

# Meeting Notes

**Project:** Newberg School District Bond Planning

**Date:** December 12, 2019

**Subject:** Bond Development Committee Meeting

**Attendees:** Joe Morelock, Nikki Fowler, Gregg Koskela, Larry Hampton, Luke Neff, Shanna Andres, AJ Schwanz, Scott Murphy, Casey Petrie, Trey Watt, Mark Brown, Jennifer Esmond, Jeri Turgesen, Don Griswald, Brittany Magallanes, Carr Biggerstaff, Shannon Buckmaster, Ann Ziehl, Mindy Allison, Brandon Ramey, Lydia Keuler, Rob Daykin, Jeremy Wright, Karina Ruiz, and Elisa Warner

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## Review of Polling Results

Jeremy Wright with Wright Public Affairs presented an overview of the results from the recent community poll of likely Newberg voters. Key findings are summarized below.

- 50% of respondents felt that Newberg School District’s facilities are in poor to fair condition.
- The “out of the gate” reaction to a hypothetical \$150 M bond proposal (without additional detail) revealed 52% of respondents in support.
- Support for the bond was lower among high-propensity voters, as well as among those without children in the district (whether past, present or future). The most common reason given for *not* supporting the bond was an aversion to new taxes. Learning more about the bond did not seem move the needle significantly for these prospective voters.
- Four (4) different bond scenario amounts were polled: \$120 M, \$135 M, \$150 M, and \$170 M. The highest level of support was for a \$120 M bond or 93 cents per \$1,000 (59% in support). \$170 M was only supported by 40% of respondents. The sweet spot appears to be in the \$120-150 M range.
- School safety improvements received high levels of support, as well as replacing/updating systems (HVAC, plumbing, etc.). There did not seem to be any “poison pills” that were highly divisive.
- At the end of the survey, after hearing the associated messaging, overall bond support rose by 5%.
- No real difference was observed between a November vs. May election (in terms of likelihood of the bond passing). There is no longer a double-majority requirement for May elections.

## Questions

- Committee members asked whether all the identified project categories had been polled. The poll was conducted in early November using the latest information available at that time. Most (but not all) categories were addressed. The purpose of this poll was to perform a “pulse check” on where the community currently stands. The next poll will have a narrowed focus and specifically ask about projects on the proposed bond package to help craft messaging strategies.
- Jeremy Wright pulled up polling results for a few additional questions. He noted that upgrades to athletic and play areas did not poll as well as certain other items.

## Proposed Bond Scenario

- Piper Jaffray developed a revised bond package scenario of \$140 M spread out over 22 years to maintain a taxpayer cost of less than \$2.00 per \$1,000.
- A committee member asked if the District would need to decide how the bond would be financed in advance of the bond. It was clarified that voters just approve bond amount, not how it is financed.

## Build a Bond Package Results

Karina Ruiz summarized the results the “build a bond package” exercise conducted at the previous Committee meeting. Karina shared proposed Tier I projects based on the number of groups that identified those projects as high-priority. Karina explained that the Tier I list is not final; the Committee has the ability to discuss potential modifications. A list of the proposed Tier I core bond package is shown on the following page.

Core Bond Package	
PROJECT	ROM COST
Edwards Expansion and Modernization ( <i>consolidation of multiple items</i> *)	\$ 17,192,204
Dundee Replacement with New 350-Student Elementary	\$ 34,300,000
Safety and Security Upgrades District-wide	\$ 3,142,704
Construction of Covered Play Structures (2k SF each) at Four (4) Elementary Schools	\$ 1,168,544
Construction of Covered Play Structures (4k SF each) at both Middle Schools	\$ 1,168,544
CTE/STEAM Improvements at Newberg HS (+ <i>greenhouse</i> *)	\$ 19,800,000
CTE/STEAM Improvements at Middle and Elementary Schools	\$ 4,000,000
Maintenance Improvements: \$18 M out of total need of \$61M*	\$ 18,000,000
Catalyst Expansion	\$ 8,700,000
Resiliency Upgrades	\$ 1,736,501
21st Century Learning Upgrades	\$ 8,200,000
Science Lab Upgrades at NHS	\$ 5,700,000
Special Education Enhancements	\$ 2,400,000
Technology Upgrades*	\$ 2,500,000
<b>Subtotal:</b>	<b>\$ 128,008,497</b>
<b>District Contingency (5%)</b>	<b>\$ 6,400,425</b>
<b>Subtotal:</b>	<b>\$ 134,408,922</b>
<b>Bond Costs (4%)</b>	<b>\$ 5,376,357</b>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$ 139,785,279</b>
<i>*Add, adjustment or consolidation of project category selected by majority of groups.</i>	

Following the presentation of the proposed Tier I core package, committee members offered comments and clarifying question (as summarized below).

- A committee member asked how the cost estimates were generated. Karina explained that the figures were developed by a professional cost estimating firm. The prices shown include direct construction costs, soft costs, escalation, contingencies, and bond costs.
- A committee member asked who will ultimately decide on what will be included in the bond. Karina explained that the Bond Development Committee makes a recommendation to the Newberg School Board, but the board has the ultimate authority in deciding what goes into the bond package. The Committee will also identify “Tier II” projects in case additional funds become available through bond premiums, grants, etc.
- A committee member asked for further clarification on how the preliminary Tier I list was generated. Joe Morelock explained that the draft Tier I core bond package was based on the group prioritization work performed at the November meeting. The Steering Committee looked for

commonalities across groups when narrowing the list of projects. Furthermore, the Steering Committee had to ensure that the project list did not exceed the price point of \$140 M (including District contingency and bond costs). The core bond package is not set in stone; it represents a starting point for discussions. The intent is to give the Bond Development Committee something to work from.

- A committee member expressed concern over whether the District would have sufficient operational funds to staff proposed CTE program additions/expansions. Joe Morelock confirmed that the District would provide instructors in support of any new/expanded CTE programs. In addition to operational funds, there is the opportunity to use Student Success Act and/or Measure 98 funds for this purpose.
- Noting that the draft core bond package combines certain projects (e.g. the Edwards expansion package), a committee member asked if project elements were broken out or combined in the polling questions. Jeremy Wright clarified that the polling provided broader characterizations and did not generally break out project elements.
- A committee member asked if the Edwards expansion item (in the core package) includes the cost of relocating the District office. Karina clarified that the number shown does not include relocation of the District office; this is listed as a separate project.
- There was some discussion on how project contingencies are assigned. There are multiple layers of contingency (e.g. construction contingency, district contingency) built into the project cost estimates to provide a cushion for unforeseen conditions, etc.

### **Tension Exercise**

Committee members were presented with the opportunity to debate the pros and cons of projects that did not make it onto the draft “Tier I” list. Karina Ruiz displayed each of the project categories (one by one), and asked Committee members align themselves with a pro or con position by moving to a designated side of the room. Committee members were then asked to argue their position to the larger group. Committee members were also allowed to switch sides if persuaded by the arguments presented. A summary of pro/con arguments offered by Committee members is listed below. The number in parentheses following each pro/con sub-header represents the final number of people that aligned themselves with each respective position at the conclusion of all arguments.

### **District office at Edwards**

#### Pros (7)

- We value the lives and safety of the district’s administrators. We need to afford our District leaders the same level of safety as other staff.
- A large portion of the current building is underutilized due to safety concerns.
- The current building cannot accommodate space for community partnerships (which is a priority for the District).
- The expansion of the Edwards building presents an opportunity to address administrative

space needs head on rather than continuing to ignore the growing operational and safety concerns.

- The Edwards campus is centrally located – this is important in terms of equity.
- Although it is true that the site is constrained, a multi-level building could be constructed to minimize the footprint of the addition.

#### Cons (10)

- The school site for Edwards is already constrained. Would Dundee make more sense as a location?
- Construction of new administrative space is typically unpopular as a bond selling point.
- Would a land exchange be an option for relocation? For example, sell the current building/land and construct on Renee field?
- The price tag seems excessively high – is there a way to reduce the cost and/or scope but still meet needs?

#### **New synthetic turf fields at NHS**

#### Pros (6)

- Cost-effective way to benefit every child and community member and increase level of community support.
- Allows more students to engage in physical activity on a daily basis, even during inclement weather.
- Supports school activities as well as extracurricular and/or club sports.
- Lack of turf options means that teams are having to schedule games and/or practices later into the evening hours, affecting family schedules, sleep, etc.
- Newberg is reportedly the only 6A district that only has access to one turf field.
- Kids of all ages use the turf field – not just high school students.
- A large number of students in the overall community participate in school, parks and rec, and/or club sports. Softball is particularly popular – this would help expand opportunities for female athletes.
- Cost of maintaining turf field is likely less than a grass field.

#### Cons (11)

- Until the District can pay for athletic costs, this does not seem like a worthy investment.
- The number of students that use turf fields is relatively small compared to the overall number of students in the District. High schoolers are only required to take on year of PE. Only a small percentage of students reportedly participate in high school athletics.
- Providing another turf field in Newberg is not necessarily the school district's responsibility – this would be a city resource. Consider community partnership options (e.g. City of Newberg).
- Who will pay the maintenance costs for the turf field (especially considering that they will be used mostly by outside groups)?

### Edwards drop-off/pick-up lanes reconfiguration

#### Pros (13)

- Drop-off/pick-up procedures at Edwards are very chaotic and staff-intensive. Parents are not able to drive up directly to a drop-off/pick-up lane. Students are released at multiple sides of the building.
- Due to the dual language program, students are transported to Edwards from all across the district (heavier transportation needs).

#### Cons (4)

- Pick-up/drop-off is problematic at every school in the district. Are conditions worse at Edwards? From an equity standpoint, why prioritize Edwards over other schools?
- Could some of the project costs be absorbed as part of the overall expansion?

### New synthetic turf field at MVMS or CVMS

Although listed separately, discussion overlapped between the pros/cons of providing this resource at either middle school. There was slightly stronger support for providing a turf field at CVMS vs. MVMS (by 2 members). The counts below represent the final tally.

#### Pros (11)

- Would be a district-wide resource.
- Mountain View's field is reportedly worse than CV's field. However, both fields are a muddy mess in the winter.
- Mountain View's building needs a lot of work. It would be nice to give them something in the bond.
- A turf field at MVMS could serve as a resource for NHS as well.
- Exterior lighting is poor at exterior fields. Good lighting would expand the hours of use.
- Consider giving up the covered areas at the middle schools and investing in a turf field instead. Consult with middle school teachers and/or administrators to determine whether a covered play area would be more utilized than a turf field (during school hours for P.E. instruction).
- It seems that a covered area would have less value at the middle school level than at the elementary level. A covered area does not always shield students from the rain. It would likely not be large enough to support a double-sized P.E. class, limiting its use for instruction.
- Even if new turf field(s) is provided at NHS, cannot guarantee that MVMS would have regular access (proximity, competition for resources, etc.).
- Would serve as a resource for helping the school meet their minimum required P.E. minutes.

*Note: There was interest among many Committee members in possibly swapping the two (2) covered play areas at the middle schools for one (1) artificial turf field at one of the middle schools.*

*Approximately 11 Committee members in attendance expressed support of this idea in an informal poll via show of hands.*

#### Cons (6)

- If a new turf field is provided at NHS, one may not be needed at MVMS. A new field at NHS could also serve as a resource for Mountain View.

- The District is currently meeting minimum required P.E. minutes at the middle school level. In light of this, the P.E. minutes argument is less compelling.

### **PE facilities improvements at NHS**

#### Pros (15)

- Would address Title IX issues at the high school, particularly in the locker rooms. Under the last bond, the boys' locker room was expanded, whereas the girls' locker room only received minor upgrades.
- Multi-use function of P.E. facilities is advantageous. The gym serves as a large gathering space that serves as a district and community resource.
- Need to provide safe environments for students. Several active leaks in the gym currently (however, this would be covered in maintenance package).
- The weight room is undersized. It is used every period, as well as before/after school. There are routinely 60 students in the weight room at any one time.
- Does the gym have seismic deficiencies? If so, this presents major safety concerns. Large groups of students in P.E. classes at any given time – up to 120.
- Invest in improvements now to avoid higher costs later. Band-aid approach is not a long-term solution.
- Need to have a safe reunification site in the event of a natural disaster.
- The gym is sometimes used for the annual graduation event (during inclement weather).

#### Cons (2)

- Do not have enough information on what would be included in this scope and why it is needed.
- This is a costly category. Can it be broken out only cover select items (e.g. Title IX, life safety concerns)? Might support select components of this category if given the option.

### **Athletic Facilities improvements at MVMS**

#### Pros (0)

No committee members selected a “pro” position for this item. They asked District administrators for additional information on why these improvements were needed. District administrators offered the following information:

- Potential equity issue between the two middle schools. MVMS's gym is 1/3 the size of CVMS's gym.
- MVMS only has two P.E. teaching stations in the gym (vs. three at CVMS).
- The wood floor in the gym is in disrepair with raised areas.
- MVMS's enrollment will likely increase if the District has to redraw boundaries in the future to alleviate overcrowding at CVMS.

#### Cons (17)

- Would floor issue be addressed under maintenance budget item?

### Health clinic access at NHS

#### Pros (14)

- Would expand access to existing clinic at NHS. Some work was completed recently in association with Providence and the Wellness Collective. The proposed improvements would expand access to community members as well as students.
- The school received a School Health Service Planning Grant that is funding a study next year to assess health care needs among students. If sufficient need is demonstrated, the District will be eligible for \$65,000 annually to cover staffing costs in partnership with a medical provider. Consequently, operational costs would be very low.
- Strong community partnerships are already in place. The District would be investing in a proven program with demonstrated success.
- Would provide both medical and physical health services. Preventative health and early intervention services are vitally needed among adolescents.
- Lifelong health behaviors are established during adolescence. Important to start kids on the right track. This can set off a positive lifelong trajectory for improved health.
- Access to health care is an equity issue.

#### Cons (3)

- No specific cons were mentioned. However, some Committee members questioned whether there might be a less expensive way to support this endeavor (e.g. including it as part of the Catalyst expansion). It was clarified that even if the clinic was moved to another facility, costs would be similar.

### Voting Exercise (Tiger Bucks)

Following the tension exercise, Committee members had the opportunity to “vote” for their top projects using “Tiger Bucks.” Each committee member received several Tiger Bucks. An envelope was provided for each of the discussed projects. Committee members could distribute their Tiger Bucks as desired, spreading them out amongst multiple different projects, or placing them all in one project. Results from the “Tiger Bucks” voting exercise are summarized below:

- PE facilities improvements at NHS – 27
- Health clinic access at NHS – 21
- District office at Edwards – 13
- Edwards drop-off/pick-up lanes reconfiguration – 13
- New synthetic turf fields at NHS – 5
- New synthetic turf field at MVMS – 3
- New synthetic turf field at CVMS – 3
- Kitchen upgrades – 1
- PE Facilities improvements at one MS – 1
- Replacement of existing turf field at NHS – 0 (N/A)



**Next Meeting**

- The next meeting is scheduled on January 7, 2019. The purpose of this meeting will be to refine the core package and develop a list of Tier II projects.

These meeting notes are a record. If there are any errors and/or omissions in the foregoing notes, please advise our office immediately; otherwise these notes will be considered correct and complete as written.

Submitted by

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