

SCN Meeting Minutes

February 18, 2020

Open Forum with Dr. Remy

- District is in process of pulling feedback together from facilities planning feedback
- Predesign work will begin soon

Elementary Playground Plans

Paul Bobek (CFO) and Christine Maduro (Director of Operations)

There is currently no replacement cycle for playground equipment. Parent groups have been ultimately responsible for purchasing, maintaining equipment. The district believes this should be the responsibility of the district.

Baseline playground concepts are being designed. WDMCS is redirecting resources from Public Education and Recreation Levy (PERL), which has historically funded WDMCS Community Education.

This idea has been presented to the board as a discussion item, no action has been taken at this time. Board directed them to seek feedback from SCN.

Maduro stated that a consultant did a condition/age assessment for each playground in WDMCS. The stated intent was to responsibly plan cash flows for replacements.

They asked consultant to consider age of student and surfacing (looking at rubber surfacing instead of woodchips to be more inclusive)

Packets include suggestions for playground layouts, some of these structure types have already been put into use at Clive and WH and have been well received

Sally Crowley - WR parent - current structure is six years old (does not need to be replaced)

Each building would have one primary structure and then some ancillary structures.

This is very early in discussions. If PTA wants to contribute to the playground (gaga pits, etc), will they be forfeiting money from the district?

We do not have a reserve built up yet, if schools want to accelerate the plans for their playground replacement.

Dr Remy stated if PTAs want to contribute “early,” (prior to proposed timeline), the timelines would be adjusted.

Partial amounts will not be given by district if PTAs want to replace sooner than timeline directs.

The consultant’s recommendation will direct what the timeline is.

Crowley asked why should we trust the district to handle this now since it’s never been done before?

Remy stated she appreciates the board saying they need to be responsible for all the assets.

Stephanie Horak stated she appreciates the district taking responsibility for this because the parent group is not what it once was at her school (Crestview).

Parent questions:

Will funding be given per student or per building? Maduro stated this is good feedback to consider.

If a PTO replaced early, but the surfacing was not changed, would the district handle the installation of the poured rubber material - could the surfacing be poured around it? Is there a recommended vendor that buildings can use that would be in the best interest of the district/parent group?

How much does the City of WDM contribute if playgrounds are considered part of a City park? Crossroads and Western Hills are considered part of a city park. City has not offered funding for that in the past. Possible discussion point.

Maduro stated blacktop and drainage issues are part of the 10-year plans, fencing, etc, not the playground project under discussion.

Parent asked if currently broken parts can be fixed. Maduro stated that replacement parts are not available from manufacturers. District's hands are tied for broken pieces at this point.

Parent: I need more specifics to take back to parent groups. They have been told for years they've been responsible and have taken on that responsibility (so this would be a big change).

Paul: This is not perfect, not complete.

Parent: I appreciate the district taking responsibility for this

Parent: Kids at FM are asking for replacements already

Staff: Supplies - balls, jump ropes, containers - will continue to be building responsibility. Budgeting includes inflation factor, but sites will need ground improvements. Surfacing would be for required "fall zone" - pricing does not include replacing all wood chips. Replacement cycle would be replicated as time goes on. Estimated useful life of equipment is 15-20 years

Parent: Are swing sets an option? Staff: Swings are not included as optional equipment currently, more inclusive elements are always recommended

Parent: Will parents and building staff get to choose what is put in as ancillary equipment? Staff: Each building will get input.

District is not looking at changing how buildings operate for recess, etc

Parent: I would like all structures to be numbered on the spreadsheet, preschools to be considered.

Parent noted that equipment should be equitable

Parent stated that equity should not look the same everywhere

Parent stated that "buildings that have "money-bag" parents can not apply for grants. This is not about equity, it's about punity."

Parent stated that buildings with decimated parent groups do not have anyone to apply for grants.

Parent stated your teacher leader is responsible for applying for grants in each building.

Time was given for feedback in small groups to be written.

Budget Projections

Paul Bobek, CFO

(This presentation was previously shared with the board)

Overview of Funds

- \$173 million spent last fiscal year '19
- 65% of that total was spent out of general fund - salaries, textbooks, utilities
- No property tax levy in WDM - our tax rate is significantly lower than neighboring communities
- Construction/renovation are paid for by capital fund
- Each fund is a separate checkbook for certain expenses

PERL fund will pay for playgrounds - this has not been used up until now. Comm Ed budget will change to accommodate this once the CE reserve fund is gone. (Currently CE has approx \$600k reserve.)

Health insurance premiums have not increased for eight years. This is not likely to continue and this has been reported to the board.

80% of districts are running at a deficit for special ed spending

80% of our budget is spent on people - salaries and benefits

Last year we spent \$8 million dollars more than funding formula, we are living off reserves. We have two years in a row of deficit spending. We can not do this indefinitely.

By April 15, board must adopt and certify the budget for the coming year

130 net open-enrolled students in 2019-20

\$6880 per student from state and property tax funding

Homeschooled students generate approx .3, of \$6880, if they enroll in extra classes we would receive more than that

Goal for early retirement program is to buy early attrition - 58 will retire early at end of 20-21 year

We have chosen to use our reserves for one more year, but highly likely a year from now that we will recommend spending reductions to the board.

Parent question: What is “the number” that would be our “magic bullet” for budget?

Parent question re: playground discussion: Will we have an opportunity to see the district response to the feedback from SCN before this goes to the board?

Dr. Remy responded that we can do that, but it will push the decision at least until May. Materials will be published prior to the board meeting for public review.

Shahna Janssen thanked the group for the district-wide support of the Personal Care Drive.

