

**THREE RIVERS SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
WORK SESSION
February 10, 2021**

Three Rivers School District Board of Directors met virtually via Zoom for a school board work session on Wednesday, February 10, 2021.

PRESENT

Jennifer Johnstun, Board Chair
Paul Kelly, Board Vice Chair
Rich Halsted, Board Member
Danny York, Board Member

Dave Valenzuela, Superintendent
Shelly Quick, Recording Secretary

ABSENT:

Jenn Searle, Board Member

CALL TO ORDER

Board Chair Johnstun called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m. and had Superintendent Valenzuela lead the Pledge of Allegiance. A roll call vote was taken.

AGENDA APPROVAL

Mr. Kelly made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Mr. York seconded the motion; the motion passed unanimously (4-0, Member Searle absent).

TRSD Discussion on Potential Bond

Superintendent Valenzuela recapped that the district has done a deep dive into facility needs, we have talked about the major infrastructure needs in the district and we know the individual needs at each of our schools and we now need to talk about how we can meet those needs.

Mr. Valenzuela shared that replacing the bond amount with the current rate does not cover the amount needed to pay for the things identified as critical needs. He reported the amount needed equates to a fundamental 20-year investment in the amount of \$86,750,000 which would be \$.93c per every \$1,000 on a 20-year bond. The recommended bond amount of \$81.77 million plus the OSCIM matching grant of \$4.975 million = the \$86.75 million total amount needed. For the average taxpayer that is about \$205 a year (on an average home with an assessed value of \$220,000). The approximate increase over 2020 taxes is only .46c per \$1,000 of assessed value.

There were some questions and discussion by board members around the bond amount, bond rate, and bond history. A slide was shared with the current bond rates across the region. It was noted that the proposed .93c rate would keep TRSD in the middle of the pack for districts where bond measures were approved.

Mr. Valenzuela shared the results of the public survey conducted by Nelson Research Group. A total of 396 respondents were interviewed by telephone between January 4 and January 18, 2021. The margin for error this survey is +/-4.9% at a 95% level of confidence. 73% of the calls that were made were folks that were 45 years old or older and less likely to have children in school, 59% were frequent or perfect voters, and non-voter responses are not reflected in the survey document. He then reviewed key items from the survey which included: the most serious issues facing the district, what the district is doing right and if an

election were held today would they favor or oppose the bond measure? At the time of the survey 53% favor, 37% oppose and 10% are not sure. The top reason for favoring the bond measure was: 31% - we have old schools that need repairs/upgrades, 22% - it's needed and 7% - children are our future. Out of the small percentage of people that said no the reasons were: 31% - taxes are too high/can't afford it, 22% - district mismanages money, 6% - funds won't go where promised and 6% - poor timing and 6% need more information.

A slide was presented with a list of projects to be completed at a cost of \$86.76 million. We will be bringing a resolution for the bond measure in front of the board at the February 17th board meeting.

Board members questions, comments and topics of discussion included: the more information we can provide to the voter, the better off we will be; utilize our Communications Coordinator to get information out to people not familiar with the district; invite members of the community to become involved in our school district; more optimistic after seeing the survey – if we do a good job we should easily get it passed; worries about the timing with the fire district levy happening at the same time; believes we should go with .93c; students are worthy to have schools that are in good repair; wants to shoot for the environment our kids deserve to be educated in; we can no longer compromise on safety measures in our schools; CTE upgrades are our future work force; good arguments as to why the outdoor learning spaces are necessary; the list is about necessities – not wants; revitalizing empty shells gutted in previous years due to previous budget cuts to restore/enhance our CTE programs and create these opportunities for kids; everything on the list is critical, but issue with doubling the current property tax rates during a time of COVID – uncertain of the impact; what happens if it does or does not pass?; clarified “doubling property tax rate” – actually it would double the current bond rate on property taxes; would only increase most voter’s property taxes by about \$100 a year; we owe it to the kids – they have had it rough for the last year; believes the community will rise up; if it doesn’t pass we have our construction excise tax, which is a pittance. When it becomes absolutely critical the money will have to be found and it will come from the classrooms – there will be tough decisions to make; reach out and get businesses behind the measure – not just individual homeowners; recapped recent issue of septic failure at Lincoln Savage and boiler issue at Fleming that could have potentially kept kids out of the classrooms; we need to be prepared to move forward next week – or not; looks forward to seeing the full survey – will give a view as to where the communications need to focus on.

FUTURE MEETING DATES

- Board Regular Session, Wednesday, February 17, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. – VIRTUAL
- Board Regular Session, Wednesday, March 10, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. - VIRTUAL

ADJOURNMENT

Board Chair Johnstun adjourned the meeting at 6:00 p.m.

Jennifer Johnstun
Chairperson of the Board

Dave Valenzuela
Superintendent-Clerk