

**Meeting:** ECASD Referendum Committee

**Date:** June 14, 2023

**Time:** 3:30p.m. – 4:30p.m.

**Location:** Administration Building Room 137

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lori Bica	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Marquell Johnson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Erica Zerr	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Abby Johnson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mike Johnson
<input type="checkbox"/> Kay Marks	<input type="checkbox"/> Kaying Xiong	<input type="checkbox"/> Kim Koller	<input type="checkbox"/> Mandy Van Vleet	<input type="checkbox"/>

\* Committee Chair

## Guests:

The regular meeting of the Referendum Committee was called to order by Abby Johnson at 3:34p.m. on June 14, 2023. Quorum was met.

**Notes:** Terri Grzyb

## Public Comment

No Public Present

## Approval of Previous Minutes

The minutes from March 17<sup>th</sup> were reviewed.

Marquell Johnson made a motion to approve the March 17, 2023, Referendum Committee minutes. The motion was seconded by Lori Bica. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

## Elect Committee Chair

The Committee Chair works with Abby on what needs to be on upcoming agendas (what needs to be covered or certain questions that need to be explained); the position does not require lots of time; it's mainly helping to get the schedule set and to gather information that needs to be shared at Board meetings.

Marquell Johnson made a motion to nominate Marquell Johnson as the Committee Chair. The motion was seconded by Erica Zerr. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

## Referendum Update Summary

Abby gave an update on where we are with the 2022 Capital Referendum and then shifted conversation to 2024 and what that will look like. Much of the work of this committee has revolved around a predictable and sustainable plan going forward, looking at districts that were successful in referendum and what their strategies were. A brief history of past referendums was shared.

## 2022 Capital Referendum Update

Putnam's classroom room addition is out for bid the week of June 12.

North has 2 phases (phase one for classroom and cafeteria addition; phase two for athletic entrance); construction to start in different phases; bid for phase one will go out the week of June 19; the hope is to have recommendations to the Board for the next Board meeting on July 24.

South – more intensive work to be done and many meetings; architects and engineers are finalizing plans; anticipate bid to go out end of July with Board approval in early September. Bid whole project out, but work will be done in phases, so we don't have multiple contractors.

Marquell asked about South's new principal and how to get him up to speed; Abby said we will have discussions with him to see vision and plans (before it goes out to bid). Mike said that Michele Wiberg has been helpful, as she has been through this and is a resource for the new person.

Erica asked if the Board sees the timeframes in bid approvals; is that part of bid? Abby said yes, but what comes to the Board is the project, not the schedule (it's part of the bid project); how will Board be updated about final timeframe (what buildings/classrooms will be affected)?; Abby doesn't have specifics on this but knows we will need to be strategic on relocating students (there has been planning for this), as this project will span over at least two school years; start in 8<sup>th</sup> grade area. The same Project Manager from Market & Johnson who we had for DeLong will run the South project (the person has a lot of history and experience and is a big asset for us because he has familiarity with us). Marquell can share information/timeline as it becomes available at Board meetings when he gives the Referendum Committee Update report. Families and community will want to know the impact of construction, so we will need to have a strategy of sharing clear, consistent, and positive communication throughout the process.

Mechanical bids for Locust Lane, Northwoods, Northstar, and Meadowview are out. Long lead time on mechanical equipment (6-8 months); as soon as we hear, we will order. We are being proactive because of supply chain issues that are out of our control.

### **Budget Update**

Round 1 of budget plans for Putnam, North, and South projects – no numbers are being shared at this time because we are still fine tuning. Putnam close to \$6.9 million (within 1%); North (close to \$19.8 million; within 1%); South – too early to know right now (target is \$42.7 million; should be within 1%). All based on the market, but we are getting contractors to bid on our jobs (not limited to one contractor).

### **Updates on Schedule**

- North and Putnam – planned to start in September; classrooms to be ready for students by Fall of 2024.
- South – planned to start in November; want students to be successful while work is being done.
- Mechanical work to begin June 2024 (equipment may arrive before then).
- Other projects happening now (Summer 2023):
  - Manz boiler and pump replacement began in May and will be completed in July
  - Sherman gym wall divider replacement began this week and will be completed by end of August
  - Sam Davey and Sherman gym floors to be replaced in the next 6 weeks
  - North and Memorial flooring
  - About 25 projects are currently happening

Marquell asked about posting referendum updates to our website. Even if it seems small to us, progress is progress and it's good for others to see that we are moving ahead with progress; some of the smaller things behind the scenes are important for community members to see. Mike shared what had been done for past referendums and looked at other districts' websites. Marquell shared how staff at Sam Davey were excited to get new gymnasium floor and water bottle filler machines. Lori talked about having signs outside of schools when work is being done (is there a determined effectiveness of this?). Maybe a simple thank you; Market & Johnson may be able to help with this.

### **2024 Operating Referendum Discussion**

Statutory things we need to do:

2 General Election opportunities – this is when you generally want to put a referendum question on the ballot (cost to district is less because there are already elections happening; multiple municipalities sharing in cost; it's not considered a special election).

- April 2, 2024; November 5, 2024

Could put on primary, but not a guarantee there will be a primary because those are determined by number of candidates running for open seats; cost is more (the district bears whole cost).

- February 20, 2024; August 13, 2024

Marquell asked how we would pay for primary; more strategic to go with general election.

Erica – Do we typically do one or the other in general election (fall or spring)? Abby gave brief history of past referendums.

Lori – advantage when it's a presidential election.

Marquell asked if the City has any upcoming projects; Mike will ask at Eggs & Issues on Friday; November makes sense to Marquell; Erica agrees.

### Question Approval Date

Statute says we have to have the question approved and certified to municipality 70 days prior to actual election.

- For April 2024, in January sometime
- For November 2024, in August sometime
- Things to Consider
  - April vs. November Referendum
  - If April fails, there is still an opportunity to impact the 2024-25 budget; still looking at budget and can make adjustments
  - If November fails, no opportunity to impact that fiscal year at all; provides a more accurate picture of where we are (the district's needs due to timing of adopting question)
  - If a district holds a failed operating referendum (recurring or nonrecurring) during 2018-19 or after, **for three years following the school year during which the failed referendum was held, the Low Revenue Ceiling amount is the amount from the year in which the referendum failed** (could not have any increases if you have a failed operating referendum). Mike discussed with committee more on per pupil revenue limit.

### Next Steps and Questions

- Marquell – what will the budget look like with shortfall of ESSER funds. Provide information for components that were added. Revisit themes from community sessions – what does it look like in terms of class size (what can an operational referendum do for class size; how is class size affecting behavior; impact of behaviors). On the educator side of things, does it align with what administration thinks; need teacher supports for development.
- Abby – we target what class sizes should be; can we add more supports or do something different (perception vs. reality, what does that look like?). Marquell – pull the data; need future component (what do you envision); revisit past referendum information (for example, this is what the 2016 operational dollars went to); effectiveness of ESSER dollars; where were the dollars allocated; impact of proposed budget and what does it mean?
- Mike talked about the end-of-year admin meeting that took place today; they shared positives and what they are proud of; STAR data was talked about and how interventionists impact that, referencing the February 2022 survey (where dollars should go).
- Erica – what are budget impacts to our district and what does that mean for overall financial picture (in and out of ESSER); need accurate read on temperature before we begin talking about dollar amounts; need information as soon as possible to make accurate assessment and recommendations moving forward; need to have an easily articulated goal of what we are funding with this money; need to have strategic priorities – need to be diverse; what does our community see as a need; identify those priority areas; align with our strategic priorities; need to see global items/terms (class size, mental health, or academic success) and what falls under that and what result or operational expectations does it align with; need to articulate in a way that is easy to communicate. ESSER is gone;

need to plug holes; want to improve quality of the ship, taking care of everyone on board (practical and immediate needs to survive *and* the aspirational/vision pieces).

- Marquell – can take in pieces; in terms of generality, was there a subcommittee of community members in 2016 (Abby said yes); Lori said SECPS is still meeting (Chris Hambuch-Boyle) – watch emails, as she is including the Board.
- Lori – How long does it take to do data analysis; should we consider a hybrid – should it have capital components?
- Abby can give updated projections based on adopted 2022-23 budget and state budget; won't know accurate 2023-24 budget until after CPI (late September); can do projections based on what we know right now; could have in early July.

#### **Action Items**

- Abby will connect with Marquell Johnson, Committee Chair, on setting schedules and agenda topics going forward
- Have strategy of sharing information to families and community as to where things are at in the process
- Update website with information (include small projects, as well)
- Brainstorm ideas on having signage outside of schools being worked on
- Will give updated projections based on adopted 2022-23 budget and state budget (what we know right now)

#### **Wrap-up Meeting**

Next meeting – TBD

Marquell Johnson moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Erica Zerr All were in favor. Meeting adjourned at 4:43p.m.