



MINUTES
FACILITY ADVISORY & CITIZEN'S OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
SOCORRO ISD
DISTRICT SERVICE CENTER – BOARD ROOM
JULY 18, 2007 | 5:30 PM

MEMBER PRESENT

Herb De La Rosa, Co-Chairperson; Victor Valdivia, Co-Chairperson; Susan Hill, Member; Paul Guerra, Member; Dot Carmona, Member; Hector Enriquez, Member; Troy Byrne, Member; Heidi Martinez, Member; Pat Ramirez, Member; Robert Valles, Member; Betty Vigil, Member; Cathey Kaiser, Member; Jacob Cintron, Member; Dr. Sylvia P. Atkinson, Superintendent of Schools; Thomas A. Eyeington, Assistant Superintendent for District Operations; Mary Benham, Assistant Superintendent for Financial Services; Cynthia Lopez, Assistant Superintendent for Socorro H.S. Feeder; Anna Lisa Banegas-Peña, Assistant Superintendent for Americas H.S. Feeder; Pat O'Neill, Assistant Superintendent for Support Services; Rebecca O'Neill, Assistant Superintendent for Montwood H.S. Feeder; Minerva Baumann, Director of Public Relations; Maya Kirtley, Administrative Specialist II; Gracie Tovar, Administrative Specialist II

MEMBERS ABSENT

Enedina Serna, Member; Ricardo Castellano, Member; Joe Sarabia, Member; Irene Chavez, Member; Patrice Conner, Member

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:35 p.m. by Mr. Herb De La Rosa, Co-Chairperson.

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Mr. De La Rosa welcomed all the new members and asked that everyone could introduce themselves to the committee.

Mr. De La Rosa asked that all members try to attend all the meetings and for everyone to try to be on time. He also asked that if a member cannot attend the meeting to notify Ms. Gracie Tovar, Administrative Specialist II @ 937-0380.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Committee approved the minutes for the Citizen's Oversight Committee Meeting held on July 10, 2007.

NEW BUSINESS

STATUS OF 2004 BOND PROGRAM

Mr. Eyeington introduced himself to the committee. He mentioned that he is a registered architect and interior designer. He has been with the Socorro Independent District for four years. He has worked as a registered architect and consultant for various districts for thirty plus years, formulating bond programs and overseeing management of their construction programs. He provided his business card to all the committee members for future reference. He provided a PowerPoint presentation showing the status of the 2004 bond program.

In 2003, the district started planning a bond program, which was past in January of 2004. It was determined to be a five year program, but the district informed the voters that the bond would not be sold at a greater rate than if the district would not receive any tax relief from the state. This meant that the district would not increase the tax rate to sell the bond. Fortunately, the district received EDA and IFA funding. Basically 70% of the funding for the 2004 Bond Program was provided by the State. The 2004 Bond Program totaled \$188,680,000.00. The program was divided into five categories. They are new construction, additions and renovations and major improvement and repairs, land banking and technology and furniture and equipment. He gave the status and short description of all five categories.

Mr. Eyeington showed the committee a newspaper clipping from San Antonio Express dated April 6, 2007, in which it talks about construction costs. The newspaper clipping goes into detail on the average cost of a school. In the Houston, San Antonio area, an average cost for a high school is \$158.00 per square foot. In North Texas the cost per square foot is \$154.00 and in Rio Grande Valley it is \$132.00. The article shows a high school, which was built three years ago, in the Northside Independent School District outside of San Antonio for \$70 million. Today, they are building a high school at \$102 million.

Comparing the construction cost for the Socorro Independent School District to the article, Mr. Eyeington showed the committee that the construction cost for Hurshel Antwine came in at \$87.00 per square feet, John Drugan at \$102.00. Antwine and Drugan were campuses that were built with 2000 Bond Program. The 2004 Bond Program was basically established at \$85.00 per square foot, but in charting out the costs, Ituarte/Hernando Combo came in at \$100.00 per square foot, District Service Center at \$102.00 and Dr. Sue Shook at \$146.00. For the additions and renovations Loma Verde came in at \$85.00, which was the established price in the 2004 Bond Program. Desert Wind came in at \$120.00, El Dorado Phase III came in at \$74.00, Hueco at \$139.00, Montwood H.S. Addition at \$154.00.

As far as land and land development, that is going up as much as construction costs. The average is about \$43 thousand an acre, which includes developmental costs.

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Mr. Eyeington receives a "School Planning Management" magazine, in which each February they publish a school construction report. The report shows the nations trend on the high schools, middle schools and elementary schools for twelve years. Charting out the trends it shows that the Socorro Independent School District is under the national average median cost per square foot. In 1995 the national average shows at \$100.00 per square foot. The district was building schools at \$70.00 per square foot. The district stayed under the national average until 2005-06. The district is catching up with the national average.

Mr. De La Rosa asked why there was such an increase. Mr. Eyeington responded that it was due to the competition in the area. A larger percentage of the work force is working at Fort Bliss. Another reason was the two natural disasters; the hurricanes that hit a couple of years ago.

Mr. De La Rosa asked if the increase of labor cost were from local companies or companies coming from out of town. Mr. Eyeington mentioned that the district's prices are basically local bidders. He added that about 85% to 90% of all the sub-contractors are local. During the Dr. Sue Shook School bidding, the kitchen equipment had to be bid out twice because the district only received one bidder. The district usually receives three or more bidders per item. The last time the kitchen equipment was bid out, the district received two bidders. The apparent low bidder was out of Phoenix.

Mr. De La Rosa asked if the projection costs were done for 2008. Are the increased construction cost calculated already. Mr. Eyeington mentioned that in preparing the new bond program that the construction cost increase will be factored in. In comparing the 2004 Bond Program \$12 million dollars were allocated for three elementary schools. If the three elementary schools would have been built in 2004, the district could have built them for less than \$12 million. Now an elementary school is costing \$12 to \$13 million, due to the increase of inflation and competition in the area.

In our next meeting district staff will provide the committee with a more detailed analysis of the demographic study. In 2006-07 school year the district ended up with 38,429 students. In the 2007-08 school year the district was predicting 39,936 students. As of today, 39, 479 students are enrolled in the Socorro Independent School District. Based on the demographic study in the school year 2011-12 the district will grow to 46,000 students, which is bigger

than Ysleta Independent School District. Mr. O'Neill will provide the committee more information on our next meeting scheduled for Thursday, July 26, 2007.

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Mr. De La Rosa asked if the BRAC was taken into consideration. Mr. Eyeington mentioned that the district is tracking the BRAC. Out of 39,000 plus students the district has identified 1,255 students. The district has done some studies that show that we will be receiving 20% or more of the BRAC. When the military families know that they will be coming to a particular area, they research the different school district and prefer Socorro Independent School District. Socorro ISD is the district of choice.

Mr. Eyeington provided the committee with a tentative 2007 Bond Proposal. He explained to the committee how administration came up with the number presented.

FACILITIES ASSESSMENT

Mr. Eyeington presented the committee with a copy of the Facility Assessment Summary. He went into detail on the various sections of the assessment and answered questions that committee members had.

DOCUMENTATION REQUEST FOR NEXT MEETING

Demographics and growth information presented by Mr. Pat O'Neill, Assistant Superintendent for Support Services.

Tax rate and debt service analysis presented by Mrs. Mary Benham, Assistant Superintendent for Financial Services.

DISCUSS UPCOMING MEETING DATES

Mr. Eyeington presented the committee with a schedule of future meetings. Committee change the dates from Wednesdays to Thursdays. The new schedule is as follows:

Thursday, July 26, 2007 @ 5:30 p.m.

Presenter: Mr. Pat O'Neill & Juan Jaime

Topic: Presentation on Demographics and Growth

Presenter: Mrs. Mary Benham & Hector Zavaleta

Topic: Presentation on Tax Rate & Debt Service Analysis

Saturday, July 28, 2007 @ 8:30 a.m.

Touring the District's Schools & Facilities

Mr. Thomas A. Eyeington will be hosting the tour of the district's schools and facilities.

Thursday, August 2, 2007 @ 5:30 p.m.

Topic: Finalize Proposal for recommendation for the Board of Trustees.

ADJOURN: 6:55 P.M.