



General Library Item

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Scarsdale Board of Education
Meeting Highlights
November 13, 2017

Audit Committee Meeting

At 7 p.m. the Board convened as the Audit Committee to review the External Audit report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2017, presented by Douglas Zimmerman, COO of the accounting firm EFPR Group, and Joseph Klimek, a partner in the firm. The Auditor's Report rendered an unmodified "clean" opinion of the District's financial statements.

Business Meeting

At 7:30 p.m. William Natbony, President of the Board of Education, convened the Business Meeting, reporting that all Board members were present. Mr. Natbony, on behalf of the Board, extended condolences to former Board member Ann Rose Simon on the death of her husband.

Dr. Thomas Hagerman, Superintendent of Schools, welcomed those in attendance and thanked everyone - staff, community, consultants - for all their work on the 2018 bond project to date. Dr. Hagerman also announced that Drew Patrick, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources and Leadership Development, successfully defended his dissertation last week and is now Dr. Drew Patrick.

Dr. Patrick presented the Personnel Report, including an enrollment and staffing update.

Dr. Hagerman and Stuart Matthey, Assistant Superintendent for Business and Facilities, presented a comprehensive recommendation report regarding the 2018 Bond Project, including:

- A history of the current bond process, starting with the December 2014 bond proposal, and including a detailed timeline of work done by previous building committees, architects, and consultants;
- Opportunities for community feedback over the course of that process, including meetings conducted by the District's current architects, BBS, with constituent groups in buildings throughout the District, community comments at Board meetings and public forums, and volumes of correspondence;
- The work of the Greenacres Building Committee at its eight meetings conducted throughout the fall, at which they focused on the refinement of plans for building usage, construction, logistics, and safety, and their recommendations concerning noise, air quality, and security monitoring, as well as additional toilet room renovations and parking;
- The work of the District-wide Facilities Committee at its eight meetings conducted throughout the fall, at which they focused on a review of the scope of work proposed plus consideration of District-wide air conditioning, and their recommendations;
- The District Administration's recommendations to the Board, based on the work of the committees, and a timeline for consideration of the bond.

District Administration recommendations included supporting all 11 District-wide Committee recommendations (Air Ventilation, Roofing, Boilers & Steam Traps, Electrical Upgrades, Field/Site Work, Building Structures, ADA requirements, Flooring, Security Related Improvements, Greenacres Spatial Needs, and Greenacres Building Committee Recommendations), at an associated cost of \$66,400,755.

With regard to air conditioning, recommended by the District-wide Facilities Committee for all instructional spaces in the District at a cost of \$23.94 million, plus ceiling fans for large group areas at a cost of \$1.25 million, District Administration recommended that these be considered as an alternate proposal with a separate vote, predicated on approval of the first set of proposals, or deferred for continued study and an independent vote at a future date.

The presentation documents may be viewed on the District website [here](#).

Following this presentation, Mr. Natbony expressed the Board's thanks and deep appreciation for the work of the Administration and the many volunteers who served on the Greenacres and District-wide committees, and noted that the District has before it a rare and significant opportunity to make an important investment in the community's schools, with minimal impact on taxes. Mr. Natbony reviewed the Board's actions to date, particularly the "soft nod" it gave to the Administration in July to proceed with working on the details of a bond scope that would include District-wide facility improvements and repairs, and renovation/expansion at Greenacres (rather than a new building).

The Board then reviewed the District-wide Facilities Committee's list of recommendations, one by one.

The Board reached consensus to support the first nine categories recommended by the Committee and endorsed by the Administration: Fresh-Air Ventilation, Roofing, Boilers, Electrical Upgrades, Field/Site Work, Building Structures, ADA Compliance, Flooring, and Security-Related Improvements.

The Board engaged in a detailed discussion of the Greenacres Spatial Needs category, including the rationale for constructing new classrooms and for constructing a kitchen facility, and the impact of Greenacres improvements on other buildings in the District. The Board reached consensus to support the renovation/construction projects, but did not reach consensus on constructing the kitchen facility, which it put aside for further information and discussion at the next Board meeting.

The Board engaged in a detailed discussion of recommendations originating with the Greenacres Building Committee, and reached consensus to support temporary HEPA filtration, additional toilet renovations, and the continued study of additional parking solutions in some form other than the original proposal for street parking alongside Huntington Avenue, which Village safety officials found problematic.

The Board did not reach consensus on the Committee's recommendations for additional noise monitoring, air/dust monitoring, and security monitoring (noting that these were above and beyond the District's usual construction procedures), nor on the proposal for air conditioning in the Old Multi-Purpose Room and Library (noting the District-wide Facilities Committee's recommendation for ceiling fans in large spaces). The Board put these issues aside for further information and discussion at the next Board meeting.

The Board engaged in a detailed discussion of the recommendation for modular classrooms, noting that the District's practice on using modular classrooms is sparing, implemented only out of necessity and never on a contingency basis as was proposed. Board members also noted that there were sufficient contingency plans in place for construction delays, such as construction on nights and weekends, and that teachers had expressed strong reservations due to concerns about the safety of moving students between modulars and the main building, the ensuing impact on instructional time, and the isolation for staff and students. The Board reached a unanimous consensus to reject the recommendation on modular classrooms.

The Board engaged in a detailed discussion of the recommendation concerning air conditioning, noting that there appeared to be widespread support in the parent community for this, but that the Board had not yet had the opportunity to discuss the topic in a thorough way over time, as it has done for the bond project scope, or to hear community views on the topic. The Board also discussed the rationales for air conditioning, the importance of keeping the original bond scope in the tax-neutral range, and the possibility of putting the question of air conditioning before the community as a separate bond proposition. The Board did not reach consensus on the air conditioning recommendation, and put it aside for further information and discussion at the next Board meeting.

Community members were invited to address the Board, and four did so:

- Robert Berg, Tisdale Road, commended the Board for its open discussion and debate on the bond scope, and spoke in opposition to adding air conditioning to this referendum.
- Mary Beth Evans, 16 Edgewood Road, Chair of the League of Women Voters Bond Study Committee, asked for more details on the air conditioning recommendation, and plans to address future District facility needs.
- Mayra Kirkendall-Rodriguez, Fox Meadow Road, speaking as co-chair of the Scarsdale Forum Education Committee, reported that the Committee had completed its study of a District long-term financial plan, and noted that the Municipal Services committee of the Forum is continuing to distribute its traffic survey.
- Diane Greenwald, Oak Lane, spoke in support of District-wide air conditioning.

The Board approved items on the consent agenda, including the Personnel Report presented by Dr. Patrick.

The Board heard a report from Dr. Hagerman on proposed changes to Board policies on Admission of Non-Resident Students, and Alcohol and Controlled Substance Testing for District Drivers; a report from Dr. Patrick on an employee union contract; a report from Lynne Shain, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Assessment, and Instruction, on new High School textbooks; and a report from Ray Pappalardi, Director of Physical Education, Health, and Athletics, on a proposed permanent installation of field lights at Butler Field.

The Board adopted revisions to the policy on Admission of Non-Resident Students, and the External Audit report.

The Board voted to accept with thanks the gift from a community member of a harp, to be donated to the Middle School.

Community members were invited to address the Board for a second time, and one did so:

- Linda Doucette-Ashman, Brite Avenue, speaking for the League of Women Voters' subcommittee that is studying the proposed bond, asked about the date for community input for the 2018-2019 annual budget.

Mr. Natbony noted that a report on written communications to the Board was included in the meeting agenda online. In response to community questions, Mr. Matthey reported that community input for the annual budget will be invited at the December 11 Board meeting.

Mr. Natbony conducted a wrap-up of the meeting and Mr. Silberfein announced upcoming Board meetings on November 20 and November 27, and a Public Forum on the 2018 Bond Projects scheduled for Monday evening, December 4.

The Board adjourned at 11:34 p.m.

The Board meeting may be viewed on the District website (under Scarsdale Cable TV) [here](#).

Administrative Content

Executive Content

Last Modified by Honore Adams on November 21, 2017