



909 South 76th Street, Omaha, NE 68114  
[www.westside66.org](http://www.westside66.org)



## PROJECT ADVOCATES

*Your Project. Our Passion.*  
120 South 31st Avenue, Suite 5101, Omaha, NE 68131  
[www.project-advocates.com](http://www.project-advocates.com)

**MEETING:** WCS Bond Oversight Committee

**MEETING DATE:** Aug 9, 2016

**DATE PREPARED:** August 26, 2016

The Bond Oversight Committee Meeting of Westside Community Schools convened in open and public session on August 9, 2016 at 6:01 p.m. at the Westside ABC Building, 909 South 76<sup>th</sup> Street, Omaha, Nebraska.

Advance notice of the meeting occurred:

- On the front page of Westside Community School's District website (no less than 48 hours in advance of the scheduled meeting date as authorized by Board Policy 1220) beginning on August 7, 2016 until the start of this Oversight Committee meeting.
- Simultaneously with the availability of the agenda to all members of the Bond Oversight Committee and staff of the Board of Education office ("the Board" hereafter).

All proceedings hereafter were taken while the convened meeting was open to the public.\*

Committee members present: John Hughes (Chairperson), Kris Brown, David Cota, Ms. Ann Christianson. Mike Williams was absent.

District Administrators and Staff Members in attendance: Dr. Blane McCann, Bob Zagozda, Brandi Petersen.

Others in Attendance: Kris Karnes (BOE), Beth Morrisette (BOE), Rob Zimmerman, Beth Molloy.

\*Members of the public in attendance are not required to identify themselves.

Chairperson John Hughes called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. Mr. Hughes confirmed that the meeting had been publicly announced, that the agenda was available to any interested parties, and that the public was welcome to attend and speak, in accordance with the current statutes of the Nebraska Open Meeting Act as posted in the foyer of the District Administrative Offices (ABC Building).

Mr. Hughes presented minutes from the meeting held on July 12, 2016. Mr. David Cota moved to approve the minutes. Mr. Kris Brown seconded the motion. All voting members in attendance, voted and approved the minutes. The motion passed with four approving votes.





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### Program Update

#### □ **Communication Planning & Efforts:**

- Mr. John Hughes welcomed and introduced Ms. Brandi Petersen, Westside's new Director of Communications and Engagement.
- Sneak-a-Peaks and Open Houses were held on August 8, 2016. The Westside community was invited to view the safety, security, and infrastructure updates at the High Priority Schools and at the new Westside Oakdale Elementary on the Swing School/West campus. Information was posted on the district's social media sites.
- The District took the opportunity to showcase the construction progress and plans at the Sneak-a-Peaks and Open Houses. Signage was well-received. Rob Zimmerman noted that the focus of interest and celebration was where it should be - on the learners rather than on the updated learning spaces.
- Ms. Petersen reported that NewsRadio 1110 KFAB's Tom Stanton interviewed Dr. Blane McCann and Mr. Bob Zagozda on August 8, 2016. They discussed renovations and security and safety upgrades.
- Mr. Brett Williams 5<sup>th</sup> grade classroom at Oakdale Elementary is prototyping some of the flexible furniture that is being considered for the new Oakdale facility.
- Dr. McCann relayed conversations with students at Paddock Road and Oakdale Elementary schools. The students were excited about their new areas of refuge.
- Teachers at Westgate Elementary are enthusiastic about the seamless look and security of Westgate's new entrance.
- Security ID badges for the new security system are still being distributed.
- Westside Middle School is under construction while school is in process.
- BOC and BOE members would like a tour of the upgraded school buildings.
- Mr. John Hughes will present the Bond Oversight Annual Report to the Westside Board of Education (BOE) at the October 17, 2016 BOE meeting.
- In conjunction, Dr. McCann will present the updated Facilities Master Plan at the October 17, 2016 BOE meeting. Project Advocates will assist preparing the report. This report is the 15-year rolling facilities plan that will be continually updated. There will be a section highlighting accomplishments of 2016, which is year one of the current Facilities Master Plan.
- Ms. Petersen, with Rob Zimmerman, will develop quarterly BOC construction progress talking points for publishing to the BOE, teachers, staff, and parents.





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### □ High Priority Projects Update:

- Summer work at the High Priority Elementary schools was completed on schedule.
- Some additional exterior work is continuing, as scheduled.
- The process of issuing security ID badges to all staff is still underway, as scheduled.
- Final trade contractor invoices will be received during the next month.
- Certificates of occupancy were not required for the High Priority project renovations
- There are some design modifications that Project Advocates will track and address over time.
- Project Advocates is saving the “Yet to Be Assigned” reserve for modifications made to the High Priority schools.

### □ West Campus / Oakdale Elementary Swing School Construction Project Updates:

- The State license for Oakdale Elementary School’s Early Childhood Education Center was obtained by opening day. Ms. Morrisette thanked Joel McWilliams of Project Advocates for his assistance procuring the license.
- The elevator from the old Oakdale Elementary was reused at the CCC / Swing School building.
- The re-zoning of Oakdale Elementary School’s land parcel was granted by the City Council on August 8, 2016.
- Asbestos abatement is complete.
- The new cell tower for the Sprint cellular array and the tornado siren will be installed the week of August 17, 2016. The District is contracting the pole installer. Sprint is installing the fiber optic cables.
- Demolition for Oakdale Elementary started early. The cell tower issue has slowed the schedule down, but without significant impact.
- For a period of two weeks in September, trucks will haul and stockpile dirt excavated from Oakdale Elementary to the Sunset Hills Elementary site.
- Ms. Petersen will communicate the hauling schedule to the community, cautioning the neighborhoods and contractors to be vigilant about child safety as trucks travel through the Sunset Hills area. She will emphasize the stewardship of bond issue dollars and the cost savings that result from transferring dirt from Oakdale Elementary to Sunset Hills Elementary.
- Prairie Construction was the lowest responsive bidder of five competitive bids. They were awarded the contract for the new Oakdale Elementary school. Their low bid exceeded the construction budget.
- Project Advocates, DLR, and Prairie Construction have been working together to identify cost reductions to help align the general contract with the budget.
  - Mr. Zimmerman recommends allocating \$400,000 of the \$578,000 contingency budget to the construction budget.
  - The Facility Task Force’s initial plan for a two-section school was 54,000 square feet at \$200/sf. During the Ed Spec process, that size specification increased a few thousand



feet. During the design phase, the plans called for the increased space at a reduced cost of \$190/sf. The bid process proved that a lower price for more space was an ambitious and unattainable budget estimate for Oakdale's design.

- A portion of the bid overage is for the site work.
  - The team is evaluating options to address the bid overage. Some options under consideration include: reducing overall square footage by dropping the third elective program classroom, reallocating some Resource space, removing the bump-outs on the exterior façade to save on footings costs, re-raising the site level, cutting back on finishes, and using hurricane glass vs. shutters. Mr. Zimmerman walked through the building plan to illustrate the changes under consideration.
  - Ms. Morrisette and Ms. Karnes noted that program changes may need to be brought before the BOE for re-approval.
  - Mr. Hughes noted that Oakdale Elementary was designed 2000 sf bigger than the original program Ed Specs. It is unfortunate that the budget mark was exceeded. Some contributing factors include the following: the iterative design process which includes community input is valuable but costly, the current level of demand in Omaha for trade contract workers in Omaha is over-heated and driving up costs, the scope of site work is extensive, and some design "luxury wants" were included in the base design as "needs".
  - Mr. Hughes agrees that Project Advocates' recommendation to use contingency funds and scale back the square footage is the best approach for addressing the overage.
  - Mr. Cota suggested that Project Advocates develop a crisp narrative to describe the evolution from the high-level 2014 assessment budget, to the revisions of that 2014 budget, to the revised numbers for the Bond, and then lastly, to the bid. The narrative should clearly delineate the trade-offs between the design value versus its cost. One example would be meeting the design commitment for FEMA-rated areas of refuge with hurricane glass versus the costlier choice of folding or recessed shutters.
  - Mr. Cota said that substantive material design re-scaling to reduce costs should be discussed with Westside's BOE.
  - An addendum to Oakdale's construction documents, capturing all the cost reduction changes, will be published to amend the permit and the contract with Prairie Construction.
  - Construction will start when Prairie Construction's general contract is amended and signed. The transfer of excavated dirt from Oakdale to Sunset Hills Elementary will be first on the schedule.
- **Westside Middle School Project Updates:**
- Westside Middle School construction progress is tracking on schedule.
  - Underground utility issues have been handled by Leuder Construction.
  - Footings are being installed.



- Structural steel and pre-cast concrete are on site.
  - Mr. Cota noted that the Project Milestone dates for Westside Middle School need to be updated to the current schedule.
  - Completion of Phase I construction for the new addition is scheduled for December 16, 2017. The goal is to move students into the new space in January, 2017. If there is a wet and rainy autumn, the schedule will be tight but achievable.
  - Leuder will be self-performing some of the Phase I work.
  - All bids for Phase 1 have been received. The final GMP with Leuder has been established within budget, with portions used from contingency. There is \$500k left in the contingency budget.
  - Loveland Elementary school's portables were moved and re-utilized at Westside Middle School.
- **Sunset Hills Elementary Project Updates:**
    - Tack Architects' design development drawings were reviewed with the BOE at a productive lunch meeting. Tack will respond to the meeting comments, such as the request for more splashes of color.
    - The design development package will be presented at an upcoming BOE meeting.
    - Construction documents will be completed by the end of the year, and then put out for general contractor bids in January, 2017.
  - **Swanson Elementary Project Updates:**
    - Project Advocates met with Ms. Jennifer Harr, Principal of Swanson Elementary School to initiate the design process.
    - Project Advocates is drafting an RFQ to be issued to design firms within the next month. The design will again be produced in collaboration by the designers and the Design Advisory Committee after gathering community input. It will be completed during the 2016-2017 school year.
    - In addition to generating a response for a new building, Mr. Hughes would like the RFQ to encourage architects to provide a concept for a renovation / addition to the current building. This was the alternative ultimately selected for the Westside Middle School, with great success.

### **Bond Status Update**

- Expenditures are on track with expectations.
- Expenditures doubled from June 2016 to July 2016.
- With completion of the High Priority School construction, Mr. Zagozda expects approximately the same volume of expenditures in August 2016.



- The initial borrowing of bond funds was \$55 million, which were sold at a \$57 premium, leaving \$2 million in deposited cash.
- Future coupon interest is owed on the bonds sold at premium.
- The additional \$2 million premium may be used to borrow less in the next borrow, so that overall a total of \$79.9 million is borrowed.
- The strategy for the next bond borrowing will be reviewed and approved by the BOC.

### **Closing Comments**

Dr. McCann reported that the BOE is collaborating with the Boys and Girls Club for a long-term agreement at the Westgate Elementary School.

Boys and Girls Club has issued a request for interest for a middle school teen center to Westside School District, as well as, Millard, Bellevue, Ralston. Dr. McCann is responding to the request for interest for the teen center.

Mr. Hughes adjourned the meeting at 7:46 p.m.

