



Superintendent

Rex Weltz
324-2001

Business Manager

Janelle Mickelson
324-2040

Board of Trustees Special Board Meeting

Lincoln Center-1325 Poplar St.-Helena, MT 59601

December 2nd, 2021

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE – Present unless otherwise noted.

Luke Muszkiewicz-Board Chair
Siobhan Hathhorn-Vice Chair
Janet Armstrong-Trustee
Terry Beaver-Trustee
Elizabeth “Libby” Goldes-Trustee
John McEwen-Trustee
Jennifer McKee-Trustee
Jennifer Walsh-Trustee

Rex Weltz-Superintendent
Josh McKay-Assistant Superintendent
Brian Cummings-Assistant Superintendent of Elementary
Janelle Mickelson-Business Manager
Barb Ridgway-Chief of Staff
Stacy Collette-Human Resources Administrator
Gary Myers-Director of Educational Technology

I. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Board Vice Chair Siobhan Hathhorn called the meeting to order at 12:12 p.m. in the Lincoln Center Board of Trustees Conference Room and started the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. REVIEW OF AGENDA:

The agenda was reviewed by those present. No changes were made.

III. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT: *This is the time for comment on public matters that are not on the agenda. Public matters do not include any pending legal matters, private personnel issues, or private student issues. Please do not attempt to address such issues at this time or you will be ruled out of order. The Board cannot enter into a discussion during General Public Comment.*

There was no public comment.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A: Items for Information: Discussion of Facilities Master Plan

Ms. Stacy Collette commented. Today we will be talking about the Facilities Master Plan, and the first thing we are going to discuss is the purpose of the meeting, then the Board vision. The Board vision is what you think and what you see for the future of facilities serving public education in the Helena community. We will then move on to information gathering, what we need to make these decisions and to make this vision possible. In the last master plan, we had demographic information and building information. We had a lot of data to make decisions about what we do in relationship to a bond, and what we do in relationship to fixing our buildings to make them more compatible with 21st Century Learning. Then we need to look at what are the priorities, who is responsible, and what is our timeline.

The committee discussed the purpose of the meeting. They discussed that the old plan doesn't need to be rewritten, and that it is very possible that it needs to be revised. They also mentioned that with the Facilities Master Plan, it could alleviate some of the crisis management that is faced sometimes with facilities. The committee said it should be a living document that is reviewed at least yearly. They also said that the most powerful part of the previous plan describes details such as the state of our facilities, how many students they hold, what significant maintenance projects they need, and what do the demographics and feeder patterns around the schools look like? The committee also discussed funding and how important it is to have public input at some point in the process.

The committee moved on to talk about the vision for facilities. The committee discussed the buildings need to allow enough space for unhindered instruction, and the buildings need to be easily adaptable and flexible for future learnings. Other topics discussed around vision included natural light, staff space, modern HVAC systems for air conditioning and air quality, future hybrid education options, future mental health needs, new District kitchen, community partnerships, and making the previous environments work as well as they possibly can and allowing them to change in the future. Other visions brought up were energy efficiency, gymnasiums, educational opportunity consistent with the three new buildings, as well as land acquisition-a vision for where our students are going to be in the future. The committee also added they would like to see local input as well as input from staff and leadership for the new plan. In summary, we want to make sure that our buildings are flexible and adaptable at every possible level, and that we're maximizing the greatest potential possible for our current educational needs; and we're still looking at them for long term use and making sure that they're feasible for what we're going to do in the future. We also want to look at partnerships with communities and look at exploring those opportunities to leverage those relationships to create opportunity for learning. The committee mentioned that we would like to have places for other activities, and places for kids to exercise. The committee also discussed that they would like to discuss any lessons learned from when the new schools were built and to use that experience to improve upon.

The committee moved on to discuss the topic: information that we need. The committee discussed that it is important to get information from families and staff about what we need. They also mentioned that the Deferred Maintenance Plan should always be a part of this living document. The committee discussed that the strongest situation would be when we have not only internal but also external recommendations because there's people all around the United States and within Montana that have already had some of these issues and these problems. So, you can take those two fields and merge them together and you're going to come up with a better ability to avoid something that maybe seems great from a smaller perspective or vice versa and really customize it to be what works best in Helena. The committee discussed that it is important to get our message out early to let the public know what we are thinking and doing. They also mentioned the possibility of a survey and a way to educate the public about the benefits of the buildings we have. The committee discussed that it is important to assess what the community wants and what they will support at some point in the process. The committee mentioned that it is important to know what our bonding capacity is. In summary, the committee needs demographic information and updated information on the buildings that we currently have which would include additional maintenance we've done, additional changes that we've made, and improvements that we've made.

The committee moved on to discuss the topic: how do we get the information and what are the priorities. The committee discussed the potential of bringing together the group of community leaders that assisted during the last bond. They could present to the public as a united, positive, and thoughtful group to get the message out. The committee also discussed that the plan should be reviewed at the beginning of every school year and updated. They then discussed that we need to know our bond capacity and Ms. Janelle

Mickelson could give us that information. Another priority discussed was receiving and reviewing the Deferred Maintenance Plan, and developing priorities based on the information in that plan. The committee mentioned that they would like to see both internal and external teams working together, and to find an educational consultant that is knowledgeable and fits our local culture. The committee discussed how we would get that information from our internal staff, and the potential of bringing the deferred maintenance report to each building for the Administrators to review and to give their input. The committee discussed that potentially the Assistant Superintendents could have those conversations with the building staff and that would be a high priority. It was then discussed that we could potentially share in our Friday message to staff and families that we are meeting to discuss the Facilities Master Plan, and we are looking at the state of our buildings.

The committee moved on to discuss timelines and next steps. The committee anticipates that all the site work will be done on the Deferred Maintenance plan in December, and that they will be reviewing the Deferred Maintenance Report in January. The committee mentioned that levies could also be discussed in January. The committee discussed educational functionality which includes wanting to have understanding from our internal staff and administrators on how they believe our buildings function, and this could potentially be completed by February. The committee discussed when to have the conversation about requesting qualifications for a consultant to complete the Facilities Master Plan. The committee decided that they potentially could have the request for qualifications discussion at the Facilities Committee meeting in January.

In closing, the committee discussed they would like to potentially see an update on the Facilities Master Plan progress in the Facilities Committee Report that is given monthly at the full Board meeting.

V. BOARD COMMENTS

Vice Chair Siobhan Hathhorn commented. I would like to thank everyone for coming and for the rich and respectful discussion that we had.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The board meeting adjourned at 1:50 p.m.

Candice Delvaux, Recording Secretary

Date