



High School Facilities Task Force Minutes from April 10, 2008

Members present: Jodi Schneidmiller, Jim Hayner, Mindy Meyer, Rob Ahrens, Jim Sporleder, Darcy Weisner, Ruth Ladderud, LaDessa Smelcer, James Payne, Jim Sanders, Linda Newcomb, Cindy Meyer, Cindy Widmer, Dick Cook, Nanqi You, John Butenhoff, Mike Pettyjohn, Dave Warkentin, Jim McCarthy

Members absent: Carina Stillman, John Rowley, Scott Krivoshein, Lawson Knight, Max Carrera, Clint Gabbard,

Guests: Dave Teater, Mark Higgins, Rich Carter, Anne Golden,

Motions

There was a motion to adopt minutes from the February 28, 2008 meeting. It was suggested that one word be added to one of the sections for clarification purposes. The motion passed.

Review of Task Force Charge

Cindy Meyer said the idea for the High School Facilities Task Force came directly from results of the "We're Listening" campaign following the failed bond election in 2006. She said Board members identified community members who could bring a diversity of opinions and backgrounds to the committee and asked them to participate. She reviewed some key points from the group's Ground Rules document: 1) That there should be no pre-conceived conclusions for the Task Force's work, and 2) That ideas from different members may have to be combined, modified or sometimes abandoned in order to craft the best recommendations for the community as a whole.

Cindy reviewed the various phases of group work that has taken place since June of 2007, including subcommittee research and reports. The goal now, she said is to close the gap and figure out the best fit for the community.

Remote Response Group Survey

Cindy introduced Janis Barton and Bill Calhoun, who created a remote response survey based on questions generated from Task Force members and others. All Task Force members could instantly chose their response to each question and then see the results as an on-screen graph. Dave Teater, a consultant for the group, kept track of results and said he would summarize the information in order to formulate a draft committee recommendation that could be presented to School Board members. He said the draft document would be ready by the next Task Force meeting on April 24, 2008.

Group Discussion

Following the survey, Task Force members discussed some of the topics that had been broached in the survey. Below is a brief recap of that discussion:

- Cost-effectiveness may not always be the driving force of a facilities project. The community might still want something even if it is not cost effective (i.e., Sharpstein and Green Park projects).
- Consensus of the group was that the Board should probably pursue parallel facility projects (some at each high school, then additional projects at each high school). The group could see four to five phases of work at Wa-Hi, but there might be a sense of urgency for Lincoln that would necessitate a single phase project. The size/cost of

the project would be a prime factor for phasing. For example, a Skills Center might cost several million, Lincoln could cost around \$20 million and various phases at Wa-Hi could total \$60 million.

- Several Task Force members liked a draft vision document for Wa-Hi that was shared by Darcy Weisner. Rich Carter explained that Darcy's idea could be explored by an architect as part of a phase-in program.
- Several group members expressed interest in a Skills Center for the Walla Walla Valley. Rich said he had visited the Tri Tech Skills Center in Kennewick and urged Task Force members to take a tour. It has 800 students from around the Columbia Valley and offers 22 certified, high-level programs. Tri Tech and Columbia Basin College have a great partnership, he said. Students often complete coursework at Tri Tech and go on to CBC for more advanced training. Rich has been in touch with legislators, who are behind a Skills Center for the Walla Walla area. He also has written a letter to the Tri City Superintendent Council for their support in phase one: a feasibility study. "We are being encouraged to go for it," he said. When asked how many students a local Skills Center could serve, Rich said the feasibility study would nail down numbers, but he expected it might be around 300 full time students.
- Several people said they could see the Skills Center and Lincoln as a combined facilities project. Rich said he has heard that Walla Walla is a one issue town and that if too many issues appear on a ballot, the community might not vote in favor of them.
- Richland High School has recently gone through a series of facility bond projects. People thought it might be interesting to talk to someone in Richland and see how the various projects worked out and how the high school operated during construction.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be Thursday, April 24, from 5 to 7 p.m. It is tentatively scheduled to take place in the library at Lincoln Alternative High School.