

**WILLMAR COMMUNITY ED & REC  
JOINT POWERS BOARD MEETING  
APRIL 24, 2015**

**Members Present:** Eric Banks, Dave Baumgart, Andy Boersma, Bill Borth, Matt Dawson, Tim Johnson, Russ Magnuson, Audrey Nelsen, Pablo Obregon, Rachel Skretvedt, Darin Strand

**Guests Present:** Dr. Jerry Kjergaard, Pam Harrington, Mandi Lighthizer-Schmidt from Willmar Public Schools

**Staff Present:** Steve Brisendine, Casey Hagert, Laura Morales, Becky Sorenson, Jena Tollefson, Pam Vruwink, Jodi Wambeke

Chairman Eric Banks opened the meeting by asking everyone to introduce themselves.

Steve Brisendine then welcomed Dr. Kjergaard, along with Pam Harrington and Mandi Lighthizer-Schmidt, who were present to talk to the Board about the upcoming School bond referendum. Dr. Kjergaard explained about the needs of the School District, using a PowerPoint presentation. The proposal includes building another elementary school, adding a new science area at the Middle School, a dedicated gymnastics area at the High School to free up gym space throughout the District. The elementary schools are crowded – Kennedy has 127 students over its capacity and Roosevelt has 188 over its capacity. Quite a few hallways are being used as classrooms

Willmar Public Schools receives 1.2 million each year for operating costs and deferred maintenance but \$9 million is currently needed to check off all items on the list.

Because of the lack of adequate gym space, teams are running in the hallways which create safety issues and increases floor maintenance in the hallways.

The Bond Referendum is asking for \$52,345,000 in school building bonds. The second part of the referendum is for \$7,750,000 for a field house (51,000 square foot) the plan is for 6 courts (allowing usage for volleyball, basketball, baseball, softball and tennis) with a separate running track, possibly running above the gym space. The field house portion is dependent upon the first part of the referendum passing.

If both sections of the referendum pass, the increase per year would be \$132 (about \$11 per month) on a \$100,000 home. The voting takes place on May 19 from 9 am – 8 pm at WEAC.

Dr. Kjergaard concluded his presentation by asking for questions. Dave Baumgart asked what Roosevelt and Kennedy would look like if the bond passes. Dr. Kjergaard responded that the two

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schools would look the same, but with less children. The plan is to have three elementary schools for children thru grade 5 and evenly divide them between the three.

Rachel Skretvedt asked if there was a site already chosen as the location for the new school. Dr. Kjergaard responded that there are several options but a decision would be made if the referendum is successful. Dr. Kjergaard expressed his feelings that the new school should be on the east side of town.

A question was asked about open enrollment. Approximately 260 students come to Willmar with 340 leaving Willmar for a different school.

Pablo Obregon stated he was concerned that the Spanish and Somali families are not as well informed as they should be.

Someone wondered what the percentage needed to be for the referendum to pass. Dr. Kjergaard stated that a simple majority wins. In other words, if 100 people vote and there are 51 yes votes, the referendum passes.

If the referendum passes, the time frame will be six to nine months for architectural drawings with a possible open date for the 2018-19 school year.

Eric Banks asked if the field house would be limited to certain sports. Pam Harrington responded that the field house is planned for use in all sports.

Matt Dawson expressed concern that people may forget to vote. Pam Harrington stated that people can get absentee ballots at any time prior to May 19.

As there were no further questions, Steve thanked Dr. Kjergaard, Pam Harrington and Mandi Lighthizer-Schmidt for their presentation.

The next item on the agenda was the formation of sub-committees. Three sub-committees have been agreed upon:

Executive which would include Steve, City Council Representative, School Board Representative and the JPB Chairman and Vice Chair.

Program Committee

Park Plan Committee

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Pablo Obregon asked if Community Ed & Rec would be impacted by the passage of the referendum. Steve responded that there would be additional spaces for our programs thus ultimately helping our programs have more quality space to program from.

A question was asked about staffing at the field house during evening and weekend hours. Nothing has been talked about in regards to that issue at this time.

Steve said the he saw the Program Committee assisting in development of programs and to evaluate the programs. Park Plan Committee working with park planning, discussing how expenses would be handled for the new additions.

Darin Strand said that (due to time constraints) an email will be sent out regarding the committee structure.

Eric Banks asked for a City Auditorium update. Steve stated the City Council has agreed to work with the contractor on the floor repair. The Gun Range proposed agreement from the City Attorney has been sent to the Gun Club for their agreement.

Steve also stated that an Open House is planned for the City Auditorium on June 25 during Willmar Fest week. This will be a combination of a belated 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary for the building and allowing the public to see the changes that have been made. The first Movie in the Park will be that night at the City Auditorium. The remaining nights for Movies in the Park will be the third Friday of July, August and September.

Audrey Nelsen asked what the backup plan is for Memorial Day since the Auditorium may not be ready. Steve responded that WEAC or the WCAC is the rain backup.

Bill Borth asked what the dead-line is for program submission for the Fall brochure. Steve said that the middle of July was the dead-line.

As there was no further business, the meeting adjourned. The next meeting will be May 22.