

**WEST WINDSOR-PLAINSBORO REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES**



<u>BOE Committee:</u> Anthony Fleres (Chair) Louisa Ho	<u>Administration:</u> David Aderhold Larry Shanok Lawrence LoCastro	<u>Guest/Public:</u> Martin Smith Rick Cave Michele Kaish
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August 13, 2013

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM at Central Office. Yibao Xu was absent. Topics covered included:

One-On-One Device Practices: The pilot will place devices in four classrooms at each of the grade 4-5 schools. Key elements in the pilot process were equity/access/reliability/professional development; each of these were discussed. At other districts, providing devices to students has shown that the need for replacement devices varies between 10 and 20 % of the devices. A technology memo outlined the four major approaches to dealing with lost/broken devices: the district could assume the full cost; families could be asked to pay an annual fee, perhaps about \$40; much as for lost textbooks today, parents could be financially responsible for the cost of a replacement; and finally, an insurance company might sell parents or the district an insurance policy, an estimate of \$65 was noted. Discussion centered on what would be done if a family requested to opt out of financial responsibility; summer use of devices; and what would be the message to parents in September.

Village Expansion: Two practical aspects of the addition were discussed. Now that planning has largely been completed, the architect has produced an updated estimate of the project's cost: \$13,226,887. The only funding action taken to date was to pull \$5 million from capital reserve in the 2013-14 budget to fund initial costs. Recently the state announced Round Four of their Regular Operating District grant program; the program provides 40 cents on the dollar of approved projects, but the 60 cents must be identified as to source of funds upon state approval: annual budget; capital reserves, or bonds. The district has submitted 58 projects to the State of New Jersey before the September 4, 2013 deadline. It is unknown how many may be approved, but capital reserve would be an attractive source of the local share.

The district's active Community Education program did not provide direct funding of the space used around the district all these years; this aided in building a fund balance in the Community Education account. This balance can be used in support of Community Education; with Community Education having a significant presence in the addition and throughout the district the Committee felt that \$4 million of the fund balance should be used for the addition. If the addition comes in at exactly the architect's estimate, the project funding would be \$9,226,887 from capital reserve and \$4,000,000 from Community Education's fund balance. This would leave capital reserve dollars to utilize for some Round Four ROD grant projects. This would also leave in excess of one million dollars in the fund balance of Community Education for future use. It is significant that this construction is being done without the issuance of bonds.

The second addition topic related to staying on top of construction activity. While it has been decided not to incur the expense of a construction manager for the project, it was decided to obtain additional construction services, much as was done successfully during the 2006 Referendum projects. The \$13,226,887 estimate for the project includes \$688,500 architect's fee and \$220,000 for additional construction services.

Davis Group: The Superintendent described last school year's "Eyes on the Door" pilot at the two grade 4-5 schools. The current thinking is to extend this through grades 4-8 in the coming school year. To do so in a timely manner the district could use a contract that is available through its participation in Ed-Data with the Davis Group. The parameters of this effort were discussed and the Committee supports extension of "Eyes on the Door" to the four schools in the 2013-14 school year.

Review Agenda Items: The Committee supports the agenda including another of the district's periodic sales of SRECs – Solar Renewable Energy Certificates– the district receives one for each 1,000 kilowatt hours its solar panels on the high schools generate. From earlier sales the district has received \$140,501.68. The current sale is likely to add about \$15,000 to the total.

2014-2015 Budget Progress: This is the time of year that suggestions impacting the next budget cycle should be discussed. The Committee felt that the present approach is working well. Each year it is "tweaked" a bit and it is working. The administration should continue with the 2014-15 budget process.

2012-2013 Audit: The audit is still at an early stage but the tasks addressed to date have gone smoothly. Work will accelerate as the district and its auditor work toward meeting the December state deadline for submission.

Summer Construction: The summer period is rather a short one, especially when construction is involved. A variety of projects are pressing on their August 23rd substantial completion dates. The largest, most complicated project is the boiler, unit ventilator project at Dutch Neck School. All involved are working to minimize the impact on teachers and subsequently on children. Projects this year include: air handler systems, roof work and LED corridor lighting at Community; paving at Wicoff; Project Use at High School South; roof related repairs, especially as an aftermath of Storm Sandy at High School North; and replacement of the chiller at Village.

Transportation: Transportation and technology are progressing with the annual placement of bus passes into the Infinite Campus system. The most trying road condition for the first half of the school year is the construction on Old Trenton Road. This impacts traffic throughout that area. Transportation has devised route changes that will limit the impact as much as possible. Bus routes changes will focus on children within the impacted area. These changes will be made for the entire school year. To facilitate the late runs, temporary runs will be made to the impacted area for the September-December time frame.

ROD Grants: 58 projects have been submitted for consideration. There has been no indication from the State on when feedback on the applications can be expected. Thinking positively, the district needs to focus on planning for the local share. Actions to make capital reserve available will save the district significantly, as for approved projects, the State will pay 40 cents on the dollar.

November BOE Election: Each county recently announced ballot order of candidates for the board election. Before the November election, the district conducted this drawing. Under the November election process the district plays no role in the ballot order.

Committee Meeting Dates: Several dates were chosen for the coming meetings: September 17, October 21, November 19 and December 10, 2013.

ASBO's Certificate of Excellence: Last Friday afternoon August 9th, the district received an email that the district's June 30, 2012 Comprehensive Financial Report has been given a Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting. This marks the fifth straight year the financial statements of the district earned that certificate from the Association of School Business Officials International. Last year only twenty districts in New Jersey received it.

NJQSAC: This year the district moves from the annual State QSAC requirements to the even more comprehensive every three-year examination. Considerable effort within the district will be spent on this over the next few months. The state will examine district practices in Instruction & Program, Fiscal Management, Operations management, Personnel, and Governance.

Long Range Facility Plan 2014: The State has informed all districts that they will have to formulate a new Long Range Facility Plan in 2014. The district's present LRFP was to be valid until 2016 under previous rules; the 2011 LRFP was to be valid for five years.

The meeting adjourned at 9:02P.M.

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, September 17, 2013, 6:30 PM @ Central Office

Topic for Next Meeting

Review Agenda Items
Audit
2014-15 budget
Round Four ROD grants

Future Topics:

Impact of Recent Legislation
Policies