



CASS SCHOOL DISTRICT 63

8502 Bailey Road • Darien, Illinois 60561-5333

Board of Education Special Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, April 5, 2022

Minutes of The Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of Cass School District 63, DuPage County, Illinois; Held at Cass Junior High School at 6:00 P.M. on the 5th Day of April, 2022.

I. Welcome and Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m.

A. Pledge of Allegiance

B. Roll Call

Upon roll being called, the following members answered present: President Shelly Camden, Vice President Kent Absalonsen, Secretary Alice Esposito and Members Rinku Patel, Urszula Tanouye and Steve Wyent. Member Lana Johnson was absent.

Also in attendance: Mark R. Cross, Superintendent, Gayle Wilson, Recording Secretary and Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent

C. Approval of the Special Meeting Agenda

Secretary Esposito moved and Vice President Absalonsen seconded a motion to approve the special meeting agenda as presented.

Roll call

Aye

Nay

Secretary Esposito

Vice President Absalonsen

Member Patel

Member Tanouye

Member Wyent

President Camden

Motion carried, 6 to 0.



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D. Recognition of Audience, Announcements and Correspondence

President Camden welcomed the following guests: Rick Gawel, Mike Webster, Calvin Tanouye, Clara Tanouye, Filomena DeChiara and Katie Fujiura

E. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

II. Reports, Updates and Informational Items

A. Updates and Discussion Regarding Long-Term Facility Plans for Safety, Security and Replacement of Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning Systems

Mr. Cross presented an overview of the district's issues and needs as it relates to the school district's safety and security issues, as well as the aging and inefficient heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems. The issues have been discussed for several years and the district has worked over the past year to take a proactive and long-term approach to addressing the needs of the district. Mr. Cross again reviewed the unanimous consensus of the 12-member Facilities Committee's recommendations.

Both the planning and the financing of future work is also part of the Board's strategic plan, including the "development of a comprehensive master plan for the improvement and replacement of the district's HVAC systems", as well as determining "the most efficient options to finance the necessary improvements to indoor air quality and HVAC systems, safety and security equipment, and health and life safety needs." The work that is required for the project is far outside of the school district's budget and maintenance costs are no longer viable for equipment that is past its life expectancy. The cost of a single larger rooftop unit would take roughly 35 to 50 percent of the district's operations and maintenance budget.

The current HVAC systems and issues were reviewed in detail, including the ages of the equipment and pictures to show current conditions. About 80 percent of the school district's HVAC infrastructure needs to be replaced and whenever possible, any of the more recently upgraded equipment in place will be maintained and later integrated into the new system.



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The Board also discussed the concerns with outdated equipment breaking down in a peak cold season, resulting in replacement that is not done as part of a long-term plan. One of the Board's goals is to complete all necessary work in a cost-effective manner through competitive bidding, while also planning for maximizing long-term energy savings, ease of maintenance, indoor air quality and the lowest possible life-cycle costs over the life of the replacement equipment.

The Board discussed in depth the committee's unanimous recommendation to pursue a geothermal solution as the most cost-effective plan not only in terms of long-term energy savings, but also with by far the lowest life-cycle cost for maintenance and replacement. Geothermal systems use the natural properties of the earth to provide heating and cooling to a building. Heat addition and rejection take place below the ground. Fluid is circulated through the loop and into the geothermal units within the building.

Based on current energy costs, HVAC-related savings could range from 35 to 50 percent, resulting in a huge annual saving for the district. This could be much more as future energy costs potentially rise.

In addition to the HVAC needs, Mr. Cross reviewed safety and security needs that include replacing the old fire alarm system, updating and modernizing the video surveillance system, and purchasing an integrated intercom and communication system for extreme emergencies and safety situations. The facility plans that have been developed do not include anything added, new or unnecessary.

Mr. Wyent noted that he feels the Board has done its due diligence in planning and that pursuing this solution and the bond to fund the projects is the right way for the Board to proceed. Mrs. Esposito noted that the bond repayment is 20 years and is not indefinite, which is important for the community to understand, particularly considering that the useful life of the geothermal system is decades longer than the life of the bond. Mrs. Camden emphasized the critical importance of addressing this need with a plan, which the Board now has in place and has tried to answer every question that could arise.



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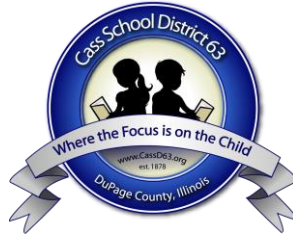
Mr. Gawel asked when work would begin if the bond passes and it was explained that the work would occur largely over the summer of 2023. He then wanted to know what happens if the referendum does not pass and it was explained that the Board would consider trying again in November as the district is not able to address these important concerns without the help and support of our community.

Mr. Cross and Board members discussed the need to provide factual information for the community through the mail, and dates were discussed for holding two or three community information meetings. This would be an opportunity for anyone to attend and ask questions. Mr. Cross will follow up with specific dates and more work will be done to provide detailed, fact-based information on the school district website under Facility Planning FAQs.

F. Discussion Regarding Proposed Resolution for Approval of School Bonds

The Board then discussed and reviewed the proposed ballot question for the June 28, 2022 general primary election ballot to issue bonds up to, but not to exceed, \$13,425,000. Mr. Cross reminded the Board that the path had been chosen to pursue a bond specifically for the purposes described so that taxpayers would be assured that the bond proceeds could not be used for any other purpose than what is described in the question. Revenue generated from the bonds cannot be used for salaries, benefits or any other purpose outside of the renovations to the buildings and the refinancing of some existing debt at a savings of approximately \$110,000, while paying it off eight years earlier than originally planned.

Mr. Cross and Finance Committee members Alice Esposito and Steve Wyent also discussed the increase in the tax rate for the purpose of paying the new bonds at 26 cents. This is a 9.6 percent increase in the school district's tax rate, and a 4.0 percent increase in the overall property tax rate. For an owner-occupied home valued at \$300,000, this is a \$246 increase, or little over \$20 per month. Mr. Cross noted that even if the bond question is approved by the voters, the district's new tax rate would still be below the average for elementary school districts in DuPage County, emphasizing the district also has one of the lowest operating expenditures per student.



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III. Recommended Action Items

A. Approval of Resolution Providing for and Requiring the Submission of the Proposition of Issuing \$13,425,000 School Bonds to the Voters of the District at the General Primary Election to be Held on the 28th Day of June, 2022

Member Wyent moved and Member Patel seconded a motion to approve the Resolution Providing for and Requiring the Submission of the Proposition of Issuing \$13,425,000 School Bonds to the Voters of the District at the General Primary Election to be Held on the 28th Day of June, 2022.

Roll call

Aye

Nay

Member Wyent

Member Patel

Member Tanouye

Secretary Esposito

Vice President Absalonsen

President Camden

Motion carried, 6 to 0.

IV. Conclusion

A. Public Comments

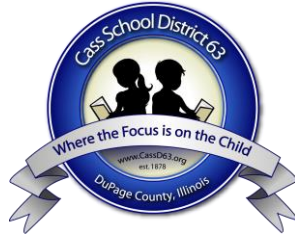
- Katie Fujiura complimented the presentation, including the details and clear explanations.

B. Board Member Comments

- Shelly Camden thanked everyone for attending the meeting and discussing and sharing on this important topic.

VII. Adjournment

Secretary Esposito moved and Member Wyent seconded a motion to adjourn this Special Board of Education Meeting of April 5, 2022 at 7:41 p.m. Voice vote; All Ayes. Motion Carried, 6 to 0.



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Shelly Camden, Board of Education President

Attest: _____
Alice Esposito, Board of Education Secretary