

# DEADWOOD COMMUNITY MEETING

## FEBRUARY 23, 2016

### COMMUNITY Q & A

*Last updated 3/1/16*

*Please continue below for the Swisshome Q & A*

#### **Are we keeping the Home Economics Room?**

Yes, the Home Ec Room will be updated with plumbing and appliances. However, the space is larger than needed and half the room will be portioned off for other uses.

#### **How long has the Home Ec Room been in use?**

This is our third consecutive year offering "Farm to Table". This year the students have learned to knit, create stationary, and bake banana bread, pumpkin pie, cookies, etc.

#### **Why is the Middle School not included? Is it important to separate Middle School from High School students?**

The Middle School currently only has two (2) classrooms being utilized. We are looking to consolidate space so can reduce our operating costs. Our Middle School tenant, The Siuslaw Watershed Council, would also be allowed to have their doors remained unlocked during business hours. We can adequately supervise our Middle and High School sharing one building. The Middle School lockers are already located and in use at the High School. We feel that a "family" environment will be created among Middle and High School students.

#### **Is the proposed bond rate based on assessed value of land and structures?**

Yes, the proposed bond rate would be one both land and structures.

#### **How is the Board writing the bond? Will you have a tax cap or can the bond raise?**

The bond amount cannot increase unless another (new) bond is approved by voters. It is possible for the bond rate to decrease slightly if the districts taxable value significantly increases.

#### **Describe the reasoning for providing additional lunch service at the High School?**

Currently lunch is only served at the Elementary School. Middle and High School students must walk "over the hill", rain or shine, for lunch. The bond steering committee feels that this would save student time and required supervision. The current concession stand area would be renovated to distribute food. MS/HS students would eat in the "Student Commons" (to be constructed) across from the current Library. The elementary kitchen would remain the central kitchen. Several school districts have one central kitchen that prepares the food and then delivers the food among the schools.

#### **The permanent tax rate was set by the state?**

Yes, the permanent rate of \$4.8917 was set by the state of Oregon, not the district, when Oregon Ballot Measure 5 passed in 1990. All school districts are assigned a permanent tax rate. *Revenue from the permanent tax rate is intended for school operations only.* Revenue from the proposed bond measure would be recorded in a separate fund as it is designated for capital improvement costs only.

#### **Would the \$1.59 bond rate be on top of the permanent rate?**

Yes, the bond amount for \$4 million will be a new tax of \$1.59 per \$1,000 assessed value. That would total around \$6.48 per \$1,000 assessed value.

#### **What kind of space will the Student Common area be?**

The current area ("Green Room") will become a permanent structure of the High School Building. The space is intended to serve as a cafeteria and for social interaction. It will be expanded and constructed to meet code.

**What happens if MSD closes before the bond is set to expire?**

This would depend how a school district merger is accomplished. This would be an extremely sophisticated legal proceeding. Unfortunately, this is a very complicated hypothetical scenario and there is no definite answer. However, if Mapleton School District dissolved, new boundary lines would be drawn for the school district that takes over Mapleton School District's territory. Tax payers would then be subject to the new school districts tax rates. All surrounding districts of Mapleton currently have higher tax rates. It should be noted this is a highly unlikely scenario. We are passing this bond to sustain our school district.

**Would funding be the only reason the school would close?**

Yes. It was discussed that Alsea School District remained operating when student enrollment fell below 100 students. School districts appropriately decrease staffing and operating costs based on the number of students enrolled. There are many districts in the state of Oregon with similar and smaller enrollment than Mapleton.

**Why is the pool building not included?**

The district voted several years ago to discontinue financial support to the pool. With Measure 5 and the loss of timber revenues, the district budget could no longer maintain it to standards. The Siuslaw River Aquatics Center (SRAC) board and the Mapleton School District board recently signed an agreement to allow SRAC to seek outside funding to reestablish the pool. Several fund raisers are being planned. Sustainable funding is hard to find in the current economy.

**Have you done an analysis of the new improvements lasting 25 years?**

We know that the proposed improvement will last a minimum of 25 years and most major infrastructure replacement will last 50-60 years. Roofing has a 40 year life span as an example.

**If the proposed bond does not pass is there a "Plan B"?**

The district will continue to apply for grants to help meet the needs in a crisis management model; fix what breaks as it occurs. The district plans to apply for a Seismic Grant that becomes available in July 2016.

**How much will building improvements cost and will you have more dollars to bring back things like classes?**

This Bond will assist the district in having some additional dollars to re-direct towards the classroom. It is our hope to bring back some additional classes like Spanish, Art and hopefully music in the future.

**Can we do improvements with the current OR base tax rate?**

The district currently is funding \$30,000 - \$40,000 per year for building maintenance. This only allows us to fix the things that break as they occur.

**Who will be the point person to oversee the project?**

The district is looking at option to hire a project manager. However, the school board, and members of the steering committee will be actively involved in evaluating the progress of construction.

**Is there consideration to control traffic driving through the district to the elementary side?**

There are currently no proposed improvements involving rerouting traffic to the elementary school. We appreciate you bringing this concern to our attention. *Instead of rerouting traffic we asked the question of how to reroute student activity to be less in the open.*

**Does the Elementary plan include upgrading the Multipurpose Room bathrooms/locker rooms?**

The plan will construct new accessible ground level restrooms; we will close the basement bathrooms/locker rooms.

**When would construction begin?**

Construction would begin this summer and probably run for the next 2-3 years to not impact the school operation.

**Will a document be created with priority work and dollar amounts of each improvement?**

Yes. Once the Board sets the Bond amount, the project will be scaled back to accomplish the highest priority jobs improving the infrastructure within the proposed budget. We are sharing all ideas and realize the project must be scaled back in the future for the next round of meeting in late March and early April.

**What will happen to the MS building?**

It will continue to be occupied by the Siuslaw Watershed Council and we are working with Peace Health to provide a medical professional one day a week in the MS building.

**Will we reroof the MS?**

No. That has recently been completed along with some restoration work on the outside including replacing dry rot and painting. The exterior of the building is in good shape at this time.

**If the bond passes, how much does PIVOT get paid?**

The entire design teams will be paid around 12% of the project construction cost.

**IF bond fails, will things cost more in the future?**

Yes, the cost of construction is increasing at a rate of 3-4% per year.

**What would it cost to implement all the ideas?**

The ideas presented are part of a Master Plan. Some of the ideas that were brainstormed by students and staff are not considered priority items. For example, an outdoor auditorium at the Elementary School was thought of, this is not a priority or feasible within the planned budget. For all of the projects that were brainstormed it is estimated that it would cost \$15 million. With an \$8M budget (\$4M from the Bond and \$4M from the State) we will be able to address the majority of the high priority and infrastructure improvement projects.

**What are some of the energy efficient ideas proposed?**

Windows, insulation, heating, lighting, electrical, etc. It is hard to model the actual savings, but we know from other projects that the school will see reduced operational costs. When this happens, those funds can be spent on improving our class offerings.

**What part of the overall budget will be put towards accessibility?** The Project requires up to 25% of the budget to be spent to improve accessibility. We know we can do what is needed for much less than that. We estimate the cost to be closer to 15% of the construction cost.

**What happen to the Booster Club's \$15,000?** This money was given to the Mapleton Community Foundation to be held until the bleachers are replaced in the HS Gym. The money will be used for that specific project. We received a quote in May of 2014 to demolish and replace the bleachers for \$38,671.

**Why can't community efforts be made that would accomplish the necessary repairs without a bond?**

We believe there are some basic improvements that we can complete by utilizing volunteers from the community. However, because of the cost of a majority of the needed infrastructure improvements, we are required to receive bids from licensed and bonded contractors that can then complete the improvements and meet prevailing wage law.

**What is currently happening in the district to address improving student academic success?**

We currently are an AVID school district; AVID stands for Advancement Via Individual Determination. By implementing AVID instructional strategies, we have been able to increase the rigor of our instruction and raise the expectations for student achievement and behavior. Students are expected to become active participants in their education. For more information on AVID, please visit their website at [www.avid.org](http://www.avid.org).

We have created a District Enhancement Group to develop a school wide system that focuses on creating active citizens through purposeful learning and service. Our goal is to provide all students with the opportunity to give back to their

world to make it a better place. They will begin by focusing on themselves and their environment. This will lead them to give back to their school and their community to make it a better place. And finally answer the question, "What will I do to make my world a better place?" Our belief is that by creating service minded citizens, we will increase the leadership opportunities for our students while instilling in them the mindset of giving.

As a district we are committed to maintaining small class sizes. The small class sizes enable us to provide more individual support for our advanced learners, along with our struggling learners.

Our instructional focus at the elementary school has been on reading and math. Through Oregon RTI we are providing strong intervention supports for our Title I and Special Education students. All of our students receive instruction using research based, strong instructional strategies that align with AVID and active engagement strategies. It is our goal to provide students with high quality, rigorous instruction! We have accomplished this by providing high quality professional development to all of our staff.

## **SWISSHOME COMMUNITY MEETING**

### **FEBRUARY 25, 2016**

### **COMMUNITY Q & A**

*Last updated 3/2/16*

#### **What is the maximum capacity of the High School?**

The current estimated capacity is 210 students; this is approximately 30 students per classroom.

#### **Why not consolidate operations to only the High School building?**

We feel that Elementary and High School aged students need to be separated. Additionally, the High School does not offer enough classroom capacity for the entire K-12 curriculum to be taught. The building currently offers 7 classrooms; we need approximately 15 classrooms to function as a K-12 district. Educational operations will be moved out of the Middle School building and into the High School building. The MS will continue to be occupied by the Siuslaw Watershed Council and we are working with Peace Health to provide a medical professional one day a week in the MS building.

#### **Would it be cheaper to purchase modular buildings?**

Modular buildings have a short lifetime. The infrastructure improvements to our current buildings will be more cost effective for long term facility maintenance and repair.

#### **What is the life of the repairs?**

We know that the proposed improvement will last a minimum of 25 years and most major infrastructure replacement will last 50-60 years. Roofing has a 40 year life span as an example.

#### **What is the projected savings on replacing windows?**

It is hard to model the actual savings, but we know from other projects that the school will see reduced operational costs.

#### **Will the reduced operating costs from energy efficiencies be earmarked in a fund for maintenance?**

Yes, operational savings will be put towards maintenance (as well as instruction to bring back some electives). Any qualifying rebates received from Central Lincoln PUD for energy efficiency or weatherization will be deposited into our Fund 402 Capital Improvement. During our 2015 fiscal year our expenses for electricity totaled \$52,877. When we experience a reduction in electricity costs we will have more money in our maintenance budget.

**Are you worried with Mapleton's low enrollment?**

Mapleton's enrollment has actually increased 10% from last school year. The Elementary enrollment is stable and a good indicator of our future student population. There are many districts in the state of Oregon with similar and smaller enrollment than Mapleton.

**A 25 year bond seems too long.**

This length of time is common for school district bonds. For example, Marcola School District Measure 20-232 (2015) is for 25 years, Fern Ridge School District Measure 20-220 (2014) is for 25 years, and Bethel School District Measure 20-209 (2012) is for 21 years. **To reduce the bond rate per \$1,000 assessed value the bond life must be extended.**

**What is the projected life of Mapleton School District?**

Our intentions are to maintain the Mapleton School District indefinitely.

**Does the state of Oregon decide when to considerate school districts together?**

No, a district merger is initiated by the school districts themselves.

**Why do we have to choose priorities? Why does it cost so much?**

PIVOT was hired to study our current mechanical systems and estimate costs for capital improvement projects. The total estimated cost for all improvements is above our \$8 million budget. As a public entity we are legally required to pay contractors prevailing wages (Davis-Bacon Act).

**Have you thought about a smaller bond?**

Yes, we considered many options. With the cost estimates presented to our bond steering committee and the availability of \$4 million matching funds from the state we feel this is a remarkable opportunity that cannot be passed up. Additionally, the cost of doing these repairs over time will escalate at a rate of 3-4% per year in construction and material costs. We analyzed our proposed bond rate with other Lane County Schools to ensure our rate is reasonable.

**What happens to the Middle School Building?**

The Middle School currently only has two (2) classrooms being utilized. We are looking to consolidate space so can reduce our operating costs. Our Middle School tenant, The Siuslaw Watershed Council, would also be allowed to have their doors remained unlocked during business hours. We are working with Peace Health to provide a medical professional one day a week in the MS building.

**Can you put the Elementary students in the Middle School building?**

The Elementary School building is 18 years newer than our Middle School building. The MS is also significantly smaller than the Elementary by 21,000 square feet. The Elementary building also has two key areas, the Multi-Purpose Room and commercial kitchen. Significant capital improvements and an addition of a commercial kitchen and gymnasium would be required to move to the MS building.

**How much do they use the kitchen?**

It is used daily; we employ a head cook and an assistant. Breakfast and lunch is prepared and served on site. Approximately 85% of students eat school breakfast and lunch every school day.

**Could you move the school kitchen into the High School Home Ec Room?**

Our food service operations require a commercial kitchen; we prepare over 300 meals a day. Our current commercial kitchen in the Elementary is functional and in good condition. Constructing a new commercial kitchen to replace a functional one would be extremely costly.

**Why was no information sent around before you hired PIVOT?**

The state matching grant program was announced in July 2015. On October 21, 2015 the district issued a request for proposals for Capital Improvement Planning and Community Outreach Services to assist the district in the grant application. The evaluation committee awarded PIVOT the contract. It should be noted that PIVOT Architecture was the only firm located in Lane County to submit a proposal. The information we received from PIVOT is also required for the

state seismic grant application. Additionally, the District needed appropriate and reliable information to present to the community.

**Is there any negotiating with PIVOT on the 10-12% they will get?**

Yes. There will be opportunity to negotiate costs.

**Is there a way to ask questions and give comments?**

Please visit our district website [here](#) for direction. If you have a question regarding financial information please email Maria McEldowney at [mmceldowney@mapleton.k12.or.us](mailto:mmceldowney@mapleton.k12.or.us). If you have a question regarding education please email Jodi O'Mara at [jomara@mapleton.k12.or.us](mailto:jomara@mapleton.k12.or.us). Please include "Bond Question" in your email subject line and try to keep questions as specific as possible. We will try to reply to your question(s) within three (3) business days

**Without the bond, how long are you projecting to stay open?**

Our intentions are to maintain the Mapleton School District indefinitely. We are seeking this bond to secure that future as well as to repair an aging infrastructure and bring the learning environment to the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**Could we have fundraised for some this stuff?**

Not really, the high priority items, infrastructure improvements, are costly. The Booster Club did raise \$15,000 to replace the bleachers. We are holding that money to put towards the estimated cost of \$39,000 to demolish and replace the bleachers. Most of our school fundraisers are for student athletics and extracurricular activities, not capital improvement projects.

**Do you communicate with other schools that use funding other than taxes?**

In the state of Oregon school districts must pass a bond to fund capital improvement projects. Fifteen (15) out of sixteen (16) lane county school districts either have a bond/local option levy in place or are seeking one to match the \$4 million offered by the state. Mapleton School District continuously seeks as many grants as we can to help keep the district going. In 2015 we received \$12,830 from the Cool Schools Grant (Department of Energy), \$29,017 from the USDA Equipment Grant, and \$25,877 from the Nike School Innovation Fund.

**Do you have an itemized cost for improvements?**

Itemized costs will be released during our second round of community meetings in April. The bond steering committee will be deciding the final high priority improvements to include in our \$8 million budget.

**When Measure 5 was passed in 1990, it was only to fund operations?**

Property owners currently pay a permanent tax rate to Mapleton School District. This permanent rate of \$4.8917 was set by the state of Oregon, not the district, when Oregon Ballot Measure 5 passed in 1990. All school district are assigned a permanent tax rate. Revenue from our permanent tax rate is intended for operations only. Revenue from the proposed bond measure would be recorded in a separate fund as it is designated for capital improvement costs only.

**Can Mapleton change the permanent tax rate?**

No, this rate is permanent; it has stayed the same since 1990. Legislature would have to change Measure 5 for the permanent rate to change.

**Do we know the interest rate on the bond and the total amount to be paid back?**

The projected interest rate is 4% (dependent on district bond rating). This interest cost, \$ 3,138,478, is calculated into the \$1.59 per \$1,000 assessed evaluation bond rate.

**Does the bond rate amount stay stable?**

Yes. The estimated bond rate, \$1.59 per \$1,000 assessed value, cannot increase unless another (new) bond is approved by voters. It is possible for the bond rate to decrease slightly if the districts taxable value significantly increases.

**Will the bond revenue only go to our local schools?**

Yes. All revenue collected from the bond rate will go directly to Mapleton School District. Revenue from the proposed bond measure would be recorded in a separate fund as it is designated for capital improvement costs only. No money will be spent on staff/employee salary and compensation.

**You have technology, textbook adoptions and curriculum included in the bond?**

Technology and textbooks are an eligible use of grant funds, as such; school districts commonly include these in a bond measure. While the majority of our budget will be spent to improve our infrastructure (roofing, mechanical, electrical, plumbing and septic systems, and exterior) we are looking to enhance student learning as well.

**Other schools offer a wider array of electives. With the cost savings, will you put more programs back into the curriculum, like music?**

The district anticipates being able to bring back some classes and programs depending upon student interest. Spanish, art, and music are the programs we are evaluating.

**What would be the difference if Mapleton went Charter?**

The financial incentive for districts to go charter is no longer available. In the beginning districts were awarded \$500,000; that money is no longer available. In addition, the district would have to be willing to bus in students from our neighboring districts, Blachly, Fern Ridge, and Siuslaw, to increase student population. This is a controversial method of increasing enrollment in Lane County; at this time the board is not willing to take that step out of respect to our neighbors. There are some differences in teaching credentials as well. Charter schools do not have as strict of licensure requirements; they can hire an employee without a teaching license for instruction.

**When would Mapleton receive bond revenue, if it passes?**

We anticipate receiving revenue from our local general obligation bond in early summer 2016. Construction would begin this summer and probably run for the next 2-3 years to not impact the school operation.

**Are computer aided education classes available to students?**

Yes. We have approximately eight students working online for credit recovery or to take higher level classes not offered in our curriculum; including philosophy, psychology, nursing, and more.

**Are there enough computers?**

We currently have computer labs with stationary desktop computers that classes rotate through. We are looking to offer more mobile technology, laptops or tablets, for students to use anywhere in the school building and nearby grounds. Mobile devices would allow multiple classes to use the internet for research and classroom activity at the same time.

**Are you committed to maintaining all of these upgrades?**

Yes. The district will convene a Long Range Facility Planning Committee to assist the district in completing a long range facility plan. The facility plan will help the district strategically plan for future facility needs within the next 10 years. Information produced by PIVOT will be incorporated into the plan (repair/replacement data, construction lifetime, etc.). The Long Range Facility Planning Committee will meet annually to determine if the district is following the plan accurately.

**Do you ever see us going back to a 5 day week?**

The District has not recently discussed reverting back to a 5 day school week structure. However, it is a topic that the board can and should revisit. It is important to note that the purpose for the district moving to a 4 day school week structure was to reduce expenditures. The financial impact of returning to a 5 day school week will not address our aging infrastructure.

**What is the bond timeline?**

Mapleton School District will file the bond measure by March 17, 2016, the filing deadline. Election Day is May 17, 2016. If the District is unable to pass the bond on the May 2016 ballot, the \$4 million in grant funds will go to a school district

on the waiting list that is able to pass their bond. The District would then continue to seek grant funds to improve our school infrastructure and seismic stability. However, the competitive grants we are eligible to apply for are not adequate enough to improve the infrastructure of our buildings like the passing of the School District Bond would allow for.