



# 2016 School Study Committee

**Meeting Minutes**

**March 28, 2017**

**5:00 – 8:00 p.m.**

**Harvey Education Center, Board Room**

**Present:** Ted Berryhill, Jessica Curtis, Susie Disselkoen, Jon Droscha, Steve Duane, Liz Evans, Shelly Fanson, Josh Galloway, Matt Hall, Amy McVaugh, Patrick Meyers, Kerry Minshall, Mitch Perrault, Mike Prelesnik, Jerry Schaffer, Sandy Smalley, Joe Starch, Mike Thompson, Sally Trout, Chris Waltz, Russ Whipple, Tim Williams

**Absent:** Tim Ayres, Brian Bushey, Erik Cargill, Lance Delbridge, Laura Fenger, Emily Kress, Christopher Mumby, Chris Wright

**Also Present:** Superintendent Ron Drzewicki, Mike Kenney, Steve Merriman, and Ted Moore

## **Public Comment**

No public comment.

## **Approval of Minutes**

Approved, following a change to remove next meeting January 31, 2017 as this meeting was not held.

Survey subcommittee meeting minutes were also provided. Chairperson, Chris Waltz thanked the subcommittee members (Sally Trout, Patrick Meyers, Josh Galloway, Sandy Smalley, Matt Hall) for their work. This subcommittee met 4 times and spent a lot of time drafting and reviewing the survey.

## **Request/Clarification Forms**

No additional request/clarification forms.

## **Epic MRA Survey**

Mr. Porn provided an overview of the phone survey that was conducted March 4<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup>. The survey included 300 respondents, which correlates to an error rate of +/- 5.7%. Mr. Porn provided a PowerPoint presentation that gave a summary of the survey results. Highlights from the summary include:

Favorable configuration options:

- Moving kindergarten to the Harvey Center. This configuration option had a strong level of support of all options provided. After survey respondents heard pro/con arguments about moving kindergarten to the Harvey Center, the favorable % changed minimally which indicates opinions are fairly strong.
- Renovating and expanding elementary schools.

Opposed configuration options:

- Moving 5<sup>th</sup> grade to the middle school.
- Moving 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders to the Harvey Center. This configuration option had a strong opposition.
- Moving kindergartners to the Harvey Center and 5<sup>th</sup> graders to the middle school.
- Moving 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> to expanded Steele elementary.
- Moving 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> to new intermediate school at new location.

In summary, the only two choices from the survey to solve elementary overcrowding that had community support were:

1. Expand existing elementary buildings.
2. Move kindergarten to the Harvey Center

Mr. Porn feels moving kindergarten to the Harvey Center seems to be strongly supported and should be included in any proposal going forward. Mr. Porn provided an overview of additional survey information regarding improvements to all buildings, the middle school, and the high school. For example:

Overall, survey respondents were in support (70%) of providing improvements to all buildings while 56% support improvements to middle school and high school. The athletic multi-purpose addition may be a controversial item. Mr. Porn thinks the package of those items will pass but will need education to the community about the multi-purpose addition and why it is needed.

When survey respondents were asked about a second vote for an \$80 M bond, after hearing more about what features and details would be included, respondents were in support by 59%. When asked about a scaled back bond proposal of \$68.5 that would include nothing at the high school but some work at the middle school, respondents were in favor by 59%. When asked about a scaled back bond proposal of \$61.1 that would include nothing at the high school and nothing at the middle school, respondents were in favor by 61%.

A gap was noticed between the ratings of the school, 72% giving the schools an A or B grade, compared to the rating of the school managing finances, 58% total positive. Mr.

Porn shared that the 72% combined A and B grade is significantly higher compared to all Michigan school districts (56%). Mr. Porn thought it may be worthwhile to learn what the voters mean regarding managing school finances. Non-parent survey respondents rated the condition of the school buildings more positively (76%) than parents (48%) rated the buildings. It will be important to educate the non-parents on what the needs are for the schools.

Mr. Porn reported that having only 19% saying school taxes are “too high” is ideal for a school district and it is among the lowest numbers ever registered on this important question in EPIC-MRA polling.

Questions for Mr. Porn:

Does the survey data (Page 11, 2<sup>nd</sup> slide) suggest that now that people have more information about what we want to do and if it included their preference they were ok with the \$80 M. Mr. Porn said they are less concerned about the \$80M being spent because they learned it was for items they are in support of. Those with concerns about wasteful spending were moving towards yes because they were in support of the school bond ideas, expanding existing elementary buildings and moving kindergartners to the Harvey Center. Mr. Porn said if a proposal came forward to move kindergarten to the Harvey Center, expand existing elementary, improvements to MMS and MHS, there seems to be general support for an \$80 M bond. Mr. Porn also explained that many respondents felt the \$80 million was a reasonable amount.

Mr. Porn said that the survey subcommittee and Superintendent Ron Drzewicki, provided a lot of support and help in developing the survey.

A committee member asked if there was anything compelling with the yes voters that he saw in the survey responses. Mr. Porn shared that the committee should really concentrate on the groups that moved from a no to a yes after the respondent was provided with additional information. Survey respondents that moved the most from oppose to the support were the ones that were more likely to vote yes on a second bond proposal for \$80 million upon being provided more information.

A committee member asked if there was any survey response indication that we would lose previous yes voters. Mr. Porn explained that the committee will need to communicate that the community will not support a new building, though they will support expanding existing buildings and also support moving kindergarten to HEC.

### **Survey Discussion**

Chairperson Chris Waltz asked the committee to talk about next steps and hopes that the group can settle on a configuration option, including the specific changes and details for the options. After this we would share the information with the consultants to develop plans. Then decide what to take to the voters.

The committee had a discussion on how soon decisions would need to be made to have a November bond proposal. The committee would need to have a proposal for the consultants by the end of April/early May. The information would need to be presented to the State of

Michigan Treasury Department in early July. It will take the consultants approximately 3 - 4 weeks to get good drawings and estimated costs. If the committee did not have a proposal for a November election, the next option would be May 2018.

A committee member asked if there is a cost estimate for HVAC improvements. Estimate was \$6-8 million.

The committee discussed that sinking funds can now be used for technology but Mason's current sinking fund language does not allow for using our sinking fund for technology. We would need to ask voters for approval to use sinking fund dollars for technology. Busses cannot be purchased out of sinking fund dollars.

A committee member asked the group to consider going towards a bond proposal that included moving kindergarten to the Harvey Center and include the technology, safety (questions 29 and 28), critical facilities audit items, and then take the other items (HVAC, MMS, and MHS) to the community at a later date. The member was concerned there is not a cost estimate that will be under \$80 million to include all items.

A committee member commented that this group should focus on the data from the survey and ask the voters to support the items that the community values rather than removing some items from the bond.

As part of the last Bond proposal, consultants have already met with school staff and administration over a period of 6 months and have a lot of information already but would need to have additional information from our group to draft a scope of work. If a Bond proposal was approved in November of 2017 there will be 9 to 15 months of design before construction begins.

Decisions to be made include:

What is done to HEC if we move kindergarten to HEC. Decide if early education and administration remains at HEC. What is the scope of work for other elementary buildings. What is done with the middle school, high school, transportation building.

Ron suggested to the group that from the last bond proposal there are frameworks that can be utilized for what could be done at the existing elementary buildings, middle school, and high school. A new scope of work could include moving kindergarten to HEC. There will need to be some additional work to the existing elementary buildings because the past bond included moving 2 grades. Perhaps the consultants could make a proposal for proposed scope of work given the current configuration option of moving K to HEC..

A committee member moved and it was seconded to direct the construction team to bring recommendations to the committee to consider. Discussion occurred. Motion approved unanimously.

A committee member felt that we should follow more normal meeting rules for norms on how long to talk and debate issues. There have been some moments that we have not been as

efficient and we should agree to certain norms. He asked if we could have a motion to have meeting rules. An idea from another committee member was that the agenda should have items on the agenda that must be decided.

Question was asked if we should get a date with Treasury on the calendar for July of 2017. A motion was made and supported to get a date with Treasury. Motion approved unanimously.

Motion was made by Mitch Perrault to move in the direction of pursuing only options supported by the survey results, namely moving K to HEC, expanding or modifying existing elementary buildings, adopting the components of questions 29-31 of the EPIC-MRA survey that the community supported (technology, transportation, HVAC, safety and security, HS and MS upgrades to science, STEM, etc.). The motion was seconded and discussion occurred. The motion was approved with one dissenting vote.

### **Public Comment**

Michael Koot provided two points for committee consideration. 1. Think about the agenda and give firm time for public comments. Perhaps 7:50 each time. 2. Please look at question #32. Specifically Michael asked the committee to look at the margin of errors for each survey question. Analyzing the +/- margin makes the approval/support percentage much closer for each question. This community member personally supports moving kindergarten to the Harvey Center as it also gives educational value.

Michael Kelly commented and noted that the survey showed a lot of support from the parents. Remember that non-parents have a higher percent of the voting. The committee will need to overcome the non-parent voters. The public member felt there was good information in the survey, but felt that the intent of the survey was not to limit what was decided by the committee. Michael shared that he has discussed a few of his own proposals with members of the community and received positive support. Michael shared that the committee does not need to move 250 kids. Moving 100 – 150 students to HEC with modest 4 classroom addition would help solve the immediate problem. Look at neighboring communities and see what they are doing. He doesn't feel it needs to be 250 students moved. He's thinking of a potential second building at North Aurelius. Williamston has a good example where they have combined admin between different buildings.

### **Next Meetings**

Will do a doodle survey to come up with next meeting dates.