

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

**Special Board Study Session**  
**February 26, 2021**

The Board of Education of Weber School District held a Study Session in the Board Rooms at 5320 Adams Avenue Parkway, Washington Terrace, Utah. The meeting convened at 8:00 a.m. The following Board Members and Superintendency were present:

|                 |                          |
|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Jon Ritchie     | Board President          |
| Dean Oborn      | Board Vice President     |
| Doug Hurst      | Board Member             |
| Jan Burrell     | Board Member             |
| Bruce Jardine   | Board Member             |
| Paul Widdison   | Board Member             |
| Jeff Stephens   | Superintendent           |
| Art Hansen      | Assistant Superintendent |
| Lori Rasmussen  | Assistant Superintendent |
| Robert Petersen | Business Administrator   |

President Ritchie welcomed everyone.

Superintendent Stephens began noting the need to assess the needs in our school district with capital facilities and bonds. The purpose of bonding is to keep pace with growth enrollment and keeping up with aging facilities. Both of these areas need to be addressed. It has been over twenty years since the Board has raised the tax rate related to debt service. Today we will be looking at three things: need - current capacity, housing developments in place already approved, and assess our oldest facilities for overall effectiveness and rank them as needed. We will then look into where we are financially. Superintendent turned the time over to Director of Facilities Scott Zellmer. Scott began his presentation with the following charts:

**Building Capacity and Functionality Assessment**

**Student Growth Pressure High Schools**

|          | <u>Capacity</u> | <u>Current</u> | <u>% Full</u> |
|----------|-----------------|----------------|---------------|
| Roy High | 1,865           | 1,829          | 98%           |
| Fremont  | 2,082           | 2,026          | 97%           |
| Weber    | 2,025           | 2,060          | 102%          |

Superintendent Stephens noted Fremont was initially built with a capacity of 1,800 and even then, the size of the gym, auditorium, and cafeteria were small. With the bond in 2017 we added twelve additional classrooms at Fremont High to increase the permanent capacity. At their current capacity, they are very full. Some pressure has been eased by adding WIC as a choice for families and we have over 3,000 of our students attending charter schools. Most are K-6 or K-9 charter schools so they eventually funnel back into our high schools.

President Ritchie noted over the last several years we are always talking about capacity. He asked as a Board, what is the number to anticipate for the future. It was noted balancing the needs of our schools with taxpayer capacity. We have done boundary adjustments related to the 2017 bond, opened WIC to give more options, but we are about out of strategies to continue to utilize our existing facilities. Board member Bruce Jardine noted the pressure on buildings deteriorates at a higher rate with higher capacities. Board Vice President Dean Oborn commented when he was principal at Roy Jr. High, they were at 1,200 capacity built for 900. We need to look ahead far enough.

### **Student Growth Pressure Junior High Schools**

|                 | <u>Capacity</u> | <u>Current</u> | <u>% Full</u> |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------|
| Roy Jr.         | 1,200           | 978            | 82            |
| Sand Ridge Jr.  | 975             | 876            | 90            |
| Rocky Mountain  | 1,050           | 1,150          | 110           |
| Wahlquist Jr.   | 1,200           | 1,235          | 103           |
| North Ogden Jr. | 918             | 933            | 102           |
| Orion Jr.       | 925             | 1,070          | 116           |
| South Ogden Jr. | 925             | 911            | 98            |
| T.H. Bell Jr.   | 800             | 661            | 83            |

### **Student Growth Pressure Elementary Schools**

#### South West Weber County

|              | <u>Capacity</u> | <u>Current</u> | <u>% Full</u> |
|--------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------|
| Hooper       | 750             | 687            | 92            |
| Country View | 825             | 623            | 76            |
| Kanesville   | 825             | 857            | 104           |

North Ogden/Harrisville

|                 | <u>Capacity</u> | <u>Current</u> | <u>%Full</u> |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------|
| Pioneer         | 525             | 426            | 81           |
| Majestic        | 700             | 770            | 110          |
| Green Acres     | 825             | 503            | 61           |
| Orchard Springs | 875             | 461            | 53           |

Board member Jan Burrell asked how many of the homes being built are high density (townhouses etc.). It was noted there are approximately 110 townhomes in development. These are single family or high density homes. High density homes usually have young families.

**Building Assessment Bottom 10**

|               | <u>Yr Built</u> |
|---------------|-----------------|
| Roosevelt     | 1957            |
| TH Bell       | 1962            |
| Canyon View   | 1968            |
| Municipal     | 1957            |
| Lomond View   | 1969            |
| Roy El        | 1963            |
| Lakeview      | 1952            |
| Valley View   | 1964            |
| Bonneville HS | 1959            |

Scott noted Canyon View has a lot of pressure on the building and the way it is used. Roosevelt currently has the most need. Superintendent Stephens noted this gives a great sense of the two areas to address with bonding on growth and facilities. Growth is more immediate but we try to balance the facilities.

Superintendent Stephens next invited Preston Kirk and Matt Dugdale to show where we are financially related to debt service. Preston and Matt have done months of managing our debt service by refunding our bonds and restructuring our debts. All of this has an impact on our tax rate for taxpayers.

Matt presented the following information after congratulating the district on its successful financial history. Refunding on the 2011 bond, due to Robert Petersen there will be significant savings with lower interest rates. The rates have gone up and down the last ten years but we are at a low point. Low rates affect the district because our debt is getting lower. This structure allows the ability to bring on more debt. We are able to restructure the debt to layer in a bond. District tax level levies have come up. The district has a great bond rating at Aa2.

Preston shared that our debt service tax levy has been fairly constant for fifteen years. We are confronting the same as other districts, Utah's growth. The last ten years we have endeavored to get every penny out to save. We have been able to refund bonds when interest rates have dropped. We are in a great position with interest rates remaining low at 2%. Preston then presented the following:

### 2021 Election Estimates

| <u>Option 1 Base Case</u>          | <u>4 Bond Issues</u> | <u>5 Bond Issues</u> | <u>4Bonds</u> | <u>5 Bonds</u> | <u>Ballot Prop.</u> |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|---------------|----------------|---------------------|
| <b>\$219 Million Bond Election</b> |                      |                      |               |                |                     |
| \$72 Million in 2022               | \$17.23 in 2026      | No Increase          | \$1.44        | \$0.00         | \$111.56            |
| \$125 Million in 2022              | \$18.93 in 2023      | \$17.89 in 2023      | \$1.58        | \$1.49         | \$115.78            |
| <br>                               |                      |                      |               |                |                     |
| <u>Option 2</u>                    |                      |                      |               |                |                     |
| <b>\$262 Million Bond Election</b> |                      |                      |               |                |                     |
| \$72 Million in Early 2022         | \$48.50 in 2026      | \$27.28 in 2027      | \$4.04        | \$2.27         | \$133.85            |
| \$125 Million in Early 2022        | \$37.85 in 2026      | \$29.25 in 2027      | \$3.15        | \$2.44         | \$138.08            |
| <br>                               |                      |                      |               |                |                     |
| <u>Option 1 (10% in '23)</u>       |                      |                      |               |                |                     |
| <b>\$219 Million Bond Election</b> |                      |                      |               |                |                     |
| \$72 Million in Early 2022         | \$5.17 in 2026       | No Increase          | \$0.43        | \$0.00         | \$105.00 (4)        |
| \$125 Million in Early 2022        | No Increase          | No Increase          | \$0.00        | \$0.00         | \$110.52 (5)        |
| <br>                               |                      |                      |               |                |                     |
| <u>Option 2</u>                    |                      |                      |               |                |                     |
| <b>\$262 Million Bond Election</b> |                      |                      |               |                |                     |
| \$72 Million in Early 2022         | \$35.02 in 2028      | \$14.76 in 2027      | \$2.92        | \$1.23         | \$127.28 (4)        |
| \$125 Million in Early 2022        | \$24.85 in 2026      | \$16.64 in 2027      | \$2.07        | \$1.39         | \$131.80            |

Superintendent Stephens noted the two options are related to Scott Zellmer's presentation regarding growth and managing our aging facilities. The \$219 million and \$262 million were not just numbers. The significance about the \$219 million is there is a path to get to it without having to raise the tax rate. It is a conservative path because the growth projections are conservative. The one thing that needs to happen in order for the \$219 million bond to happen without a tax rate increase is we need to let the taxpayers know it will take place over the next five years. If we see greater assessed value growth, it will allow us to accelerate the issuance of bonds. We do not want to over promise and under deliver, so with conservative projectections related to growth, there is a path to get to the \$219 million and all it would entail.

The second path with \$219 million bonds without a tax increase have more aggressive estimates of 10%, 10% and then 5% and 5%. In this scenario we could get to \$219 million without a tax increase but complete projects in four years. Refinance and restructuring have created the two pathways to get to the \$219 million without a tax increase rate.

The \$262 million option includes additional projects but will have a tax rate increase. It will be minimal if done over five bonds using an aggressive estimate of future growth but we can for less than \$1 a month on an average home.

Superintendent Stephens noted a High school and Jr. High on Option 1 would allow us to be able to begin simultaneously. Option 2 with the \$125 million, we can start an Elementary, Jr. High and High school simultaneously. This will help prevent increases in construction costs.

Dr. Robert Petersen then presented possible 2021 Election Bond Project - as of 2/1/2021

| PROJECT:                    | <u>Budget</u> | <u>Architect</u> | <u>Construction</u> | <u>Testing &amp; Fees</u> | <u>Equip. Other</u> | <u>FF&amp;E</u> | <u>Total</u>       |
|-----------------------------|---------------|------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| High School                 | 111,473,00    | 5,250,00         | 100,000,000         | 185,000                   | 329,000             | 5,709,000       | 111,473,000        |
| Junior High                 | 50,827,000    | 1,410,000        | 47,000,000          | 185,000                   | 329,000             | 1,903,000       | 50,827,000         |
| Elementary                  | 28,669,000    | 780,000          | 26,000,000          | 185,000                   | 329,000             | 1,375,000       | 28,669,000         |
| Roosevelt(rebuild)          | 27,925,000    | 1,500,000        | 25,000,000          | 100,000                   | 200,000             | 1,125,000       | 27,925,000         |
| <b>Priority 1 Sub-Total</b> |               |                  |                     |                           |                     |                 | <b>218,894,000</b> |
| Colosimo                    | 31,009,000    | 1,120,000        | 28,000,000          | 185,000                   | 329,000             | 1,375,000       | 31,009,000         |
| Pioneer/C View              | 12,300,000    | 800,000          | 10,000,000          | 100,000                   | 200,000             | 1,200,000       | 12,300,000         |
| <b>Priority 2 Sub-Total</b> |               |                  |                     |                           |                     |                 | <b>43,309,000</b>  |
| <b>Total:</b>               |               |                  |                     |                           |                     |                 | <b>262,203,000</b> |

Superintendent Stephens noted the district already owns these properties, and how there was great forethought to purchase the land where we would need it in the future at low costs.

The Colosimo Property gives an option for Pioneer/Canyon View. It was noted there is not an easy fix for Canyon View so we considered in this scenario to address growth in the Harrisville area and also move Canyon View into Pioneer. It would need remodeling to adapt to the special needs students coming from Canyon View. Canyon View would then be sold. It was noted the Colosimo land boundaries Majestic Elementary and would relieve some pressure off that school.

Superintendent Stephens introduced Scott Riding and Kyrene Gibb from Y2 Analytics. They will go over the process for a bond giving reliable data on where the public stands on this information.

Scott began noting they work on many school bonds. He explained taxpayer groups may not know much about our district and the bond. Their job is to help us know if the bond is likely to pass. The ballot language represents to voters if voted for; taxes stay the same, if not then money may come back to them. Education and listening components are important on bonds and the economy may be a factor.

Superintendent noted there is no need to rush into this. We will listen and collect feedback to make an informed decision. If the Board decides and we have defined the set of projects, knowing we have taken the time to listen, the public will know we have been very deliberate. We want to receive feedback and know these are the tentative proposals. The timeline following today is to recruit participants to participate in focus groups over the next month. The survey would be in the field until April, come back in May with results and then back in July when we know the status of the economy. Most of the 800-1,000 surveys will be conducted online.

Superintendent Stephens explained the money received in December from the federal government is distributed using the Title I formula. Our allocation is \$8.5 million of ESSER (Elementary Secondary Schools Emergency Relief funds). This is one time money to be used for help with academic learning loss. The state legislature also weighed in on how local districts can spend federal funds. The base budget is outlined in SB1 & SB2 with the appropriate uses of ESSER funds. All of these address learning loss. It further states any district that used ESSER funds differently than indicated; the state would take back funds.

We have until September 30, 2022 to expend these funds. Sheri Heiter, the Curriculum department and about 200 teacher fellows will assess K-12 data across all curriculums. Fellows will develop assessments to help teachers monitor progress, growth and also training for all teachers specific to their content area. Professional development will be put together by teachers. Training will consist of four sessions, 1.5 hours each and once completed will earn a \$500 stipend. There will also be technology training to address needs and will receive a \$500 stipend with up to possibly twelve hours of training. Every school will receive \$100 per student to put together very specific intervention plans based on their schools needs.

Each teacher will receive \$300 teacher supply money for instructional supplies through Class Wallet. It was noted the majority of money will be going to teachers. Kids need their teachers. The bonuses provided by the legislature are for school based individuals, not district employees. These are the people working with kids in schools on a daily basis.

Meeting adjourned at 11:40 am