MERIDIAN
MERIDIAN SCHOOL DISTRICT

Facilities Task Force Meeting
July 26, 2023

Welcome
Committee members in attendance were Chantell Bertollini, Alec Covert, Karl Noste, Michelle Simmons, Paul Kratzig, Todd Torgeson, Derek Forbes, Lisa Gilchrist, Joe O'Brien, Jay Yeager, Kurt Harvill, James Everett, and Angie Hoyt.

Approve Meeting Minutes
Members in attendance read over the minutes from the June 22 meeting. Derek moved to approve the minutes as written. All approved.

Group Norms
Jay asked members in attendance to review the group norms.
1. Attend all meetings and be on time.
2. Listen to and show respect for the views of other members.
3. All questions are welcome.
4. Be an attentive listener and hold each other accountable.
5. Carry out assignments on schedule.
6. Extend grace and assume positive intent.
7. Always strive for win-win situations.
8. Every member is responsible for the team's progress/success.

Review Upcoming Meetings
An additional meeting has been added on Sept. 13 at 5:30 p.m.
- Site visit to Lynden Middle School.
- Task force members will meet in the Meridian Learning Center at 5:30 p.m. and hop on a bus to ride together to tour Lynden Middle School.

Aug. 22 at 5:30 p.m. **(this is a revised date and time)**
- Site visits to Meridian Middle School and Irene Reither Elementary School.
- Task force members will meet in the Meridian Learning Center at 5:30 p.m. and hop on a bus to tour both schools.

Sept. 26 at 5:30 p.m.
- Site visit to Meridian High School.
- Task force members will meet in the Meridian Learning Center at 5:30 p.m. and walk over to tour the high school.
- Task force members will review all information presented so far.
- Task force members will be asked to prioritize projects for recommendation to the School Board.

Oct. 24 Review at 5:30 p.m.
- Review draft recommendation and provide feedback.

Presentation by Cory Plager, Senior VP Public Finance with D.A. Davidson
Jay introduced Cory Plager with D.A. Davidson. Cory has been managing school bonds and levies for about the last 20 years.

Cory Plager with D.A. Davidson presented an introduction to school bonds and levies. Cory shared information about the differences between education program levies, operation levies, capital projects levies (formerly referred to as Maintenance and Operations levies), and school bonds. Cory explained how levy funds are collected and require a simple majority vote to approve. Bond funds are received up front and require a super majority vote to approve. Bonds are limited to a 5% debt capacity ($104,196,156 for 2023) and require 40% of the people from the previous general election to vote. Cory also explained that bonds can be refinanced, and that our district has in past years refinanced bonds which allowed us to refund $1.2 million to taxpayers. Cory shared historically data that showed that 96% of EP&O levies and 91% of capital levies brought forward in February since 2008 have passed.

Cory talked about the financial planning steps for a bond and shared two bond examples, which included projected tax rate examples.

Comments and Questions from Task Force Members

A task force member asked how do we share with community members that their school taxes portion of their tax bill is reducing? The district will share factual information with taxpayers through the website and newsletters.

Two task force members shared concern that the sample projected tax rates would be a hardship for members in our community.

A task force member asked who the bond holders are? Cory explained that usually insurance companies own school bonds.

A task force member asked if we would work in collaboration and investigate using grassroot companies and utilize volunteers to offset costs. The district is required to follow a bid process that will include bids from companies in our local area. Cory is unsure about utilizing volunteers because of labor liabilities and safety requirements.

A task force member asked if a bond is passed does it have to be spent on a specific proposed purpose? Cory explained that yes, bond funds must be spent on the projects as presented to the voters based on the resolution passed by the School Board. However, often there is a clause built into bonds that allows the board to bring a resolution forward to spend remaining unallocated bond funds. This would involve a public hearing process.

A task force member asked if other options are being considered in lieu of spending $45,000 to demo the District Office. Dr. Everett shared that School Board members have suggested some other options such as auctioning off the building.

Next meeting is at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Aug. 22. We will jump on a bus and tour the Meridian Middle School and Irene Reither Elementary School.