

**Mahomet-Seymour
COMMUNITY UNIT DISTRICT NO. 3
Champaign County, Illinois**

**Meeting of the Board of Education
Special Meeting**

Held in the Board Conference Room

Date: October 15, 2019

1. Call to order

The Special Meeting was called to order by President Max McComb at 7:00 p.m. He welcomed all present to the meeting.

2. Roll Call

Board members present for the roll call were: Max McComb, Lori Larson, Merle Giles, Dr. Colleen Schultz, Dr. Jeremy Henrichs, Meghan Hennesy, and Ken Keefe. Also present were Superintendent Lindsey Hall, and Board Recorder, Dawn Quinley.

3. Pledge of Allegiance

President McComb asked those in attendance to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. Approval of Agenda

Dr. Schultz asked to remove closed session from the meeting as she does not believe that Board Policy 2:200, Types of School Board Meetings, allows the Board to discuss any matters that were not included in the stated purpose of the Special Meeting. The Board discussed whether that applies to closed session and also whether the meeting agenda serves as notification of the stated purpose of the meeting.

Motion was made by Schultz, seconded by Hennesy, *to approve the agenda* as amended. The motion passed.

5. Public Comment McComb reviewed the visitor guidelines and called for any public participation forms. There were none.

6. Follow Up Discussion to September 4 Joint Meeting Between Board of Education & Village of Mahomet

President McComb explained that there would be no action taken tonight, that it just an investigative meeting. He proposed that the meeting be broken down into three areas: TIF, Village of Mahomet's interest in the Junior High, potential new intergovernmental agreement (IGA) with the Village of Mahomet to replace the 2011 agreement.

President McComb mentioned that a delegation from the Village was in attendance to help serve as a resource to the Board. He gave a brief overview of the original intergovernmental agreement with the Village of Mahomet that includes plans regarding the building of needed roads on District property. Under that agreement, these roads would have to be paid for and built by the District when called for by the Village because the District is considered to be the developer. He also reviewed an updated proposal that was presented at the joint meeting in September that would change the location of the needed railroad crossing and extend South Mahomet Road all the way to Prairievew Road. That proposal would include an extension of the existing TIF that would allow for needed roads to be paid for with TIF funds instead of by the District. He encouraged the Board to review the Question and Answer sheet that was provided by the Village and asked for questions.

The Board asked several questions about the TIF and the current Intergovernmental Agreement. Questions included who would pay for the railroad crossing and whether the developers that own land within the TIF would help pay for the needed roads. The Village representatives explained that the new TIF extension proposal would put in all needed roads and the railroad crossing using funds generated by the TIF. This would allow for the projects to happen all at one time and in the near future. It is very expensive to put in public infrastructure, so using the TIF as a funding mechanism to put in public infrastructure makes development more attractive and more likely which would then bring additional tax revenue for all the taxing bodies involved in the TIF. The Village also explained that the current projection is to be able to pay for the needed roads and the crossing based on the current increment continuing to grow at a very conservative estimate of 2%. It is not dependent on any new development within the TIF.

The Board asked for clarification on whether or not the District would be required to put in the road on District land if the District does not plan to build anything on its for many years. It was explained that under the current IGA, the District would be required to put in the roads when the Village calls for them. Also, TIF funds that are projected to be in the TIF when it expires in 2023 need to be committed and spent within a certain time frame. The Village plans to put in the railroad crossing with the TIF funds,

so the District would be called upon to put in its portion of the road at that time, then the village would go out and look for grants and other funding to build the portion of the road between the District's land and the railroad crossing. The Village also indicated that there is an option to do nothing, and that if they go that route, they would use the TIF funds for public infrastructure in other areas that would benefit from economic development within the TIF district. A concern was raised about the proposed South Mahomet Road extension going through the middle of District property. It was felt that it would stop the District from doing some things and brings a major road through the property. The Village indicated that they considered other options, but this is the quickest and least costly option for all parties involved.

A concern was shared that the District could be losing money by participating in the TIF. The Village explained that they had done some calculations about the gap between what the District gives up to the TIF over the life of the extension vs. what it would cost the District to go out and bond and the gap is about \$750K. It was further explained that if the TIF extension doesn't happen, the road won't happen. The Village anticipates further commercial development growth within the TIF and this will benefit the District in the long run making the gap smaller.

The Board asked a question about traffic on the proposed South Mahomet Road extension. The Village indicated that there would be a mix of relief from traffic on 150 and school traffic, but the road will be built wide and oversized to handle the traffic. A question was asked if the village would have an objection if the District wanted to go with a plan more like the original plan even if it costs some money to move the road down lower on the property. The Village indicated that they would object because it would create new issues, and it was also a logical area of divisions because of other property lines, and there would be additional costs for utilities.

A concern was raised about giving up short term money for long term gain when we have short term needs with regard to class sizes being too big and buildings being too small. It was mentioned that the District needs to do something about space and it needs to be done soon.

A question was asked about the District's ability or not to renegotiate the pass through percentages once the District pays for its portions of the roads required. It was further stated that it seems the District is subsidizing the rest of these roads for the other developers because they can't be compelled to do it themselves. The Village said that this is a fair statement, but with or without the District being a player in this, this would still be a long range transportation goal and the TIF would be the plan to fund it. If it was so inviting for a developer to do it, it would already be done, but it's not. The essence of TIF and economic development is that you make the initial infrastructure investment which in turn enables developers to make an investment on their side.

There was some discussion about whether the District should build a Junior High when there are shortages of space in all the other buildings. It was explained that we have space options in every building except the Junior High and the Junior High is landlocked.

Concerns were raised by some on the Board about commercial developments happening in the downtown TIF district that the District will not receive tax revenues from for many years. It was pointed out by others on the the Board that there will be payroll, sales taxes, and other community enhancements that will benefit the community. There was a concern raised that the Board may not have known that there was a downtown TIF, but it was stated that the Board had a delegate as part of the process, and TIFs are passed in a public open meeting and that happened earlier this year.

Dr. Hall shared some thoughts about space utilization at the high school and Junior High. The high school is not out of space. Capacity can be looked at several different ways, and the Board may want to engage in a space utilization study. Currently at the Junior High and High School, teachers all have plan times when their classrooms are not being taught in and could be used by other teachers. Under this scenario, teachers would travel to open rooms throughout the day. They would not have their own classroom. The difference between the high school and the junior high when considering this sort of arrangement is that the core spaces at the junior high are too small for the number of students. Core spaces are rooms like the cafeteria, gym, library, and hallways. The high school has larger core spaces.

The Board discussed that class sizes that are increasing from kindergarten and moving through the buildings. A concern was shared that there seem to be general space issues in all buildings and the Board should look at growth as a whole and consider other options besides building a new Junior High. A question was asked why the Junior High has been identified as the building that is needed. It was shared that the Board looked at this in the past, and the Junior High was identified because it was the building that was closest to capacity, the building is aging, the condition deteriorating, and it isn't as functional to the middle school concept. If the Junior High was moved to the High School, it would likely have the same issues there with the middle school concept.

A question was asked by the audience whether the District would need to go to the tax payers to build another building. President McComb explained that any substantial building project would probably exceed what the District can do without a tax increase,

so there would be a need to go to voters. The amount needed would depend on what needs to be built. The community engagement process will help to facilitate this conversation with the community.

The Board discussed whether the current land the District owns could support a high school, and it was shared that it probably isn't large enough for that, but could support other buildings. High Schools with athletic fields and room for expansion require a lot of land and there isn't enough acreage left on the land around Middletown Prairie. They also discussed several ideas about whether the District might be able to purchase the land to the west of its property, or possibly interest the land owner to the east of its property in a sale/purchase or trade of District land for their land. This would allow all of the District's land to be north of the proposed road, and all of the land owners land would be south of the road. Again, it was mentioned that these ideas could be brought up as part of the community engagement conversation.

A member of the audience shared thoughts about how she believes there needs to be a trade-off between figuring out space and facility needs with building a road. She thinks that space needs outweigh the need for a road

Another member of the audience discussed the gap of about \$800K over the life of the extension that the District would be giving up by being part of the TIF. The Village explained that they believe that this is the amount that the District would give up once the District considers that it would have to go out and bond in order to finance the cost of the needed roads. The audience member said that the worst case scenario would be that the District is out \$800K, but he thinks that this isn't a significant amount over the life of the TIF extension especially in light of all that could be accomplished within the TIF that might benefit the District in the future.

Another member of the audience shared that she believes that the road needs to be built so the District can build the spaces needed. She believes that the District needs to concentrate on the land that they already own as she doesn't think that adding on to the existing buildings will fix the problem.

Some historical information about how the District settled on the land it currently owns. It was indicated that the Board looked at multiple locations in Mahomet. They chose this location it had the lowest possible cost to develop because it had lowest cost for water and sewer. He believes the District still benefits from the proximity of water and sewer. Even if the District helps to pay to build out the road, others help pay as well, and everyone benefits. The land costs were lower than other options, and there was access to Route 150.

President McComb brought up the Village's interest in purchasing the Junior High. A member of the audience asked if the price would be \$750K, when the price had been set, and if that price had been decided in an open meeting. President McComb said that the price has been a discussion between the District and the Village, and that the price has not been set. The Village agreed. She asked if the Village would have to go to the taxpayers to purchase the Junior High or a recreation or pool. The Village stated that they are budgeting for that and that they would very likely need to go to the community for a MAARC and/or pool. She asked how the Junior High is land-locked. The answer given was that the soccer field is there and sits lower. Building out that way would be difficult. She asked if there had been a study on that, and President McComb indicated that talks with the architect revealed this. The Board discussed what a building would look like that was good for a middle school concept.

A member of the audience asked if the Junior High isn't adequate for a school how could it be converted to a rec center that is useful and a good use of taxpayer money. The Village indicated there is a study available about what would be needed for a MAARC. When the Junior High came into focus as a possible option, they did a subsequent study on it. They found that they would take the good parts and get rid of the rest. The outdoor space met MAARC criteria.

A question was asked if the landowners whose land the proposed road would go through have been contacted or paid for the right of way through the land. The Village stated that no one has been contacted yet, and they would not be paid for the right of way.

The Board asked when a decision on TIF extension is going to be made. It was indicated that it would be decided after adequate discussion. The Village indicated that it would need a supporting letter from each taxing body, and it needs action of the state legislature. Their tentative goal to begin road construction is next year, sometime in 2020. They would need a letter from the Board acting on behalf of the District. The TIF extension would also need to go through the TIF review board. The Village indicated that they have had tentative discussion with other taxing bodies about the Village's intent. It was asked if the TIF could move forward if one taxing body says no to the extension. The Village wasn't sure, but thought it could likely move forward with a majority of the taxing bodies. The current TIF expires in 2023.

A new Intergovernmental Agreement with the Village will need to be drafted for a TIF extension. A question was asked if the village would be amenable to letting the District out of the TIF once the road project is complete and paid for, or dissolving the TIF. The Village stated that they would need to discuss it internally, but it is unlikely because it doesn't help the TIF do what the TIF needs to do.

A representative from the Library reminded the Board that there are more people impacted by the TIF than just the Village and District. The Library might not benefit as much from the roads being discussed, but they know it is good for the community. Maybe the next project would benefit the Library more. The Village agreed that decisions need to be made with regard to what benefits the whole community. Everyone needs to work together. It would be short sighted to think that this is the only project.

A member of the audience asked if the South Mahomet Road extension happens, would the existing South Mahomet Road be widened. She wondered who pays for turn lanes and expanding current South Mahomet Road. The Village indicated that the Illinois Department of Transportation and the Village, and Mahomet Township would pay for those things. The Village indicated that any project to improve the existing South Mahomet Road won't happen until it is warranted, and it is not warranted right now. The Village indicated that they have no intentions of making future improvements to South Mahomet road as part of this discussion. She asked if the proposed road have turn lanes. It was indicated that he thought it would. There will be no driveways that back onto the proposed South Mahomet Road extension.

The Board thanked Patrick Brown, Sean Widener, and Robert Kouzmanoff for coming and for their input. President McComb shared that he appreciates the cooperation.

10. Adjournment

With no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned by consensus at 9:31 p.m.

Max McComb, President

Merle Giles, Secretary

Submitted by Dawn Quinley, Board Recorder