Brian Braun
 - There is an allowance for certain cooperatives bidding, but it requires ISBE approve – not the state of Illinois
 - District cannot access what the City of Decatur accesses
 - City has different statute that applies to them
 - As long as purchase is under \$25,000 and doesn't meet the bidding threshold, or under \$50,000 if it is a construction project of a certain type, District is fine; otherwise, will have to go through Dr. Curry to make sure it is subject to competitive bidding

Discussion – Woodrow Wilson Site – Demolition / Feasibility

- Site that was originally considered for Dennis
- Necessary space (green space, parking for events)
 - Current property was not enough
- To get property to be right size, District would need to purchase adjacent homes
- Background – Interviewed 3 architectural firms
 - All three firms said that by today's standards District should look at 15 – 20 acres to build a K-8 facility (ideal – not etched in stone)
- Woodrow Wilson – 2.14 acres
- Dennis Mosaic and Kaleidoscope – 2.4 acres
 - Properties are small/congested for today's educational process
- Woodrow Wilson Site Feasibility Discussion

- Acquire everything in triangular wedge – would have to acquire 26 properties which would be 7.3 acres – very bottom of where we want to be for a modern K-8 facility
- Problem – Could we acquire properties and what would cost be associated
 - DPS engaged real estate agent, started doing title searches, title work was a mess and there were liens everywhere
- Proximity to railroad track – need to be able to get children safely from west side of track to east side of track – not a pathway for safe travel under the railroad tracks
- Logistical issues – would have to gut the building and recreate
- Timeline to have expenditure made is September 2024
- Site was discounted due to these parameters
- Far less expensive to go with new structure over Woodrow Wilson
- Out of options with west end – no land option for Dennis for this time frame
- Committee member Taylor – fine with moving forward with new Dennis under the normal process – community meeting, hold referendums, and try to get done through the normal process
- Take into consideration that there are certain limits to what District can bond to raise funds for project
 - Just over \$30 million left
- Demolition of current Dennis has to be part of the conversation
- Where are we at with Durfee – still working with the City of Decatur

Discussion – Updates to MacArthur High School

- Football and concession stand schedule update:
 - Originally planned to receive bids August 9, 2022
 - Contractors too busy to bid for August 9, 2022
 - Extended bidding period to August 30, 2022 and able to pick up some bidders
 - None could commit to August 9, 2022
 - Received confirmation from two bidders and potentially seven others
 - Bid would be awarded at first Board meeting in September

Updates on American Rescue Plan / ESSER III

- Only other thing had left on renovation list was American Dreamer
 - Supposed to have renovations that included adding on gym
 - \$2.4 – \$2.5 million for initial project – once we started looking at materials the cost jumped to almost \$10 million
 - Not a project that District could take with that amount of money at that time
 - What do we now do with the needs of American Dreamer since not building a new Dennis?
- Dreamer – need to plan for more space for middle school
- Vice President Taylor – Build brand new school at Oak Grove
- Dr. Clark asked for clarification
 - Looking towards families, administration, and staff to determine whether or not a new building is viable over a renovation
- Due to being on a short timeline, need to have another conversation in the very near future
- Talk to Administrator at Dreamer – Discuss whether the best thing to do is relocate to a new building or can the current building be salvaged?
- Recommended to have more discussion at the August 23, 2022 Board meeting

- Discussion of grant
 - Grant was approved for the construction of a new Dennis school to alleviate over crowding to provide larger spaces for student separation (lunch, physical education, etc.)
 - Approximately \$38 million was ear-marked for the construction of a new Dennis Lab School
 - Would have to change parameters of grant and work with ISBE for approval
 - Need to have a plan in place and submit to ISBE by the end of September
 - Within the next 2 weeks, Administration needs to have a good idea of what needs to be submitted to ISBE
 - Programming with Architects could take 2-4 weeks
- If we renovate, what are allowable expenditures from the ESSER grant?
 - Most of funds were allocated towards new building or instructional needs
 - Main focus – response and intervention from COVID-19 (loss of learning, anything that mitigates the impact of COVID)
- Board Member Scheider recommended having an emergency finance committee meeting before the August 23, 2022 Board meeting
 - Dr. Curry stated this could be discussed and reframe it as a Facilities Meeting

Dr. Curry asked for a motion to adjourn. President Oakes motioned, seconded by Vice-President Taylor. The meeting adjourned at 5:40PM.