

# ***Spotlight on the Board***

## **Notes from the District 15 School Board Meetings December 10th, 2008**

This was a Regular Board of Education meeting. Board member Wendy Rowden was absent.

### **Capital Improvement Plan – Summer 2009**

Ref: *Summer 2009 Capital Improvement Projects*

[www.fcwpta.org/pdf/summer09\\_capital\\_projects.pdf](http://www.fcwpta.org/pdf/summer09_capital_projects.pdf)

**Asst. Superintendent for Business Rebecca Allard** – Stated that at the Board's seats this evening is a revised capital expenditure report that was not included in the Board packet that went out last week. It is in essence the same document the Board reviewed at the November 18<sup>th</sup> BOE special meeting. **Board President Gerald Chapman** – Questioned the 2008 roof repairs for Pleasant Hill (\$150K) and Paddock (\$50K) and then the request for \$4M in 2009 for full replacement of those roofs. Asked what the district was doing in 2008 that is not a part of the full roof replacement in 2009?

**Allard** – The \$150K for PH is the roof replacement for one wing that was recently done. Then there were some additional dollars that were allocated at the June BOE meeting to do another additional partial replacement. The recommendation is to do the full replacement.

**Craig Phillips, Maintenance Manager** – Initially, before the June meeting when we allocated to do another \$2M in capital improvements was to do only \$300K in partial roof replacements for PH - \$150K which has been done, the second part which would be done this summer. Now with the \$2M appropriation based on our current needs basis, it was determined then that we would do the full replacement this summer for PH. So the \$150K in the 2008 number of \$300K is also conveyed to the \$2M down below. **Chapman** – Asked, so will it be \$2.2M? **Phillips** – Yes  
**Chapman**- So there is \$200K allocated in the 2008 budget and then another \$2M in 2009.

**Board member Sue Quinn** – Has a follow up question regarding the \$2.2M for the Paddock and PH roofs combined compared to the \$1.9M original estimate for both of those roofs.

**Phillips** – The original cost estimate was done based on a projection. It was in the original 2005 Life Safety document. Even in this economy with prices going down, roofing has not seen those decreases.

**Board Vice President Kelly Keenan** – Asked where the additional \$2M in capital expenditures came from? **Allard** – Replied at the November 18<sup>th</sup> Special BOE meeting, the Board asked us to come back with an additional allocation. (Keenan was absent.)

**Quinn** - At that meeting, she thought that we not only specified that we wanted a reprioritization of the list but we had the full list of the projects that were completed and not completed - category A, B and C and we reviewed all of that. Her understanding was that we wanted to come back and have a listing of what it would take to get those A priority items that were not completed – done.

**Chapman** – Added, up to \$2M worth

**Quinn** – There were \$4.1M to get the A priority items done. That included \$3.3M worth of roofs for five different buildings, some internal and external work that had not yet been completed but designated A priority items before. She thought the Board expressed a desire to get all of those A priority items done and that we needed to revisit the cost. Originally we had \$2M but now we are delayed until next summer. Typically in the summer, we use the monies from the following school year. So we are really only looking at two budget years worth of monies that we are going to be expending. The ones we haven't expended yet and the future budget. We will be looking at budget here in the next several months for next year; we have an opportunity to pull more monies in to get the work done.

**Keenan** – isn't this \$2M for the two roofs in next year's budget? **Chapman and Quinn** – Yes

**Keenan** - So then you just spent it because the \$1.9M (at the top of the list) is this years and the \$2m is next years. **Quinn** - That is exactly her point. The \$1.9M above is still not declared a priority because a lot of those items are still B items. And there are A items that are not getting done. **Keenan** - But this is what they (administration) said are the priorities. Some of them are Bs because they came up after, became more important since the Life Safety study.

**Phillips** - There are items under plumbing that may supersede what may be A or B Life Safety items that have to be done. For example, the \$360K for Plum Grove JH is some of the balance of identified Life Safety A items but that wouldn't come to \$360K - that would be roughly \$60K. The \$300K deals with the potential problem with the lower level bathrooms (at PG) in replacing water lines, tearing out concrete block walls and redoing fixtures which has to be done.

**Phillips** - (In response to additional comments) - Stated that all A items will be done this summer (2009) either by internal staff or by vendors or in a couple of cases by the contracted architects. The next category, which are B items, some are identified under mechanical. Where the discrepancy comes in - the initial report categorized roofs as A, then it was reversed to be B. Because of the duration of time, it doesn't matter if it is A or B. The Life Safety As will be done by the end of July with the exception of roofs.

The other \$2M appropriation going into 2008/09 begins to set the additional motion of dealing with the roof issues. We started by taking an evaluation of all roofs in the district, prioritized which ones are the most critical. Pleasant Hill and Paddock were at the top of the list. Also have to deal with the mechanical system at Paddock, allocated \$120K - it may only cost \$40K which would then allow us to use the funds in another category as we go through the bidding process. Curtain walls fall under category B - we have that amendment in from the State (for approval), now we have to figure out how to finance it. The Board packet identifies all of the buildings' roofs. Some were initially put in at \$800K but that was only a partial roof replacement. That same building a year from now may need a 100% replacement which will escalate to the \$1.2M or the \$1.4M.

**Quinn** - Asked to separate this (expenditure) into roofs and non-roof issues. She thinks Phillips is on the right track that these two buildings (PH and Paddock) are the most pressing for replacement. We have 20 buildings with roofs lasting 20 years, so on average we should be doing one roof a year. We haven't done any for awhile. These are the two worst. What she would like to see is some kind of projected schedule of how often do we need a whole roof.

**Allard** - That will come before the board in January. Wanted to clarify the list - For example, the item on the list for Sanborn, that work is being done right now with Phillip's staff and done through their operating budget. What you are seeing on this list is the larger scale capital projects. There are still some items that you are not seeing on this list but will be completed by the end of the summer.

**Quinn** - That is the second of her three part question. Roofs were first, the second is what Allard addressed - the internal and external items, A priority items. It adds up to about \$750K - There are about \$1M of various items that goes towards capital. Asked if Allard was saying that all of these items would be done by the end of the year? **Allard** - Replied that Phillips is indicating this.

**Quinn** - Doesn't have a problem if you are saying these are the most urgent items that need to be funded and they are large capital items that can't be done out of the regular operating budget. She doesn't have a problem with that piece of it. Just wants to make sure that we are getting the whole piece together and we are not stopping it at \$4.1M because that is the money we have. She wants to make sure that we have all of it taken care of that needs to be done right away.

**Phillips** - as we said at the previous meeting, we are going to break this into two parts. Part 1 was to come back with a recommendation for the extra \$2M for the 2008/09. The second part is to come back with a schedule for the balance which is B items (roofs) and C. That schedule is going to be submitted at the January Board meeting. That will give the Board the opportunity to see how the funds that may be required to meet the end result over a number of years. They will not be coming in January and saying "you gave us \$2M but you really need to give me \$20M". We will give the Board an outline of the balance of the work to be done, year and date for those completions.

**Chapman**- and each of these major projects will come to the Board for bids to see how our actuals are compared against what we have for projected costs. **Phillips** – yes, in addition to that before we go out to bid, we need authorization for you to direct us to do that.

**Allard** – And we are looking for that (authorization) later in the agenda tonight.

**Keenan** – Asked about the shared expense for the parking lot at MJ and if it included the sidewalk too?

**Allard** – Right now it is the parking lot and not the sidewalk. **Keenan** – Why not the side walk too?

**Allard** – thinks there is more conversation that needs to occur about that.

**Keenan** – We have been talking about this for two years. Why would we do the parking lot and not the sidewalk when the sidewalk will alleviate some of the parking issues? She is not saying don't do the parking lot but if you lump the sidewalk in too, it will take care of some of the parking issues.

**Phillips** – Said that there is a problem with the sidewalk on Wilson Avenue. After a meeting with Palatine Village administrators, it was determined at this time to hold off on the sidewalk and concentrate on the Harrison Street parking. There are right of way issues for properties along Wilson. The Village has had a conversation with property owners because of complaints about the overflow parking on their property. The Village also said that if the school district desires a sidewalk along Wilson Avenue, it should make a formal request and in sufficient time they will allocate the money in their budget. They are currently willing to share the expense for the parking because they believe that safety for the public and people using that facility (MJ) is greater than the sidewalk.

**Lukich** – Apologized to the Board because the capital projects list that was in their Board packets (and posted online) is the one that the Board, administrators and everyone else has been working on since May. At the October 18<sup>th</sup> and November 18<sup>th</sup> facility audit meetings, this same list was discussed. In addition, it was the same one that the Cabinet agreed to on Monday, 12/8.

The list received tonight is improperly dated – it was not 12/3/08. It was received today in his office and the business office at 4:30 p.m. It embarrasses him to do business this way. He sees many discrepancies. There are items on one sheet that are not on another. It is confusing and therefore, he is not able to give his recommendation to the Board. He has not had time to study it.

He can assure the Board that Allard, he and other cabinet members have not discussed many items on this new list such as Winston Campus and Paddock mechanicals, Jane Addams carpeting. They were not on the original list. When he looks at the two lists, there are some things that are constant, some things that are a variable. Lukich said if the Board is familiar with these items and comfortable with them, then they can vote. But if the Board is unfamiliar with them, then he is unable to recommend them this evening.

**Board member Nancy Lee Carlson** – Asked that we wait until January (to vote) because the Board had directed that we get the information before the January meeting.

**Lukich** – As a matter of a lesson, he does not like to see paper walked into a Board of Education meeting and ask a Board to consider spending \$2M on some ideas that just popped up this evening.

**Chapman** – Asked Carlson if she wants to table Action Item #08-1227 Capital Improvement Plan.

**Board member Nancy Lee Carlson** – Made a motion to table Action Item 08-1227 Capital Improvement Plan – Summer 2009 until the January Board meeting.

**Quinn** – Asked if the Board waited until January, would there be any problem with getting bids processed for the roofs or any other items that are on the list? **Phillips** – No

**Quinn** – Since we are tabling this and it is going to end our discussion, she had another question/comment. Not against tabling it, just wanted to throw something else out to consider for January. Quinn questioned the Jane Addams carpeting increase from \$122K to \$250K.

**Phillips** – The original amount (\$122K) was for remediation (repair) on the report from eight months ago. When we presented this at the last BOE meeting, it was identified as Jane Addams based on evaluation for total replacement which is why you see the \$250K. If you go back almost a year ago when we put the \$2M together, it was not identifying any one particular building but just allocating a

dollar amount for carpet remediation. When we presented at the previous BOE meeting, it was identified to have carpet done at Jane Addams for the \$250K. We have since done an evaluation of all of the buildings and indicated where they should be on the list for remediation. As a priority, we have taken roofs to start with and then we will backtrack into the carpeting.

**Quinn** – Carpeting is definitely much further down the list than roofs. She can appreciate the idea of doing full carpeting replacement in a building. But the concern that she had last time was that there are some particular spot places in carpeting that are in really dire need. Speaking of Paddock, there are a couple of classrooms that are pretty bad.

**Phillips** – He apologizes for this not being in the Board packet, but there was a memo sent that indicates that over the Christmas break, carpeting remediation, based on our last Board meeting conversation, is taking place.

**Phillips** – TJ, Paddock, KH and WC are scheduled for carpet remediation in those areas that were identified for the holiday break. **Quinn** – Since that was a follow up to Board discussion, can you get a copy of that memo to the entire Board?

**Keenan** – Would like to quickly compare the two lists. The differences are the two partial roofs; plumbing increased 130K and increased the carpeting. **Phillips** – Correct. **Keenan** – Well, I can vote. **Chapman** – We have been hearing that if we wait until January, there is no problem. He asked for a Roll Call on the motion to table the Action Item.

## **Action Item – Capital Improvement Plan - Summer 2009**

A motion was made to table this item until the January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2009 Board of Education meeting. It was unanimously approved.

## **Transportation Study Update**

Ref: **Transportation Study Update – PowerPoint Presentation**

[www.fcwpta.org/pdf/BOE\\_121008\\_trans\\_report.pdf](http://www.fcwpta.org/pdf/BOE_121008_trans_report.pdf)

**Three Tier Start Time Option** (individual slide, school names omitted in presentation)

[www.fcwpta.org/pdf/BOE\\_121008\\_3tier\\_start\\_proposal.pdf](http://www.fcwpta.org/pdf/BOE_121008_3tier_start_proposal.pdf)

Allard introduced the presentation by indicating that it was an update to what they presented at the November BOE meeting and that they were going to talk about procurement tonight. The Board had wanted clarification on that and the administration also talked a lot about school start times. They were going to give a little history of school start times prior to this year; look at what the district currently has and also look at an alternate start time. She wanted to say clearly up front that there are no recommendations in regards to start times.

### **Procurement**

The recommendation is to purchase the 14 buses that were leased from Midwest Transit last year. They are needed to run the current system and returning them is not an option. There is adequate monies in the (transportation) fund balance. When the amended budget is presented, this will be incorporated into that. There is ample fund balance to cover this expenditure.

### **Review of the current bus fleet**

The district has 162 buses, aged from one to 20 years old. Last month, she showed the average cost of repair and mechanic time for the buses. In addition to the buses, there are also 32 Operation and Maintenance vehicles that the mechanics maintain.

### **Bus Purchasing Replacement Cycle**

The Board had asked for a recommendation on how to procure buses over a 10 year period. The chart breaks down the age and type of buses – wheelchair, 35 and 71 passenger buses. Her recommendation is that during the 2009/10 school year, the district replace 34 buses. Then through

the next 9 years, it would be 29, 10, 12, 10, 10, 10, 9, 12, and then 26 buses (2018/19). Allard knows that the Board desired a more evenly distributed plan. However since buses were not purchased consistently from year to year, it made it difficult to do. Therefore, the recommendation is to purchase 34 this year and 29 next year. Then it will be flattened out until school year 2018/19 when 26 buses would be purchased.

**Keenan** – Asked Allard if the Board ever received the study showing the difference in cost to maintain buses for a longer period of time vs. purchasing new buses? She believes it was asked for in January and again a few months ago. **Quinn** – Advised Keenan that the information could basically be pulled out of the chart presented by Allard. Assuming \$20 an hour for mechanic labor cost, it can be calculated out. Quinn's calculation of this information says that no, it is not cost efficient to buy new buses until they are older than 10 years old. At 15 years, the cost (of repair) starts to be a reasonable trade for a new bus. Whether that is used strictly as the requirement for getting new buses at 10 years or 15 years, can be a Board decision. That is what the numbers show.

**Keenan** – Agrees with Quinn's calculation, but would really like to see a study.

**Allard** – Referring to the slide, if you have a bus that is 5 years old, the material cost (to repair) is roughly \$3200 and 55 man hours to work on that bus. A bus that is 10 years old, the material cost increases to \$5800 and the 57 man hours. She would argue that the breakeven is after the State stops reimbursing the district for buses. A recommendation to purchase buses will come to the Board in January; bids were just opened last week.

### **2008-09 School Bell Times**

Allard considers this year's bus system a modified two tier system because there are actually five start times. The majority of schools start at either 7:55 a.m. or 8:50 a.m. Parochial schools start at 7:40 a.m. and end at 2:10 p.m. MJ and VL begin at 8:40 a.m. until 3:10 p.m. and CLA starts at 9:05 a.m. and ends at 3:35 p.m. The administration acknowledges that the current system is working.

### **Efficiencies incorporated into current system**

**Allard** – (continued) with the new management that the district now has in transportation.

- 30% less bus stops this year
- Reduced overtime substantially
- Have changed the location of the buses where we park them. That simply means that a bus parked at CLA is not doing a bus route for Virginia Lake (VL). They are doing buses for that end (of the district). It is logical that we would do that.
- Realignment of school pairings. What that means is that a bus that is doing runs for TJ is not doing a bus run for VL. The schools are more logically paired together.

### **Can it be improved? Yes, but . . . it requires a change in start times**

Allard said that last month. A three tier bell system that was examined could be start times of 7:45 a.m. (to 2:15 p.m.), 8:30 a.m. (to 3 p.m.) and 9:15 a.m. (to 3:45 p.m.). The first start could be 7:45, 7:50 or 7:40 a.m. The other times would change accordingly. But what we need in between each bell time is 45 minutes. That is based upon that the greatest percentages of routes would be than 30 minutes. If you wanted that to be 35 minutes, then 50 minutes is needed between bell times.

### **What are the cost savings?**

This question was asked at the last Board meeting if we went to a different system. Allard said that if the district went to a three tier system, they believe that they could reduce mechanics by two (\$110K), bus drivers by ten (\$300K), bus assistants by ten (\$250K), and fuel cost savings (\$40K) to the tune of about \$700K. That number was brought up by a Board member at the last meeting and she thinks that this chart just validates that number. There would also be a capital savings over a ten year period by trading in those ten buses and not replacing them.

**Keenan** – Asked if those two mechanics (worth \$110K) were additional, over and above the two we would be saving by purchasing new buses? **Allard** – If we go to a replacement system where we don't

have 15 to 20 year buses, then yes – those are the same two mechanics. There are currently ten full-time mechanics.

**Questions/comments by Board members - Allard** – The action item that she is looking for from the Board tonight is the purchase of the 14 buses that were leased from Midwest Transit a year ago.

**Board member Tim Millar** – Asked if the savings projected was the gross amount, not the amount after reimbursement from the State? **Allard** – Yes, the actual cost is half (\$350K) or less if the State continues to fund transportation. **Millar** – Questioned the reduction of ten drivers and assistants. Asked if the assistants ride only on the special needs buses? **Allard** – Typically yes. The district has multiple aides on multiple buses. We are going to be evaluating the number of bus assistants (\$25K each) that we need anyway.

**Carlson** – She thought that the CLA routes were longer than 39 minutes. (Referred to earlier slide about length of time on buses). **Allard** – That would be in the future if we went to a three tier system. From the VersaTrans information, the department does believe that all of the routes can be done in the times that were stated. **Carlson** – Right now the CLA routes are extremely long. They are the last tier and there are a lot of problems. **Chapman** – It is a function of the location of the facility. **Carlson** – That is why the facility study becomes very important. She thinks that before we do this with transportation, that the facility study is so imperative before we go into any of the issues of three tiers. **Allard** – That is why the first slide (of the presentation) says that there is no recommendation.

**Quinn** – We are in the middle of this huge planning process where a lot of things are being considered. She sees no reason to do anything but to stay the course right now with transportation. In reference to efficiencies and the VersaTrans system, Quinn believes that the district still does not have the new VersaTrans map system and training that the Board approved last June.

**Allard** – Training has not yet occurred, believes that will happen the week after next.

**Quinn** – Hopes that with better training, longer routes can be worked on and more efficiency can be found in the system. **Allard** – Agrees. They did the best they could coming into the district this summer. They do expect to find additional efficiencies in what we are doing.

**Quinn** – It is a complicated system and software, training is needed to be able to use it effectively. The more effective our staff is in using the tools, the better the outcome.

**Lukich** – He believes that a comment was made at the last BOE meeting, that in order for the district to get to the transportation system it currently has, it cost an additional \$700K.

**Board member James Ekeberg** - Said that was his understanding. A three tier system was talked about in the district but never proposed to the Board. Allard showed (in her presentation) that there is approximately \$700K and then take off your reimbursement from the State (actual savings \$350K).

**Lukich** – He may have misunderstood, but thought that in order to get to the system we have now, that the \$700K was the true cost in order to make those accommodations. Asked if it was correct that if the district considered a three tier system, it would save about the same amount of money?

**Allard** – We added 24 buses to our fleet to accommodate the current system.

**Keenan** – Asked Allard if the Board could have two items for the January meeting – the bus analysis (maintaining old vs. purchasing new) and their best recommendation for the most cost effective, efficient delivery system for next school year (2009/10). **Chapman** – Thought that the opinion already expressed is that the Board is in the middle of the facilities study and it may impact transportation. One of the issues that have been talked about is that some of our programs are not neighborhood school programs and we are bussing kids. It is part of the facilities study. For example, is our special education students served better where they are now? Chapman is not opposed to a three tier program; in fact he thinks the district should do it.

**Keenan** – It is not going to change for next year, we hired these transportation professionals, she would like to see their best, most efficient try at the system. If we choose not to do it, we choose not to do it. If we can save that much money, she would at least want to look at it.

**Chapman** – Maybe we should be looking at it for the 2010/11 school year.

**Quinn** – Thinks the Board should revisit the issue when there are some conclusions with the facilities study. It is her understanding from the facilities meeting that over the next 6 months or more, the Board will be making some major decisions about the future of the district. When those decisions are made, transportation will be a part of that decision-making process, possibly bell times as well. Quinn thinks that it is a waste of our staff's time to come back next month with their best guess for today's situation when there are other things going on (facilities study).

We can also look at our mechanics to see if we are really right-sized with our mechanics especially if we are going to buy new buses which obviously use less mechanic time. She would like things looked at for cost savings that do not radically change the system. Less bus assistants is another item (\$25K per assistant). When you look at the \$700K (projected savings) and break it down – two mechanics (\$110K), 10 drivers (\$300K), 10 assistants (\$250K) and fuel costs (\$40K) which have already come down. Believes we can get at some of these cost savings without making some kind of radical changes this year. **Keenan** – Agrees but thinks the Board should look at and be presented with both.

**Millar** – Wants to make sure that whatever the Board does that it has the parameter of serving the public. Regarding start times, the Board has been down this road before and had been trying to get away from some of these times (earlier or later starts). Millar wants to make sure that the Board has customer service in mind when considering transportation.

**Keenan** – Believes that the district's customer service is not as good as it was three years ago. Bell times are not much better, bus times have greatly lengthened, and they have doubled in lots of areas. Agrees that going from 9:10 a.m. to 8:50 a.m. is an improvement but for \$750K?

**Chapman** – Asked if there was anyone else on the Board besides Keenan that wishes to address start times at the January Board meeting? **Keenan** – Not saying that we totally do new start times

**Chapman** – The only objection that he has is that we have a scheme that is implemented this year, it is conceivable that we could change next year and then turn around and change it again because we are in the middle of looking at facilities. He understands the cost savings and is sympathetic. What was said in committee is that we look at facilities and we want to have some level of consistency so parents know what to expect in terms of what schools they are going to attend and where programs are going to be located. He thinks it makes sense to fold it into transportation as suggested.

**Lukich** – He asked the Board to continue to consider what has been done in a brief amount of time with three new professionals on Board. Lukich really thinks that some of the \$700K can be cut into if we stay with the current system if the Board chooses. He thinks that staff can create and find some cost savings between now and 2010. **Allard** – Those cost savings would be reflected when the 2009/10 budget comes forward. **Quinn** – Has every confidence in our transportation department based on experiences so far this year, has more confidence in our planning process and the possibility of changes going forward, thinks we are on a good path, just stick tight and let it go through the process.

**Keenan** – Reiterated that the service is not as good as it was three years ago, longer bus times, it has nothing to do with the people in place right now. We are providing less customer service and it costs more money. She (her children) attends two bussing schools (one is St. Theresa) and the kids are on the bus for a long period of time, at the bus stop before 7 a.m. Customer service is not good for CLA, Sundling and parochial schools. **Chapman** – Thought that one of the issues heard before is that no one wanted the 7:15 a.m. start time (parochial). **Keenan** – But they are up as early anyway because of the length of bus ride, St. Theresa usually started at 7:15 a.m. now 7:40 a.m. but their average bus time increased 25 minutes. You didn't save anything, same thing for Sundling.

**Lukich** – What might be helpful to the Board is some sort of survey with feedback from our stakeholders about length of time. **Chapman** – Thinks the Board has to decide first if we are interested in having any type of alteration (start time change) for next year. His sense is that we have one Board member that is (Keenan) – but he doesn't know.

**Keenan** – Even if we did do a survey, it could be for the next year.

**Chapman** – We also talked about getting feedback relevant to the facilities. He would like that folded into together (in a survey).

**Carlson** – There will be major discussions about this district and where it is going. Feedback is always important, but we need to present stakeholders with a plan of action first. Thinks that the Board needs to give a commitment to our parents, they went through a horrendous time already with this bus schedule change and we are making it through a year, it seems to be working better. Maybe next year we don't change it, get it a little bit better because maybe a major change comes the following year when we have our facilities study and we do make changes in this district. There needs to be some very radical changes. We don't know yet until that study is completed. **Lukich** – That is almost word for word what our building principals, transportation and other administrators have said. Some consistency in the district would probably be more important next year than some cost savings.

**Carlson** – That is her opinion. **Chapman** – Asked Ekeberg and Millar if they wanted to weigh in on this matter. **Ekeberg** – Stay with the status quo for a year. **Millar** – Agreed

**Quinn** – Confirmed that the purchase of 14 buses would come out of the 2008/09 budget. Allard said that about \$500K would be added to the amended budget. She would recommend that the district purchase the same number of buses every year from now on. We have 160 buses in the district, we have a tentative ten-year replacement plan of roughly 16 buses a year – 14 this year, 16 next year, 16 the year after that and keep going. Then we can have some consistency in our reimbursement from the State and our knowledge of how much we have to spend every year on the buses, we can fill that pipeline. Understands that we want more now because we have older buses, but thinks that the district needs to deal with having older buses for awhile because they aren't that expensive to fix up, get the pipeline filled and be even. She wanted to reiterate that because it is an important piece for our future planning and having some consistency in our budget process.

## **Award Bus Purchase – Midwest Transit**

The motion to purchase the 14 leased buses from Midwest Transit was unanimously approved.

## **School/Community Relations – Gifts to the District**

Ref: **Board of Education Policy 8:30 – First Reading**

[www.fcwpta.org/pdf/BOE\\_policy\\_giftstodistrict.pdf](http://www.fcwpta.org/pdf/BOE_policy_giftstodistrict.pdf)

**Quinn** – Asked if the Board would be pre-approving all fundraising events?

**Asst. Superintendent Jim Garwood** – The policy does not require pre-approval of fundraising events. It does require that the project or goal of the fundraising events is pre-approved by the Board of Education. Garwood explained that sometimes donations may cost the district to spend money to implement it. There may be installation, wiring and electrical costs. The administration wants the Board to make the decision beforehand as to whether it wants to carry the financial obligation that may come with a donation.

**Quinn** – Is concerned that the policy overlaps into other things and may influence other fundraising situations. She suggested that additional language could be put into the policy to clarify.

**Chapman** – Stated that this policy covers donations only. If funds are being raised to offset costs for students (field trips, etc.) that is different than funds that are going to be an improvement to a facility (ex: whiteboards). **Quinn** – Asked about the request for Board approval on uniforms for Plum Grove Pep Squad (later in the agenda). How is that not offsetting a student cost?

**Chapman** – That is not a PTA event. It is a school sponsored event. The only reason the Board is involved in it is because the school is sponsoring the event. In another school, if a PTA stepped up and said that they would do that (fundraise for uniforms) then it is not the Board's venue to approve.

**Quinn** – So it is other parent organizations/teacher groups/other groups that are not PTA? Do we say that in the policy? **Carlson** – It could be PTA.

**Ekeberg** – He does not want to make it so narrowly defined that it (project) doesn't come before the Board. It is better to have a broad writing, let it come before us. If we get too much, we can change the wording. We haven't even implemented it. Let the staff go ahead. He thinks it is fairly clear.

**Garwood** – He gave an example from another school district. PTA made a donation of an electronic school sign, they paid for the sign. It had to be installed, conduit had to be run out to it, and then there was the electricity because it was a fancy sign with dancing images and words across it. It is costing that district money for the next 20 years and all of the maintenance of it. That was a PTA donation. That is something that needed to get some approval because it carries some substantial costs for that district. **Lukich** – The policy will be brought for final reading at the January 14<sup>th</sup> Regular Board of Education meeting.

## **Bond Funding Capacity Level for District 15**

**Keenan** – Wants to make sure that if the district is going to go for any additional bonds that it comes before the Board before the planning stage. The reason she is stating this is because last year, we did the \$5M bond and a couple of years ago we did another bond. She feels that we are getting these small bond increments instead of paying down our bonds so that if we decide to do a bigger project, we will have more money at that time, be prepared for our larger projects.

**Chapman** – He is not interested in selling bonds, thinks that the direction is that we would not go down the bond route without some prior (discussion). **Keenan** – That is not how it has been done in the past. Just wants to put it out there to make sure it comes before the bond before it is even considered. **Chapman** – Doesn't think that there is any objection.

Keenan made a motion that before any bonding becomes part of any budget or any thought process that it comes before the Board for approval. It was unanimously approved.

## **Authorization of the Certificate of Tax Levy**

Ref: **Daily Herald, 12/11/08 – "District 15 settles on 15 percent levy hike"**  
[www.fcwpta.org/pdf/Daily\\_Herald\\_121108\\_levy\\_hike.pdf](http://www.fcwpta.org/pdf/Daily_Herald_121108_levy_hike.pdf)

## **Adjournment**

The Board did not go into Executive Session and the meeting adjourned at approximately 9:20 p.m.

Notes by: Jennifer Mondy  
[fcwnews@comcast.net](mailto:fcwnews@comcast.net)

Posted: Monday, December 29<sup>th</sup>, 2008