

LEVY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING  
Final Minutes: April 29, 2009

**ATTENDANCE**

Seth Adams, Josh Almy, John Baringer, Maryann Bellavia, Terri-Ann Betancourt, Susan Cohodes, Trina Davis, Tina Dunne, Paul Dutton, Kate Emerson, Bernie Gibson, Wayne Hamasaki, Jane Harris, Holly Hollinger, Tania Issa, Doug Jones, Yuni Kim, Sharon Klein, Janine Kotan, Susan Lammers, Tola Marts, Maureen McCarry, Jeff McGowen, Anne Moore, Kimberly Montague, Rick Moulton, Jody Mull, Kelly Munn, Deborah Parsons, Floyd Rogers, Pat Sansing, John Somers, Carol Stamper, Leigh Stokes, Drew Terry, Dawn Wallace, Connie F. Wan, Absent from meeting: Matt Bott, Tera Coyle, Jon Hegstrom, Duane Silvestri, Dean Van Dyke, Antonette Wood.

**WELCOME AND REVIEW OF MINUTES**

Mr. Thiele opened the meeting by reminding people to pick up printed information on the table and asked them to sign the attendance sheet. The committee took some time to review the minutes.

Mr. Thiele welcomed the committee back for the third meeting and expressed appreciation for the time being given to help with the levy process. As previously mentioned in emails to the committee, if a fourth meeting is required it will be scheduled for next week on Wednesday, May 6<sup>th</sup>. The first order of business will be to approve the minutes.

Mr. Thiele moved on to read a correction to the minutes regarding the major companies on the Washington bid list for buses.

The following amendments to the minutes were suggested.

- It should read: ...'the major companies for the small buses are Bluebird, Mid Bus, Collins and Girardin.' Mr. Thiele asked if there were any other corrections.

No other corrections were proposed.

**Vote:** A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes for the April 15<sup>th</sup> meeting as amended. By a unanimous show of hands, the motion passed and the minutes were approved as amended.

Mr. Thiele outlined what is coming up as the committee proceeds through the levy development process. He shared his thoughts about the levy process. A levy is always forward thinking. It is the foundation for ISD planning that insures a revenue stream for future education needs. The dollars secured through a successful passage of our 2010 levy package will be addressing education, technology, transportation and critical facility needs for up to 5 years out from 2010 when the levy is on the ballot. Levy income provides revenue that school systems need. He gave an example from the food service list of an oven that has an average life span of up to 12 years but that is currently only eight years old. By the time the 2006 levy funds are exhausted, the oven will be twelve or thirteen years old and it will need to be replaced. So, it really is about securing that ongoing stream of income. At the last meeting a question was answered stating that 65% of the work has been completed from the last levy and what should be remembered is that

money has only been collected since 2007 – only two and one half years. With this 2010 levy, money will not start being collected until April 2011 and then go out 4 years from that. Future needs going out 5 years need to be anticipated. That is why the district always must come back to the voters and ask for a new levy to insure that revenue is in the pipeline. This assures that the School District does not get behind. Mr. Kuper interjected that it in addition to being difficult to catch up with expenses, it also becomes more expensive to catch up.

Mr. Theile proceeded to explain that to this point the ballot components that the committee has addressed began with the Maintenance and Operation levy (M & O), a detailed explanation about school finance and the 24.97% levy lid for the Issaquah School District and then moved on to the Transportation and School Bus Replacement ballot measure. A good discussion of the proposal resulted in approval. Now the work in front of the committee is the Capital Levy which includes Critical Repairs and Technology. The critical repairs portion was discussed at the last meeting and copies of the springboard proposal for critical repairs and the technology portions of the Capital Levy were given to the committee prior to the meeting.

Mr. Thiele reiterated that the spring board proposals should fit within the superintendent's parameters. These include recognizing the current economic climate and making sure each Levy will include funding essential to insure that the Issaquah School District has all of the resources possible to meet its mission and student ends learning goals. This is important because the mission and ends for our students is the foundation for the philosophy driving the district's budgeting. Additionally the parameters include safety and efficiently maintaining facilities and property according to state and district use standards and schedules. A levy that can be presented to voters as a package that does not represent a tax increase, will be essential in a tough economic climate.

Mr. Thiele then explained that the committee should now look at the process to amend the Capital Levy springboard proposals and adopt a total levy package. At this meeting the committee will have the opportunity to amend and change the Critical Repairs and Technology springboard proposals. Presentations will be made by the Technical Team and the committee will be given time to ask questions and have discussions with their table groups. It is important to have input from the committee as representatives of their communities to assure that the springboard proposals can be endorsed by the members. At the end of this process, a formal amendment will be voted on. To pass, 75% of the members must approve and only members that have attended 2 of the 3 meetings can vote tonight.

### **CAPITAL LEVY: CRITICAL REPAIRS**

Mr. Crawford reviewed the materials that were handed out to the committee. The back pages describe the codes, provide the CSI description codes, construction specification codes and project categories. Also included are the new food service spread sheets related to food service equipment. This spread sheet shows the age of the equipment today and the expected life of the equipment. The other thing to note is the total of \$867,875. The

previous spreadsheet last week listed a total of \$1,710,000. There was an error in the way the totals had been calculated on that spreadsheet. The incorrect total was not included in the project total so there is not an actual reduction in the overall total for the Food Service request.

Mr. Crawford explained that the other two spread sheets in the package were broken down and totaled in two different ways. One is sorted by school and subtotaled by school and the other is sorted by priorities 1, 2 or 3. Refer to the reports for the totals of each. He noted that there are not too many Priority 3 items and that there were no priority 1 or 2 items left off of the list. Although the format of the reports was changed, they are basically the same as last week's reports except the totals have changed slightly and the Food Service portion was revised as previously explained. The package also includes a description of the priorities and how each priority was determined. (Refer to the front pages).

Responses to some of last week's questions included an explanation about the problems with installing urinal screens. They would not be prohibitively expensive to install in new facilities but the real cost comes from adding screens to existing buildings due to the need to retrofit structural support. Mr. Crawford also explained that the screens have proven to be very high maintenance due to vandalism and the cleaning required. If the Issaquah School District added screens throughout its facilities (190 – 200 screens) the cost would be about \$66,000 to \$80,000. The cost of the structural work and retrofitting would be about triple that amount. Therefore, the Technical Team recommended this item not be added to the Critical Repairs priority list, although a committee member could make a formal motion to add the screens and let the committee vote.

Mr. Thiele invited the committee to review questions that were included in the packet so that the members might have some of their own similar questions answered. He also commented that most of the questions that had come in required mostly clarification.

Mr. Thiele explained that the Critical Repairs spreadsheet was sent out to all building principals for review as suggested by the members at the April 15<sup>th</sup> meeting. Mr. Kuper commented that there were very few responses. The committee was then given time to review the Critical Repairs springboard proposal and invited to ask questions or make comments on the proposal.

There was a discussion about how the earmarking of levy funds is maintained for specific items. The IVE HVAC system was an example of an item that was listed for replacement in the 2006 priority 1 list but had not been done. It was explained that the system is still working but needed some attention. Since it wasn't necessary to replace at this time, parts were replaced and maintenance was done as needed to extend the life of the system. The money for total replacement has been set aside for the future replacement of the HVAC system. Mr. Crawford stated that all priority one items from the current levy are expected to be completed by 2010 when that stream of levy income ends.

A member mentioned that PTSA often funds, or partially funds, items (such as playground equipment) that may be listed on the Critical Repairs list. The Technical Team explained that items purchased by the PTSA usually require additional ISD funds to remove the old equipment and prepare the site for new equipment.

A member representing Maple Hills shared that the Maple Hills Principal had asked for a change in the prioritization of repairs for that school. A discussion of water systems followed and Mr. Crawford explained that there are some schools that have had water heater or water circulation issues that resulted in a change in priority.

There was a discussion about ADA requirements. A member expressed concern that not all Issaquah School District facilities are wheelchair accessible. It was suggested that the district should establish a baseline for accessibility for all schools. She noted that no items were listed to address ADA issues in this Levy, but several schools received ADA improvements as a result of the 2006 Levy. The member expressed concern that if ADA-type upgrades were considered “critical repairs/upgrades” for some schools and approved by voters in the 2006 Levy, it would follow that proposing similar ADA upgrades for the remaining schools could be similarly justified to the voters. Mr. Crawford responded that accessibility needs and requirements change over time. All buildings complied with ADA requirements at the time of construction or modernization. An evaluation and upgrade of all the district facilities would be very expensive to do all at once. Instead the district only upgrades buildings that have students with needs for those changes. The member stated that ADA upgrades needed to be identified centrally, not by individual schools. The member noted that her child was in a wheelchair at a school that was not scheduled for an ADA upgrades and further expressed that the lag in time between identifying a need and getting upgrades completed resulted in wheelchair-bound children being impacted for months to years. The member further commented that the argument for spending money on buses to exceed safety and emission standards should be applied by ISD to ADA standards so that wheelchair access was addressed at all ISD schools to a minimum level. The member also noted that ISD contributed to a manual for educators to ensure compliance to federal disability laws which was posted on the internet; this member said the leadership of ISD in ADA compliance issues evidenced on paper should be reflected in the facilities and practices of all Issaquah Schools.

One member questioned the estimated cost of a specific item on the list stating that it was way too high. A discussion about cost estimating followed. Mr. Crawford stated that the costs listed are based on estimates and previous information. Inflation costs right now are minimal. Generally speaking, the district uses conservative estimates but some costs will be higher and some will be lower with the overall expenses tending to average out over time. Due to recent news stories about other districts, a member expressed concern that voters might think the levy request was inflated if the district showed costs too high for many items. Mr. Kuper explained that emergencies come up and there are things in Capital Projects that are not budgeted for. Emergency repair work can be costly. He also explained that if money is not used for a specific item according to the timing projected on the priority list, the funds remain earmarked for a very long time until the project is completed. Mr Crawford explained that some projects are delayed because the ISD

maintenance people have a pretty good handle on maintaining things to prolong their life and last longer into the future. At that time the funds are there if they are budgeted for and the district would fulfill its obligation to replace the item. Levy funds cannot be used for general fund expenditures.

Other discussion included the importance of presenting a package without anything frivolous items included. Mr. Crawford responded that lower priority items were not necessities but may provide for cost savings and preventative maintenance

A member stated the importance of the committee members getting clear answers from the Technical Team in order to provide confident explanations to community members who may have doubts. Mr. Kuper reiterated to the committee that the list presented is the best estimate of the district's current and future needs. The priority list was cleaned up and all nonessential items have been removed. Also, items were removed because they are better suited to a bond package or removed because the item was on the 2006 levy list.

A member expressed appreciation for the conservative nature of the Critical Repairs proposal and the way the Technical Team articulated what the money is needed for. Need to be honest if there is reserve in this budget. Mr. Crawford responded to a concern that there should be honesty about any reserve in the budget by stating that the total is appropriate for the scope of work. Mr Thiele interjected that it is important for the levy process to be honest, have integrity and be trustworthy because the district needs to come back and ask for money again. Another member added that a good process and transparency are also essential.

In response to a suggestion that a matrix showing how many of the 2006 levy list projects had actually been done, Mr. Kuper stated that about 65% have been completed.

There was a discussion about the why Priority 2 improvements to fields should not be a part of the next bond. It was explained that this item was not included in the scope of the current bond and needs to be addressed before the next bond.

Mr. Crawford explained that the sewer situation at Liberty, Briarwood and Maywood has never been off the radar screen and that the district is working with developers and the City of Renton. There are indications this may be resolved soon. Until now, installing sewers with the current sewer infrastructure was almost logistically impossible and financially unfeasible.

Mr. Thiele invited members to break into table groups to discuss potential amendments to the Critical Repairs springboard proposal that should be considered.

Mr. Thiele reconvened the committee and reminded the members that 28 votes are required to amend or change the current proposal.

The following motions were made, seconded and voted on by the committee:

- Drop all category 3 items and keep category 1 and 2 only for the final Capital Levy package.

Discussion: This action would show the committee is acting frugally but others disagreed and believed some items on the priority 3 list are important maintenance and safety items.

One table endorsed the process involved in putting the total proposal together and stated that the \$155,000 savings would not make a difference to the tax rate.

Vote: 0 in favor. Motion fails

- Drop from category 3 the item to install occupancy sensors in custodial rooms.

Discussion: In terms of saving on utility bills, it would not take too long to pay back the cost of installation. Other members stated the money saved on utility bills would allow more money to be spent on books. Perhaps staff should turn off the lights manually.

Vote: 16 in favor. Motion fails.

- Change the name of category 3, for promotional purposes, to "Necessary Improvements" and change the name of the entire levy component to "Critical Repairs and Necessary Improvements."

Discussion: Although this sounded good to the committee, Mr. Kuper interjected that care must be taken when changing the name of ballot proposals and titles due to legal constraints.

No Vote - Amendment not a voteable item.

- Change the priorities of Maple Hills items: Paint facility from priority 1 to priority 2, replace the sewer pumps from priority 2 to 1 and replace the hot water tanks from priority 2 to 1.

Discussion: The technical team had no problem with changing the order of the priorities as suggested by the school principal.

Motion withdrawn by recommender.

One additional motion was presented (due to time constraints, Mr. Thiele asked that no vote be taken on this motion but that there be a Committee vote to pass the List "As Proposed, Without Amendments") that the Issaquah School District should better address ADA guidelines for each school for parking, access to classrooms, emergency exit access, at least one drinking fountain and bathroom, gym and commons area access with the goal of maintaining some minimum standard for all schools. Mr. Crawford responded that ADA access is required for code and that money has been set aside in the 2006 bond. He continued saying that the district needs to begin the process to identify the needs and use existing funding to complete needs rather than wait for funding in this proposal to be improved. He invited communication from Committee members to help identify where there is a need.

Additional motions made, seconded and voted on by members

- Pass the Critical Repairs springboard as proposed.

No discussion.

Vote: 36 yes - 1 no.  
Motion passes.

**NEXT STEPS AND CLOSURE**

The committee was advised to review the Technology springboard proposal before the next meeting. Mrs. Dixon will speak at the beginning of that meeting on the Technology Springboard proposal. The next meeting will be on May 6<sup>th</sup> from 6:00 pm to 8:30.

The meeting adjourned at 8:42.