

**Gervais School District #1
School Board Working Session Meeting Minutes
Thursday, February 8, 2024**

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

- 1.1 Board Chair Henry Bustamante called the Gervais School District #1 School Board Working Session, Marion County, to order on Thursday, February 8th, at 6:00 PM.
Board members present: Henry Bustamante, Ana Contreras, Jenny Jones, and Angie Toran.
Others present: Dandy Stevens, Caryn Davis, and Kristen Miles (OSBA Representative).
- 1.2 Board Chair H. Bustamante led the Pledge of Allegiance at 6:00 PM.

2.0 DISCUSSION ITEMS

- 2.1 Superintendent Stevens presented a packet to the board that included a Bond Planning – Cost Estimate Summary, General Obligation Bond Summary of Structuring Scenario, a breakdown of the bond's tax amounts, based on assessed values, for \$1.75/\$1,000, \$1.80/\$1,000 and \$1.85/\$1,000, and additional project rankings obtained from an online survey to the community and staff.

The board reviewed and discussed each document. The following were noted as factors for consideration:

- For “Red Zone Projects” (warm, safe, dry), plus projects designated by the district as essential to the bond, the cost comes in at \$32,741,648. If we subtract the OSCIM grant, the needed baseline amount for the bond is \$26,741,648. If the district chooses to go in at \$1.75/\$1,000 assessed value, there will not be enough to get this work completed.
- Project costs continue to rise. The costs for the same projects that were presented to voters in prior year bond attempts, have gotten increasingly more expensive.
- The biggest cost driver at GES is the HVAC system and the required electrical upgrades to install that system. The district has waited too long to replace the aging GES HVAC system.
- Item E3.9 provides fresh paint and other interior updates, but not an update to the carpets in the hallways at GES. Supt. Stevens will be getting figures on updating the current hallway carpets at GES to non-carpeted flooring.
- Community and staff were surveyed and asked which additional projects they would want to have done; the results were listed by school in order of ranking. Fifty-one people participated in the survey, including many parents. The top three for each building were:
 - Gervais Elementary School (GES) top choices were a student counseling center, covered play area, and library remodel.
 - Gervais Middle School (GMS) top choices were reducing crowding in hallways, remodel of locker rooms and adding an outdoor learning and gathering space.

- Gervais High School (GHS) top choices were to add two new classrooms, student toilets and a covered secured connection between N/S wings, HVAC and ventilation upgrades to the CTE building, and add more CTE elective spaces.
 - Gervais School District top choices were a new turf football/soccer field, football bleachers with press box upgrades, and pre-engineered concessions building and restrooms at fields.
- Elementary school and high school are each in need of seismic upgrades. The district has listed those as included only if more funding becomes available. The district has applied for a seismic grant that would be used for the GHS cafeteria.
- The biggest portion of the bond proposed spending is at Gervais Middle School. This proposed allocation is currently set at \$18,954,451, with over \$16M of that amount going towards new classrooms and commons building, including a new main kitchen, library, Maker Space lab, and connecting of the 8th grade building to the new building.
- For GMS, there are some smaller projects, like reducing the crowding in the hallway and remodeling the locker rooms, where other district funds may be available, instead of bond funds, to complete. District maintenance staff could work on creating an outdoor learning and gathering space at GMS.
- The top community project at GHS of adding two classrooms, student bathrooms and secured connection between wings, comes in at a cost over \$2.5M, so it will likely not be doable on this bond. The district will keep this request in mind, if the current bond passes, and we start planning for the next phase of improvements. This is also true of the request for adding more CTE elective spaces.
- The request for furniture and lockers at GHS may also be accomplished using other sources of district funds.
- Although the top response for district projects is a new turf field, this has not been included in our planned bond projects, as it was considered one of the reasons why the prior bond did not pass.
- The culinary arts lab at GHS has been grayed out because we recently received a new CTE grant that can be used for a portion of this project.
- GHS cafeteria seating and the library, counseling office and career center changes were discussed.
- If the district gets the Seismic Grant and/or the Capital Improvement Grant, we can use those funds for the GHS upgrades and add other projects into the high school's overall plan.
- The following bond amounts were discussed:
 - At \$1.75/\$1,000, over 25 years, we would receive \$26.59M of bond funds, which is short by \$151,000 for the baseline projects.
 - At \$1.80/\$1,000, over 25 years, we would receive \$27.375M of bond funds.
 - At \$1.85/\$1,000, over 25 years, we would receive \$28.130M of bond funds.


- In comparison, Silver Falls School District's current bond rate is \$1.96/\$1,000.
- For the average assessed home value in the Gervais area of \$150,000, the difference for a taxpayer from \$1.75/\$1,000 to \$1.85/\$1,000 is only \$15 more per year. If you look at a home with an assessed value of \$500,000 that difference is \$50 per year.
- The board discussed the reality of closing the schools down and consolidating with surrounding districts if the bond fails in May. Board members noted that as taxpayers we are either going to be paying for Gervais School District's bond or another school district's bond. Currently, all surrounding districts have bonds that are higher per \$1,000 assessed value, than what the district is proposing for the May bond election. The community will be paying more to another district. The board is intent on moving to consolidating if the bond does not pass.
- Supt. Stevens noted that Woodburn School District has asked to see our district and meet with the board to discuss consolidation.
- Supt. Stevens stated that the process for consolidation involves negotiating with other districts, with pieces of the district doled out to other districts. Wherever the lines are drawn, our district splits into those other districts. Part of what created Gervais School District was the consolidation of other districts into our district.
- The school board feels that they have enough information to make their decision regarding the bond and what the bond amount will be at the February 15th, 2024, regular board meeting.

3.0 ADJOURNMENT/EXECUTIVE SESSION

3.1 Board Chair Henry Bustamante moved the board out of the regular work session and into executive session at 6:39 PM to review and evaluate the performance of the superintendent or any other public officer, employee, or staff member, unless that person requests an open hearing. (ORS 192.660(2)(i)).

3.2 The board exited executive session at 7:48 PM and adjourned the meeting.

APPROVED



HENRY BUSTAMANTE
Board Chair



CARYN DAVIS
Recorder for Board Meeting in absence of
Board Secretary

