



**\*\*\* MINUTES \*\*\***

**DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS AND FACILITY PLANNING COMMITTEE**

APRIL 22, 2015

4:00 P.M. – 6:00 P.M.

SERVICE CENTER CONFERENCE ROOM

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**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Kathy Clark

Mike Falch

David FitzGerald

Mark Goings

Deb Hower, MD

Wendy Sue Johnson

Ben Nemitz

Rich Spindler

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS EXCUSED:**

Ben Nemitz

**RESOURCE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Mary Ann Hardebeck Charlie Kramer

Dan Van De Water

Larry Sommerfeld

Heidi White

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**.I. Meeting Called to Order**

Mike Falch welcomed community guests, two local television stations and then called the meeting to order.

**.II. Approval of Minutes of April 15, 2015**

*Kathy Clark moved, seconded by Mark Goings to approve the April 15, 2015 minutes as presented. Carried by unanimous voice of acclamation.*

**.III. Discussed Little Red Information**

Little Red Elementary School closed 2008. It is located four miles southwest of Eau Claire with frontage on State Hwy 37. The school is 19,379 SF in size and sits on 33.79 acres. The site has telephone, electricity, natural gas, and private septic system and well.

Information on the Little Red appraisal and status information was sent to committee members to be reviewed and to discuss whether the building and property is still useful to the District and to come to an understanding as to what should be done with it.

Currently, Little Red is being used for storage of salvageable items that were removed in the Robbins and Sherman school expansions. Items such as cabinetry, building materials, electrical panels, ceiling fans, boiler, landscaping materials, etc. and with the items being reused as needs arise at the other schools. This space is the only space in the District for storing excess materials. The need for storage space in the future will grow due to more stringent code enforcement that does not permit materials to be stored in mechanical rooms in the schools.

The building is being heated at a minimum of 50 degrees in the winter and monitored regularly to help keep its integrity. The roof is very good and any leaks are fixed as they occur. The older section of the building (block area) needs some masonry work, but nothing at this time that would compromise the structure and reliability of the building. All doors are in good shape.

Two years ago, Little Red was cleaned and prepared for a possible rental of a private school which never came to fruition. Other inquiries in the property have been for a winery, small businesses, bed & breakfast; none of which have materialized. A contract has already been drawn up if a party should want to rent. Renting of the property would help our revenue stream for the short term.

Little Red is located at the geographical center of the District, though outside of the ring of sewer/water, the location and acreage is prime. It will be approximately 10 years or so before water/sewer will be realized out in the Little Red area based on conversations with the City of Eau Claire.

Long-term the property has significant value as water and sewer gets closer. It is felt the property should be kept as an investment against having to pay a large amount of money in the future to acquire land to do the same thing after the area is more developed.

The best use at this time is for school storage, unless a renter should want to rent it. For what it costs in heat and electricity for the District to use the building for storage, the cost of having to rent storage space would be much more.

Based on our enrollment numbers, there is not enough growth to constitute acquisition of new school sites, only the need for expansion at the current sites. It was suggested that Little Red would make a good overflow site if there is a spurt in population, rather than to build, at least until we know where things are at. Staff could be placed at this site and teaching started rather quickly.

Moving the ECASD Service Center to the Little Red location and selling the Service Center site on N. Hastings Way was discussed but not a viable option. Though Little Red offered major highway frontage, the site does not offer a maintenance base or storage for vehicles and plows.

A committee member reminded the group that when Little Red was closed, the Study Committee did not recommend closing it permanently. They always left the possibility of it being reopened and that policy still applies.

#### **.IV. Developed Little Red Recommendation for Board**

Continue to hold onto the property of Little Red as a viable part of our District's inventory, utilized by the District for storage needs and continue to hold it for future educational purposes. It has a value to the school district with little overhead cost.

*All in favor.*

.V. **Discussed APL Study**

The APL report offers a summary of the Enrollment Projection Analysis completed for the Eau Claire Area School District by the Applied Population Laboratory, University of Wisconsin-Madison. The last report was done two years ago. Enrollment projections are provided for the district as a whole, and individually for each grade and grade grouping. The projection process uses a combination of historical enrollment data, birth trends and projections, housing starts data, and population trends and projections to create reasonable assumptions about future growth scenarios and the likely impact on the school district.

The results of the survey points to steadily increasing enrollment in ECASD over the next decade. The Baseline model indicated the most growth, while the Two Year “Trend” showed steady to slightly declining 4K-12 enrollment. Three of the four models showed K-5 enrollment increasing in the near term, while grades 6-8 and 9-12 will likely see increasing enrollment for the foreseeable future.

There are currently 11,016 students enrolled in the ECASD. The APL Study, compared to past enrollment numbers have stayed rather straight lined with light growth. One wildcard to be considered in the District’s enrollment numbers will be the voucher program and its wide spread availability. The ramifications will not be realized until the program is implemented. To date, no ECASD students have been lost to the voucher program, however, we do not know what the future holds.

A handout on building capacity comparisons was discussed, with SAGE schools being looked at for possible capacity concerns. It did not seem to make sense to add on to a school building when there is available room in other school buildings. Some options discussed were:

- to close open enrollment to those schools already at capacity
- not allow intra-district transfers to those schools already at capacity
- create an overflow policy for new students moving into an “at capacity” school to attend a neighboring school with transportation provided from the home school.
- lastly, look at transitional school boundaries.

.VI. **Developed APL Study Recommendation for Board**

The committee requests that administrators look at open enrollment, intra-district transfers and overflow policies as ways to alleviate overcrowding in the elementary schools, with a possible option of transitional boundaries.

*All in favor.*

.VII. **Agenda for Next Meeting**

This is the last Demographic Trends and Facility Planning Meeting for the 2014-15 school year. The next meeting will be fall of 2019.

.VIII. **Other**

Mike Falch will be presenting before the School Board on May 18, 2015.

It was suggested that SAGE be discussed again with the Board.

In order to meet the needs of our community, it is recommended that the district boundaries should be reviewed once every 5 years for possible adjusting.

Thanks to Dan and Wendy Sue for serving on the committee; Wendy Sue is stepping down from the School Board and Dan is retiring.

.VII. **Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 5:08 p.m.