

The Rockbridge County School Board held a special meeting on Thursday, November 19, 2020. The meeting was held at Maury River Middle School.

Present: Chairman Wendy Lovell; Trustees Corey Berkstresser, Kathy Burant, Heather Hostetter, and Neil Whitmore; Superintendent Phillip Thompson; Deputy Clerk Haywood Hand.

Board of Supervisors Members Present: Leslie Ayers, R.W. Day, A.J. Lewis, II, D.E. Lyons, and David McDaniel; Spencer Suter, County Administrator and Clerk to Board.

CALL TO ORDER

School Board Chairman Lovell called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m.

Supervisor Lyons expressed his appreciation to the Rockbridge County School Board for all they do and noted the unfortunate behavior by past participants during the public comment period of the regular meeting for the Rockbridge County School Board and shared that the Rockbridge County Board of Supervisors will offer their support in any way they can.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA: None

2022-2026 RCPS Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Overview

Superintendent Thompson provided information on the Capital Improvements Plan that was recently adopted. He stated that the following items have been accomplished:

- Replaced roof at Floyd S. Kay Vo-Technical Center.
- Replacement of track at Rockbridge County High School
- Athletic and Community Use of field at Maury River Middle School which will reduce travel time for teams

Superintendent Thompson provided information on the Current CIP FY22-26, which has been approved by the School Board:

- HVAC replacement @ Fairfield Elementary School and Central Elementary School
- Field drainage issue at Central Elementary School
- Transportation office building (currently in building owned by Lexington City)
- Repair of stadium concrete at Rockbridge County High School
- Telephone systems at many schools are antiquated and often “go down” and need to be replaced
- Supervisor Lewis stated that the HVAC at the two elementary schools has been on list for years and he hopes those systems will be upgraded. He reminded the School Board members that the Board of Supervisor members are in support.
- Supervisor McDaniel inquired if there is a new quote for cost for HVAC systems.
 - Superintendent Thompson stated that the quote will soon be available.
- Supervisor Lyons noted that the list discussed does not contain anything that has not been discussed previously.
- Supervisor McDaniel inquired if other projects in the school division’s CIP should be considered due to currently low interest rates when contacting loan companies about potential financing of the HVAC systems at CES and FES.
 - Supervisor Lyons suggested allowing Steve Bolster, Director of Finance, County of Rockbridge, and his team to go to work with those scenarios and see what they come back with.
 - Steve Bolster, discussed debt service schedules.
- Supervisor McDaniel noted that a considerable amount “someday” will be spent at Rockbridge County High School.
 - Superintendent Thompson stated that the Rockbridge County High School property was not put in the plan but that is something that will have to be looked at. Superintendent Thompson explained that his desire was that both Boards would discuss the appropriate fiscal year in which to place the large CIP projects that include Rockbridge County High School.
- Supervisor Lewis reiterated the need of items as discussed by Superintendent Thompson.

Central and Fairfield Elementary Schools – Trane Presentation

Superintendent Thompson stated that administration realized that the HVAC systems could not be replaced at that time and that a MOU citing a division-wide HVAC replacement schedule was agreed upon by both Boards.

Mr. Scott Wise, Sales Engineer, of TRANE Energy Solutions Group, provided a slide presentation, which reflected the following information:

- Central Elementary School: Replace with same system and include rooftop ductwork replacement (new insulation and metal jacket) / \$1.37M summer 2021
- Fairfield Elementary School: new rooftop equipment; inside replacement (possible timeframe suggested) / \$3.5M (this is not the adjusted cost).
- Supervisor Lewis inquired why there is a difference in estimates for HVAC systems (CIP versus Scott's presentation)
- Supervisor Day - Life Expectancy? Warranty?
 - Mr. Wise stated that there is a warranty of 5 years. Life expectancy would approximately 20 years.
- Superintendent Thompson added that during Fairfield Elementary School remodel 20 years ago, the original HVAC systems were not updated.
- Trustee Hostetter inquired if the 5-year warranty for Central Elementary School includes roof work, insulation, and metal jackets (exterior ductwork).
 - Mr. Wise stated that the manufacturer's warranty would cover pieces of equipment, parts/labor, and any refrigerant that gets lost over the 5 years. Workmanship as a contractor would be a 1 year parts/labor, and materials warranty, which would cover the exterior ductwork.
- Trustee Burant inquired if Rockbridge County Public Schools is training staff to work on this or if the work will have to be contracted out with Trane.
 - Mr. Wise stated that Rockbridge County Public Schools does have staff who work on the units. Trane typically does the work on more complex issues.
 - Trustee Burant inquired if there can be an adjustment in the presentation costs to revised numbers?
 - Superintendent Thompson stated that this can be done.
- Superintendent Thompson inquired if Covid has slowed business down.
 - Mr. Wise stated that it has not affected business.
- Mr. Bolster requested that Mr. Wise generate a budget for the project so the completion dates and costs would be known at the front end of the project.

RCPS Average Daily Membership (ADM) / Budget Projections for FY2021 (Current Year)

Superintendent Thompson stated that the ADM largely drives state funding. The figure of 2,492 is used to budget for FY21; the actual figure is 2,439 (53 fewer than anticipated). He stated that there has been tax revenue loss, however, the most recent calc tool from VDOE shows funding to make up for that; this is the "Hold Harmless" provision to assist with loss tax revenues.

- Supervisor McDaniel inquired if the reduction in ADM is due to moving, withdrawal, private school or home school.
 - Superintendent Thompson stated that it is all of those reasons but is hopeful that some students will return as school begins to bring back more students.
- Supervisor Ayers inquired what the expectations are for next year. She also inquired if the division expects some students to return this year.
 - Superintendent Thompson stated that the division had seen a reduction last school year and expected a bit more this year; however, Covid has created a larger number of students leaving for one reason or another. He stated that he anticipates that some students may return later this year.
- Chairman Lovell stated that kindergarten numbers are lower because families are waiting to enroll their kindergarteners.
 - Superintendent Thompson stated that he expects the kindergarten population next year to be larger than normal as a result of parents holding them out this year.
- Supervisor Ayers stated that a constituent raved about how the Superintendent reached out to them because their child was struggling with reading and allowed him to come to school.
 - Chairman Lovell stated that there has been a lot of feedback during this process and for the most part, has been positive.
- Supervisor Lewis inquired if all feel comfortable that the Hold Harmless funds are new monies or is it being pulled from another line.
 - Mr. David Daniels, Director of Finance, Rockbridge County Public Schools, replied that the Hold Harmless money is indeed funding that replaces lost revenue and not taken from another line in the calc tool.
 - Superintendent Thompson stated that the March 31 2020 ADM was 2516.
 - Supervisor McDaniel inquired if the school division is going to reach out to those who left.
 - Superintendent Thompson stated that the division is keeping track and will continue to monitor.

- Trustee Hostetter requested confirmation that the Hold Harmless provision is not actually new money.
 - Superintendent Thompson stated that it is not new money but rather money that the division was originally going to receive.
- Supervisor Lyons inquired what ADM did the school division use when budgeting for FY21.
 - Mr. Daniels stated that the ADM used was 2492 which was also that estimation used by the state

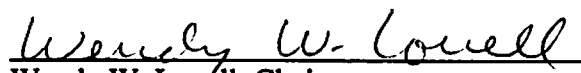
Additional Discussion

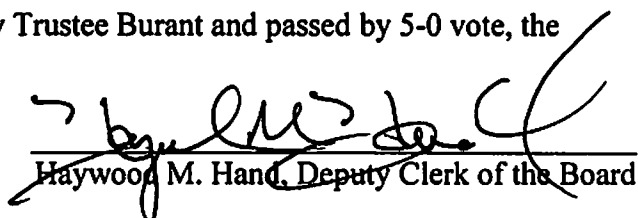
- Supervisor Lewis stated that he would like a set schedule for projects in relation to the CIP.
- Supervisor McDaniel stated that from an IT standpoint, he did not see anything in the CIP.
 - Mr. Jason Kirby, Director of Technology and Human Resources, stated that the division did a network analysis looking at bandwidth and several other issues. He stated that the division is good with bandwidth but access points at all buildings (except MRMS) need to be added (about 200) at an estimated cost of \$1000.00 each to buy and install.
 - Supervisor McDaniel inquired if fiber is now in all buildings.
 - Mr. Kirby replied that the school division is in a good position and uses E-rate money to help with that. Some Chromebooks are an older wireless capability and the school division is starting to update those.
 - Supervisor McDaniel inquired what Chromebooks are being used now.
 - Mr. Kirby stated that Lenovo are roughly \$200 per unit but future Chromebooks will run approximately \$300 per unit.
 - Supervisor McDaniel inquired if synchronous learning would then be an option.
 - Mr. Kirby stated that it would an option.
 - Trustee Burant inquired if the community would be able to handle the format.
 - Mr. Kirby stated that with any format there would be problems with access for some families.
 - Trustee Hostetter asked for confirmation that 25% of families do not have access.
 - Mr. Kirby stated that the school division has given out 100 Wi-Fi hotspots and are below 10 students using paper/pencil or thumb drives.
 - Chairman Lovell stated that multiple students in the same home using the same network can be tricky because of the strain on the bandwidth across several devices.
 - Supervisor McDaniel reflected that he is wondering what the new normal will be and stated that if virtual learning is here to stay, we need to be able to provide it and synchronous learning is 100% better than giving out assignments. He feels students need to see the teacher "teach" and that steps need to be taken to make it an option.
 - Chairman Lovell stated that she is in agreement and acknowledged that there are students who work better under virtual platform.
 - Superintendent Thompson discussed how Rockbridge County is working to reach all areas to provide internet access.
 - Supervisor McDaniel stated that the item does not have to be in the CIP but requested IT numbers be provided.
 - Trustee Burant inquired who it is up to get fiber in place and into homes.
 - Mr. Spencer Suter, County Administrator, County of Rockbridge, stated that Rockbridge County is farther along than many counties. BARC continues to expand but the process seems frustratingly slow but it will come. The county administration is looking at every available grant out there and recently received \$770,000 grant funds. He stated that the school division survey information helped in that process.
 - Trustee Burant stated that a patron of Rockbridge County went to the Board of Supervisors because she was amazed at the cost of internet and received assistance for "the last mile" to reduce cost.

The next regularly scheduled Joint Meeting of the Rockbridge County School Board and Rockbridge County Board of Supervisors is scheduled for Thursday, January 21, 2021 at 5:00 PM the location to be announced.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion by Trustee Hostetter, seconded by Trustee Burant and passed by 5-0 vote, the meeting was adjourned at 6:11 p.m.


Wendy W. Lovell, Chairman


Haywood M. Hand, Deputy Clerk of the Board