

**WEBER SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**5320 Adams Avenue Parkway**  
**Ogden, UT**

**General Board Meeting**  
**August 4, 2021**

The Board of Education of Weber School District held a Board Meeting in the Board Rooms at 5320 Adams Avenue Parkway, Washington Terrace, Utah. The meeting convened at 6:00 p.m.

The following Board Members and Superintendency were present:

Jon Ritchie	Board President
Dean Oborn	Board Vice President
Janis Christensen	Board Member
Paul Widdison	Board Member
Jan Burrell	Board Member
Jeff Stephens	Superintendent
Art Hansen	Assistant Superintendent
Lori Rasmussen	Assistant Superintendent
Robert Petersen	Business Administrator

Board Member Doug Hurst was excused.

1. Pledge of Allegiance: Assistant Superintendent Lori Rasmussen
2. Consent Calendar
  - A. Minutes
  - B. Warrant Register
  - C. Budget Update
  - D. New Hires
  - E. Bid/Purchase Approvals
  - F. Leave of Absence Requests
  - G. Approval of LEA License and Endorsement Lists August 2021
  - H. Approval of Weber School District Early Learning Plan 2021-2022
  - I. Approval of Changes to 2021-2022 Fee Schedules
  - J. Approval of Weber School District's American Rescue Plan (ARP)
2. Discussion/Action Items
  - A. 1. Facilities Director Scott Zellmer - Needs Due to Overcrowding, Growth and Aging Facilities.
  2. Community Relations Specialist Lane Findlay - Survey Summary Data
  3. Business Administrator Robert Petersen - Financial Capacity
  - B. A Resolution providing for the holding of a special bond election in Weber School District, Utah for the purpose of submitting to the qualified electors of the District the question of the issuance and sale of \$\_\_\_\_\_ General Obligation School Building Bonds; providing for the holding of a public hearing and the publication of a Notice of Public Hearing; and providing for related matters.

- C. Approval of Revised Policy 2360 - *Special Education Transportation* - 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading
- D. Approval of Revised Policy 4199 - *Special Education Policy Statement* 1<sup>st</sup> Reading
- E. Approval of Property Tax Rates and Revenues for Tax Year 2021

**AGENDUM ITEM #2 – Consent Calendar**

A. Minutes

That the minutes for the Study Session and General Board Meeting Session dated June 9, 2021, be approved.

B. Warrant Register

That check numbers 00017036 through 00017459; and 00529382 through 00531169 totaling \$15,148,304.39 dated July 27, 2021, be approved.

C. Budget Update

That the budget update dated July 28, 2021, be approved.

D. New Hires

That the list of personnel changes and additions dated June 4, 2021, through July 29, 2021, be approved.

E. Bid/Purchase Approvals

F. Leave of Absence Requests

There was no leave of absence requests.

Board President, Jon Ritchie, called for a motion to approve the Consent Calendar.

Motion: Jan Burrell                      Seconded: Janis Christensen

That the above Consent Calendar be approved. Voting was unanimous in support of this motion.

### **AGENDUM ITEM #3 – Discussion/Action Items**

A. Facilities Director Scott Zellmer began discussing the need for a bond and explained bonding is the funding mechanism we use to address the district's facility needs caused by growth and aging facilities:

Growth - We are seeing tremendous growth with subdivisions in western and south western Weber County. Current enrollment and building capacity concerns are based on October 2020 enrollment with junior high and high school needs. It was noted just four years ago; twelve classrooms were added at Fremont High School. The question has been asked what about boundary changes. It was noted the district likes to utilize existing facilities and we have adjusted boundaries the past three years. We currently have seventy portables in the district, however there are security issues and infrastructure problems with bathrooms, gyms and cafeterias.

Aging facilities –All buildings are evaluated yearly in 24 different categories to determine where we focus our ongoing Facilities budget. A list of the ten most needy school buildings in the district were shown with the most critical being Roosevelt Elementary and T. H. Bell Jr. High.

Current needs in the district are a new high school located at the district owned property at 4300 W. 2200 S. in Taylor, a new Jr. High at district owned property 2700 W. 2000 S. in West Haven, new elementary school on district owned property 5100 W. 3300 S. in West Haven, replace Roosevelt Elementary, replace T.H. Bell Jr. High, and Pioneer/Canyon View replacement and re-purpose.

Estimated costs: New high school - \$157 million  
New Jr. high - \$51 million  
Elementary - \$34 million  
Replace Roosevelt - \$37 million including and acquisition & demolition  
**Total - \$279 million**

Replace T.H. Bell - additional \$55 million  
Pioneer/Canyon View - additional \$45 million  
**Total - \$379 million**

Community Relations Specialist Lane Findlay began discussing the 2021 bond viability research survey conducted in house March 2021 with 5,881 responses. A findings summary was then discussed showing in general, people have a good overall impression of Weber School District and recognize the greatest need is striking a balance between building new schools and replacing aging schools. There is strong support for a bond if it does not include a tax rate increase with employees at 81.2%, parents 74.3% and public 71.7%. That support decreases if a tax rate increase is required with 12-18% increase in those likely to vote “no.”

The top 5 most important projects were identified in the survey:

New high school  
Rebuild Roosevelt  
New Jr. high  
Rebuild T.H. Bell  
New elementary

## Findings from Y2 Analytics focus groups March 2021

- Good view of the district
- Limited knowledge about a possible bond
- Recognize the growth taking place in the area
- Recognize the need for new schools and replacement upgrades
- Open to the idea of a bond
- Opposition to a bond grew when tax rate increased
- Support increased when people were provided more information about the district's needs.

Surveys were sent out to voters and 916 surveys were received back.

All research in house and with Y2 Analytics show good support as long as there is no tax rate increase.

Robert Petersen introduced Matt Dougdale from Stifel. Matt shared a presentation from a financing standpoint and noted Weber School District exudes financing excellence. The district has taken advantage of low interest rates by refinancing bonds and were able to restructure refinancing resulting in bonds paid off earlier. They will now be paid off in 2024. Weber School District's bond rating is Aa2 and has been successful maintaining high investment grade ratings throughout its bonding campaigns of the last decade. Matt shared what the ballot language would look like then talked about debt service tax levy. It was noted Weber School District has not increased our debt service levy since 2005. Weber School District's comparable tax levies are lower among other districts in the state.

Preston Kirk with Stifel noted they have worked with Weber School District for ten years. The following three scenarios were shared:

Option 1 - \$279 million to build a high school, junior high school, elementary and replace Roosevelt Elementary. Bonds are not all issued at the same time but in phases. Existing bonds will be layered in with a new bond. It was noted the ballot has a provision stating you cannot take into consideration existing bonds.

Option 2 – \$334 million includes replacement of T.H. Bell Jr. It was noted \$300 million is the maximum to bond without a tax increase. Possible increase of \$30.02 in tax increase on a \$395,000 home.

Option 3 – \$379 million adding Pioneer/Canyon View project. This would result in a tax increase in the amount of taxes of \$61.66.

Robert Petersen summarized options 1, 2 & 3 and noted we want to be reasonable on our assumptions and realistic on estimates of priorities.

Superintendent Stephens thanked all and noted there are so many variables into an important decision to bond. We have tried to implement strategies to delay bonding with boundary adjustments that have helped us utilize all of our existing facilities thus far. We see the need especially in the western part of the county. Preparing for this bond we have tried to seek input from tax payers, but have not been able to hold town hall meetings due to the COVID pandemic. It was noted over the last four weeks; nine city council meetings have been visited with four or five more to attend. The support is similar to what has been shared with our survey.

Superintendent Stephens noted the Board has for sixteen years with four different bond cycles not raised the debt service rates. Our over-all tax rate has declined every year for the past five years. There has been increases in assessed values however. It was noted as Lane Findlay presented, it appears we have strong support of sixty to seventy percent without a tax rate increase. This reflects quality, trust and leadership from the Board.

Board President Jon Ritchie then opened the meeting up for discussion from the Board.

Board Member Jan Burrell noted even with the margin of error, the data still shows strong support in favor of the bond.

Board Vice President Dean Oborn noted he was asked by a constituent about property tax rates. It was noted the overall certified tax rate decreased and is set by the tax commission. Superintendent Stephens explained tax values and noted there has not been a tax increment in over four years from the district. The Board only controls the tax rates, not assessed values computed by the tax commission.

Board member Bruce Jardine moved to motion by adopting a resolution for holding a special bond election in the amount of \$279 million which would not require a tax rate increase.

Seconded: Paul Widdison.

That the approval adopting a resolution for holding a special bond election in the amount of \$279 million be approved. Voting was unanimous in favor of the motion.

Superintendent Stephens concluded noting how communities may be disappointed not being on the list of projects, but explained they will rise to the top on the next possible bond cycle. We will make facilities function for the next few years.

Roll call vote was then taken on the motion from Board Member Bruce Jardine.

Jan Burrell – aye  
Bruce Jardine -aye  
Paul Widdison – aye  
Janis Christensen – aye  
Dean Oborn – aye  
Jon Ritchie - aye

#### B. Approval of Revised Policy 2360 – *Special Education Transportation* – 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading

Special Education Director Quinn Karlinsey noted since the amendments made at the June 9<sup>th</sup> Board meeting, there has been no further input. This Special Education Transportation policy has been in place for two years. The amendment clarifies eligibility consideration for students. It is recommended the Board approve Revised Policy 2360 -*Special Education Transportation* on a second reading.

Motion: Jan Burrell

Seconded: Bruce Jardine

That the Approval of Revised Policy 2360 – *Special Education Transportation* on a second reading be approved. Voting was unanimous in favor of the motion.

C. Approval of Revised Policy 4199 – *Special Education Policy Statement* - 1<sup>st</sup> reading

Special Education Director Quinn Karlinsey noted they are asking for a revision to Special Education Policy and the Policy and Procedure Manual. It reflects a more uniform formatting with other Weber School District policies and come into compliance with new Special Education rules USBE passed last year. A template model was provided and was approved by the State. It is recommended the Board approve Revised Policy 4199 – *Special Education Policy Statement* on a first reading.

Motion: Janis Christensen    Seconded: Paul Widdison

That the Approval of Revised Policy 4199 – *Special Education Policy Statement* on a first reading be approved. Voting was unanimous in favor of the motion.

D. Approval of Property Tax Rates and Revenue for 2021

Business Administrator Robert Petersen explained every year as per the Utah State Tax Commission, a form is generated with a list of all our levies. At the time of our last Board meeting we didn't have the basic rate from the State of Utah. The final tax rate for Tax Year 2021 is 0.05566. It is recommended the Board approve the overall tax rate.

Motion: Dean Oborn                      Seconded: Jan Burrell

That the final tax rate of 0.005566 for Tax Year 2021 be approved. Voting was unanimous in favor of the motion.

**AGENDUM ITEM #4 – Information Items**

➤ USBE School Fees Statistical Report

After determining no further business need be conducted, President Ritchie called for a motion to adjourn the general session of Board Meeting.

Motion: Jan Burrell                      Seconded: Dean Oborn

That the general session of Board Meeting be adjourned. Voting was unanimous in favor of the motion.

General Board Meeting adjourned at: 7:13 p.m.