

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL BOND WORK SESSION OF THE MARSHALL BOARD OF EDUCATION HELD ON MONDAY, APRIL 12, 2021 AT 5:00 PM IN-PERSON IN THE MARSHALL OPPORTUNITY HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM

PRESENT: LINDSEY, NICHOLSON, M. DAVIS, GAMBLE, LANKERD, R. DAVIS

ABSENT: MIDDLETON, WILLIAMS

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by President Lindsey. A moment of silence was observed.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The pledge of allegiance was led by Trustee Lankerd.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Moved by M. Davis, supported by Lankerd, that the agenda be approved as presented. A roll-call vote unanimously carried the motion.

PUBLIC COMMENT

President Lindsey called for any members in the audience to address the Board on agenda items only. There were no comments.

ACTION ITEM – BOARD PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

CONTRACTING WITH MASB FOR BOARD GOVERNANCE TRAINING AND STRATEGIC PLANNING GUIDANCE SERVICES: Approve contracting with MASB for Board Governance Training and Strategic Planning Guidance Services.

Superintendent Davis explained that Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) training would be separately contracted.

Board members asked questions and commented as follows:

- How long will the training take with MASB? – *three to four months; likely through December 2021. It will depend on the consultant's recommendation and availability.*
- What is the selection process for choosing a consultant and will they have DEI in their background? – *a list of questions will be developed and the questions could include a couple related to DEI when the district selects the consultant to go with.*
- Can a few Board members be involved in the selection process for the consultant? – *Board members could be a part of the selection process. The Board president will query Board members to determine who wants to be part of the selection process; the number of Board members will be limited to three as to avoid a quorum.*

- When will an RFP go out for DEI training? – *the hope is to have a recommendation by June.*
- The Truth & Titus Collective, located in Battle Creek, and Mid Atlantic Equity Consortium (MAEC) should be considered as potential vendors for DEI training.

Moved M. Davis, supported by Lankerd, that Action Item – Board Professional Development be approved as presented. A roll-call vote unanimously carried the motion.

BOARD TOPIC

POTENTIAL BOND REVIEW: Superintendent Davis welcomed Todd McDonald, Principal/Chief Operations Officer from CSM Group; and David Martin, Director of Client Services/Chief Operations Officer from Kingscott. As Mr. McDonald and Mr. Martin made their way to the podium, Superintendent Davis explained priorities/projects identified were vetted by the Facility Needs Assessment Committee. The projects have been reviewed at community forums and input from the public was sought; and cost projections for each have been estimated. Based on the identified priorities a package of projects was developed for a November election bond vote or for a future election date. He added a few projects identified may be able to be accomplished through alternate funding not associated with a bond; and that a timeline associated with pertinent election dates would be reviewed. Additionally, the idea of putting an elementary school adjacent to Albion College's Washington Gardner Building is being mentioned often in the community with communication including Albion College's offer of land to the district to build the elementary school on. The district is seeking feedback from parents in the Albion community that have elementary level students in the school system; it will be done by direct mailer with a week and a half to two-week response timeline.

Mr. Martin led the discussion reviewing the project list for a \$40M bond package, including two options; estimated costs; millage extension for Marshall with Albion millage equal to 2.37 mils, an amount Albion was paying, that dropped off their taxes two years ago; bond draw downs and what that means to costs and interest; and timelines.

Board members asked questions and provided comments as follows:

- A focus group needs to be formed as it would be helpful for the process.
- Athletic projects need to be equitable.
- Want to see the flooding issues at the high school softball complex fixed.
- Would like money applied towards technology.
- Fixtures, finishes and equipment should be taken care of outside the bond since these items depreciate; funding should be able to be found elsewhere.
- Air-conditioning at the middle school needs to be considered – *it would cost over \$2M to accomplish this; it is up to the Board to decide if this is something that is more pertinent to address in the bond than what was proposed.*
- Take this to the public to ask if there is anything that should be identified in the bond that is not currently – *community forums sought input from the public and the Facility Needs Assessment Committee has already identified and prioritized items.*

- 25% of the bond is applied towards athletics that has lesser needs – *this was previously explained; athletics need to be in the bond as it is a means of selling the bond and getting votes from the community.*
- Based on community forums, \$40M seemed to be the right number for the bond – *the bond amount can be whatever number the Board wants the number to be; this was an estimate based on what the community seemed to be comfortable with.*
- What are we trying to accomplish at this meeting? Want to have people be part of this process; this was not communicated out to the public; want input from people.
- The public will be confused if what was presented is shared with them as written.
- Is it the right year to be going to the community for a bond?
- Multiple forums and surveys have been done to identify what the communities want. At some point you take what has been said into consideration and move forward.
- It does not feel like proper community outreach has been accomplished. Meetings in both communities need to occur to share here is where we are at, what we are thinking and ask the public what their thoughts are. There is value in having in-person meetings. Take feedback, synthesize and move forward.
- When you go to the community it will be helpful for the Board to bring its options. A starting point is needed to generate comments.
- Craft options with a lot more detail and meet with the communities to present them; ask for their likes and dislikes. Have some recordings that can be shared with everyone and then synthesizing the data gathered to present to the Board for the Board to make a final option decision.
- The Board should not discount the work that has already occurred. If a different committee is going to be formed, it should not throw out the information that has already been pulled together from the forums.
- There are several large groups that have not been spoken to and the options presented are not from the information received in the survey.
- The information presented is weighted on the facility assessment needs. The Board has the right to add something to the bond or something separate. \$40M was what was arrived at, it doesn't mean that this is the minimum or maximum amount. It's up to the Board to determine the projects that are most critical and sell it to the community in open forums, so the community understands it. The district can continue to do workshops, or the Board can make a committee, identify needs, present to the Board and make recommendations.
- The Board will determine its desire to move forward with a bond vote at the May 24, 2021 Board session as it sounds like the Board is not at a point to vote yes to a bond package, rather, it wants to continue conversation of "wants."
- Taking bond documents to Treasury for approval does not commit to a bond vote; it does commit somewhat to the scope of the bond.
- We are in the middle of a pandemic; discussion needs to occur openly if going for a bond; is even a good idea?
- Timelines for a potential bond vote have been presented; it is up to the Board to determine pursuing a bond or not.
- What are the costs to the district for a special election?

- It is hard to communicate with people during a pandemic; even if there were events to attend social distancing makes it difficult.
- The Board is not ready yet to move forward; need to figure out how to get there as a Board.
- Would like the Board to narrow options down to two and present them informally in a comfortable atmosphere to groups of 25 or less.
- We need to make the goal, what are we going to do to move forward, or are we going to continue feeling like we don't have enough information? Decide or have an end game that if we don't get all the input we are prepared to move ahead.
- Doesn't feel like options have been explored enough. More conversations are needed.
- Decide where the new elementary school will be located; this is needed to gain support.
- Information shared with the public needs to be in a simple format.
- Is money being put into buildings because of feelings/nostalgia?
- Need a plan for MOHS if money is going to be spent on the building; explore options of partnering with other institutions to make MOHS something that will benefit the whole community.
- Does MOHS have to be saved?
- Historically, the district has a vision for the MOHS facility and work continues on this vision. It has successful connection with ECEC and KCC. The MOHS building is worth the investment.
- The Crull and Harrington buildings are not worth the investment.
- If the Board needs to decide sooner rather than later and then back its decision regarding the location of the new elementary school.
- The Board will need to make a decision by the May 24th meeting in order to meet timeline requirements should the Board decide to pursue a November bond election vote.
- What is presented to treasury is detailed with costs associated with each project.

President Lindsey will reach out to see who on the Board would like to serve on a Board Bond Subcommittee.

PUBLIC COMMENT

President Lindsey called for any members of the audience to address the Board.

Raymond Barclay spoke as a representative of Albion College; he indicated he is looking forward to working with the district.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

There were none.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:16 p.m.

LISA EYRE, RECORDING SECRETARY