



*Respectful, Responsible, Safe & Prepared*

**JOINT BUILDING AND GROUNDS  
AND FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
May 26, 2022 – 5:30 p.m.  
Waupaca High School Community Room and [Live Stream](#)**

**Welcome and Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order by Finance Committee Chairperson Dale Feldt at 5:29 p.m.

**Roll Call:**

Present in the WHS Community Room: All members of the Building and Grounds Committee and Finance Committee were present (Steve Klismet, Dale Feldt, Patrick Phair, and Mark Polebitski). Additionally, Board members Stephen Johnson, Betty Manion, and Ron Brooks were present. Although Betty Manion left the meeting at 6:30 p.m. due to another commitment.

**Also Present:**

Present in the WHS Community Room: Ron Saari, Sandy Lucas, Carl Hayek, Matt Vassar, District Consultant Civil Engineer Robert Breest, Molly Ryan and Steve Kieckhefer from PRA Architects, and Carol Wirth from Wisconsin Public Finance Professionals, LLC.

**Approval of Agenda:**

A motion was made by Patrick Phair and seconded by Steve Klismet to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

**Review of Board Meeting Norms:**

The Board reviewed their collective commitments.

**”Point of Entry” Building Safety Renovations and Remodeling:**

Director of Business Services Carl Hayek advised that the number one safety concern as determined by the Department of Justice and the Wisconsin School Safety Assessment is the vulnerability of the District’s point of entry at all school buildings. Mr. Hayek further advised that he has been working with PRA Architects, Civil Engineer Bob Breest, Building and Grounds Supervisor Matt Vassar, and others viewing current building entryways and developing an understanding of the scope of the project. By designing one main point of entry and reconfiguring other doors to be exit-only, school building access points can be better controlled. These entries will look like point of entry doors not a fire egress door, with automatic door locking and alarm systems. These renovations and reconfigurations will cost approximately \$3,875,000.

Mr. Hayek then introduced Molly Ryan and Steve Kieckhefer of PRA Architects. Ms. Ryan explained that there would be one single point of entry where a person would need to be buzzed in from the exterior door, buzzed into the office reception area, and then buzzed out to gain access to the rest of the school building. All doors would be locked all day except in the morning as students arrive and in the afternoon when they depart. Ms. Ryan then went through the preliminary plans for each of the four school buildings. The total cost of the project includes everything necessary to complete the project, including appropriate lighting.

Ms. Ryan advised that the Waupaca Learning Center was the most difficult to design a solution for and largest in scope. It will involve adding an addition which would include a secure entry area and vestibule, as well as reception, nurse, principal, and assistant principal offices. Because of fire codes, there would also be an emergency exit-only hallway from the stairway created, and the doors leading to that emergency exit-only hallway would have alarms and there would be no handle on the door to open it from outside the building. There were many concerns raised and much discussion relating to the emergency exit-only hallway. But as Mr. Kieckhefer reiterated, it is necessary for fire-rated protection. They can, however, install fireproof windows along the wall so the area can be visually monitored. In addition, they will relocate one of the emergency exit-only doors leading out from the gym to past the new addition or possibly eliminate it.

Ms. Ryan advised that at the Middle School, the building would be reconfigured so that the reception area is in the front of the building (so basically switching the reception and nurse areas), along with adding a second set of doors for secure entry. Some concerns were raised with the secure entry being on the opposite side of the building as the commons area.

Ms. Ryan advised that at the High School, all that would be needed is the addition of another set of doors leading from the secure entry to the rest of the building and a door in the reception area. Committee members had concerns relating to student parking being on the opposite side of the building as the main entrance. Ms. Ryan advised that it would have to be a District decision on how to handle – the school could possibly have a second entry open during the morning and afternoon when students are arriving and leaving and then locked the rest of the day. Mr. Hayek added that protocols would have to change and staff would need to be retrained to be sure that all are following the correct protocols. Some consideration may be given to possibly changing the location of student parking.

Then at the Chain Exploration Center, Ms. Ryan advised that renovation of the existing reception area and adding a secure entry vestibule is needed.

Committee members raised concerns regarding events being held at the schools in the evenings and on weekends when there are no staff onsite to monitor or allow entry. Mr. Hayek and Mr. Vassar advised that the doors could be unlocked for those types of events and actually can be unlocked at any time; but during the day all doors would be locked. In addition, as a District, we will need to consider how to handle access to all our buildings after hours.

Another concern raised by Committee members was how to keep someone from driving a vehicle into the entryways. A suggestion was made that balusters could be installed, preferably in a decorative way so that it looks nice at the front of the school.

Mr. Kieckhefer concluded by stating that if the referendum passes it would take approximately five months to complete the design process. Then much of the work would be done during the summer months at the Middle and High Schools, but it would be further into the fall to complete the work at the CEC and probably after the first of the year to complete the project at the WLC.

Mr. Hayek advised that funding constraints do not allow the District to take \$3,875,000 from the overall general fund instruction budget, and using any fund balance would be detrimental to the organization's net capital position and could be depleted in a few years. This could cause the District to short-term borrow, potentially needing to come with referendums to exceed the revenue limit.

Mr. Hayek's recommendation is to go to the public with a referendum in the November 2022 general election for the sole purpose of this one time safety remodeling and renovation project of \$3,875,000, which is a long-term investment. Mr. Hayek further advised that the project tax mill rate would be 13 cents per \$1,000 of property value. The District will be out of this debt obligation in 10 years, and it will not harm or increase the District's normal source of expenses. It is solely for the building safety remodeling and renovation only, as recommended by the Wisconsin School Safety Coordinators Association and the Department of Justice.

Mr. Hayek also recommends to leave the \$1 million of additional revenues from last year that was moved to the capital projects fund in there rather than use it for this project, which could then be used to supplement any potential cost overruns for this project rather than ask for a larger referendum. If it is not needed for this project, it fills the financial gap to supplement maintenance and facility needs.

Mr. Hayek then introduced Carol Wirth from Wisconsin Public Finance Professionals to talk about the referendum process. She advised that the gross principal and interest payments are eligible for state aid. She further advised that the District is in a unique situation and is able to receive funding because it is in the secondary tier and the state will share at 49% of the debt service cost, so it is important that the District stay within the second tertiary tier. She provided amortization schedules and tax levy impact assumptions, which are all subject to change. She added that the interest rate is conservative and is subject to change, adding that the interest rate will rise but the District's equalized value will rise as well. She stated that if the referendum passes, the interest rate gets locked in in February/March 2023. Ms. Wirth reiterated that this project results in a net tax impact of 13 cents per \$1,000 of property value.

Ms. Wirth concluded by providing a timeline of the required steps to take this to a referendum, when the District could borrow the funds, and when the first debt payment would need to be made. She noted that the borrowed funds can only be used for the project described in the referendum ballot.

Mr. Hayek concluded by stating that this is about the protection and safety of our children. It is a safety protocol – it is a single point of entry.

A motion was made by Patrick Phair and seconded by Steve Klismet to make a recommendation to the full Board at the next regular Board meeting to authorize a referendum for \$3,875,000 for all school building entryways to be remodeled or renovated for safety and security purposes working with Wisconsin Public Finance President Carol Wirth to direct and complete the financial portions of this project including formulating the referendum resolution language to be on the ballot in the November 2022 general election as presented. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

A motion was made by Patrick Phair and seconded by Steve Klismet to make a recommendation to the full Board at the next regular Board meeting to authorize PRA Architects to continue to complete their architectural work completing their design work inclusive of managing and fulfilling all bidding of materials and labor associated to complete this project as presented. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

**Adjournment:**

A motion was made by Patrick Phair and seconded by Steve Klismet to adjourn the meeting at 7:21 p.m. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.