



**Strategic Facilities Committee Meeting #10
Teleconference 301-914-1341/ Board Room at Central Office
Garrett County Board of Education
40 S Second Street
Oakland, MD 21550**

Minutes of August 30, 2019

Facilitator: David Lever

Committee Members Present: Crystal Boal
Karen DeVore
David Lever
Tracie Miller
Kevin Null
Carissa Rodeheaver
Nathan Sorber
William Swift
Richard Wesolowski

Dr. Lever called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. The majority of the committee members joined the meeting in the Board Room while a few of the members joined via teleconference. Joel Gallihue, AICP, Consultant to the Facilitator for student enrollments, joined the meeting via conference phone.

I. Introductions

Dr. David Lever, Facilitator, welcomed the committee members and made certain that committee members had received the meeting documents.

II. Minutes

Nate Sorber made a motion to approve the minutes from the July 29, 2019 SFC Meeting and Carissa Rodeheaver seconded the motion. The committee members unanimously approved the minutes.

III. Research Subcommittees: Reports

The research reports completed by the subcommittees were distributed to the members. Dr. Lever stated a summary of all of the subcommittee reports will be in the final report. He stated the reports will be available on the Google drive and asked the committee members to email any feedback regarding the reports.

IV. Planning Recommendations

1. Review of Draft Planning Recommendations: Scope, Priority, Schedule, Costs

Dr. Lever provided the preliminary recommendations for the capital projects and other actions. He stated the text highlighted in yellow are the main points of the document. This report included a Background section, Recommendations, including Redistricting and Capital Improvement Projects (Disruptive Behavior; Head Start; Building Systems; Open Space Classrooms; Southern Middle School and Broad Ford Elementary Renovation/Expansion; Crellin Elementary School and Swan Meadow School deficiencies); Relocation of Board Office; and a Single High School.

The report also included Project Tiers, which provide a preliminary prioritization of the recommended strategic actions. In each fiscal year the projects and actions could be included for one, two, or three tiers.

Tier 1 includes near-term actions and projects including redistricting to balance enrollments and near term capital projects. Tier 1 recommendations are estimated at a total cost of \$7.238 million consisting of \$2.616 million in State funds and \$4.622 million in local funds. Projects include Security Vestibules in 10 of the schools, Disruptive Behavior projects (2 spaces a year, 10 total), Head Start classrooms (1 space a year, 9 total), Building System repairs (Southern High School building envelope and Northern High School pavement and boiler replacement) and Relocating the Board Office.

Tier 2 includes middle-term actions and projects. The middle-term capital projects will focus on improving the learning environment of schools that have open space pods and at two schools (2 pods a year with 8 total), schools with the largest number of educationally inadequate features, as well as continuing the replacement and upgrading of building systems. Tier 2 recommendations are estimated at a total cost of \$9.664 million consisting of \$4.012 million in State funds and \$5.652 million in local funds. Projects include Open Space Classrooms at Grantsville and Friendsville Elementary Schools; Renovations at Crellin Elementary School; possible work at Swan Meadow School; and Building System replacements at Yough Glades and Friendsville Elementary Schools.

Tier 3 includes long term actions and projects including the Single High School and long-term capital projects. The tier 3 recommendations are estimated at a total of \$52.172 consisting of \$20.989 million in State funds and \$31.183 million in local funds. The projects include Broad Ford Elementary School /Southern Middle School renovation and expansion; Crellin Elementary School additions; and Building System replacements at Route 40 and Grantsville Elementary Schools.

The funding sources were also discussed in the report. The entire capital program outlined in the report is projected to cost approximately \$69.1 million with anticipated participation by the State at \$27.6 million and by the County Government at \$41.5 million. Dr. Lever noted that these costs are estimates and many factors could change the costs as well as the proportion of State and local contributions. The largest single project is the Broad Ford Elementary School and Southern Middle School renovation/addition with a total estimated cost of \$48.4 million. Dr. Lever also discussed that the State of Maryland has three funding programs that are applicable to public school capital projects in Garrett County. State capital funds are generated from the sale of tax-exempt General Obligation bonds, a condition that carries with its certain limitations in the use of the proceeds and timeframe in which the funds may be used. The State funding programs include: the Capital Improvement Program (CIP), which funds major capital projects, including new and replacement schools, full renovations, partial and limited renovations and systemic renovation projects; the Aging Schools Program (ASP) provides relatively small grants that are allocated on a formula basis to each LEA; and the Safe Schools Grant Program (SSGP), a small program recently instituted to allow school systems to implement capital projects that enhance safety and security in schools.

Local funding includes Paygo, which is direct payment of capital expenses from operating budget revenues; Debt, which is issuance of municipal bonds to fund capital projects; local grants which may include contributions from Head Start or from other nonprofit or profit organizations; and donations from individuals or businesses.

The report included five recommendations to fund the projects outlined in this capital program.

1. The Board of Education would work with the Garrett County delegation to adjust the State-local cost share formula.
2. The Board should relocate the Board of Education offices to the Dennett Road facility and terminate its use of the property on 2nd Street in Oakland.
3. The Board should work with the County Government to promote a modest increase in property taxes to support the local share of the Tier 3 Projects.
4. The Board and County government should identify functions that could be conducted jointly in order to improve efficiency and reduce costs.
5. The Board, County Government and nonprofit organizations should collaborate to identify functions that can occupy under-utilized spaces in the northern elementary schools and in Southern Garrett High School.

Joel Gallihue discussed the Redistricting scenario-testing presentation. He discussed the method utilized, which included identifying planning areas that allow for logical transportation shifts. He discussed the percentage statuses of utilization and potential measures that can be taken for schools in each status range. He shared a Scenario 1 recommendation, which would relieve Broad Ford Elementary School by redistricting some students to Accident Elementary School. In order to keep students in the same feeder pattern, a number of middle and high school students would also be redistricted from the southern secondary schools to the northern secondary schools.

Scenario 2 included the Scenario 1 options, but also included redistricting some of the Broad Ford Elementary students to Grantsville Elementary; Yough Glades Elementary students to Broad Ford Elementary and Crellin Elementary Schools; and redistricting some Accident Elementary School students to Grantsville Elementary. Joel discussed the current utilizations at the schools and the projected utilizations in 2023 under a No Change scenario, noting that Board Ford, Yough Glades and Crellin Elementary would all be over 100% capacity. He also shared a map showing utilization under Scenario 1 for 2023, noting that Broad Ford would be 89.8% but Accident, Crellin, and Yough Glades would be at over 100% capacity. He shared a Scenario 2 capacity utilization for 2023, noting that Broad Ford would be at 97.1%; Yough Glades would be at 95.7%; Crellin would only be slightly over capacity at 102.3%; and Accident would be at 99.4%. Another factor to consider is that while the redistricting would occur at the elementary schools, the impact would cause Southern Garrett High School to be further underutilized. A report was also provided that shows the impact of these changes.

Dr. Lever stated that the planning areas are at a highly conceptual level at this point and that should the Board choose to go with these recommendations, further studies by the Transportation Department would be conducted to test and define the exact redistricting lines and bus routes. Committee members inquired to make certain the principals of the schools impacted by the redistricting recommendations have been consulted for their feedback. An individual attending the meeting expressed concerns that Friendsville Elementary School would not be positively impacted by the redistricting recommendations and would remain at 46.5% capacity. Dr. Lever stated that with Head Start and daycare in that building that the capacity in the school will be adjusted to a higher utilization figure.

2. Review of Board of Education Submission Documents

Dr. Lever discussed the preliminary capital plan report with a tentative funding schedule with the committee. The report included the tier 1, 2 and 3 projects with program totals and a funding schedule for FY 2021 and for the next 5 years. He also shared a draft Projects for CIP (FY2021 – FY2026) report. Each of the project costs were detailed by total costs, and by local and State share. Each of the project categories were also summarized, by total cost and by the respective years of completion.

The committee discussed adopting a recommended budget for FY2021, which includes the committee's recommended projects for Security Vestibules (A&E design and contingency and installation); Disruptive Behavior classrooms (A&E design and contingency and classroom renovation); Head Start for 1 school (A&E design and contingency and classroom renovation); Building Systems at Southern High School (A&E design and contingency and renovation/new construction and restoration & encapsulation); Open Space Pod Conversion (A&E design and contingency and open space pod conversion); and relocating Board Office to Dennett Road facility (A&E design and contingency and small renovations at Dennett Road). The staff would be tasked to put this information into the FY 2021 CIP for the Board's consideration.

Nathan Sorber made a motion to accept the budget recommendation to the Board of Education for the FY2021 CIP and Karen DeVore seconded the motion. The committee unanimously approved the motion.

IV. Discussion

The committee and public attendees discussed various concerns. These concerns included the costs to incorporate Head Start at each of the elementary schools and whether those funds should be spent on the existing students. Also concerns were raised that the additional spaces for disruptive behavior might be overused by staff and this would not be in compliance with MSDE and COMAR discipline guidelines. Questions regarding the Broad Ford Elementary and Southern Middle School addition and renovation were asked, including about the feasibility study about the phasing schedule and costs.

Public members were concerned that Swan Meadow School was not included in the draft recommendations, but it has been addressed several times as having a large number of deficiencies. Committee members requested that the unique issues of the school be summarized in the final report.

A staff member attending the meeting stated that the estimated cost savings for relocating the Board offices to Dennett Road were overstated and she would provide the correct estimates to Dr. Lever that week.

A member of the public expressed concerns regarding the costs of the security vestibules and his belief that the school funding would be better spent somewhere else due to the small likelihood of a school shooting or security incident. The committee members reiterated their decision to recommend the security vestibules in the 10 schools and that their goal to ensure student safety was a top priority.

V. Adjournment

Nate Sorber made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Kevin Null seconded the motion. The committee unanimously approved the adjournment of the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 12:49 p.m.