

**MINUTES OF THE JOINT WORK SESSION OF THE  
AMES COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
AND THE AMES CITY COUNCIL**

**AMES, IOWA**

**JUNE 13, 2016**

The Ames City Council and Ames Community School Board met in joint session on June 13, 2016, in the Board Room of the School District's Administrative Building, 2005 - 24<sup>th</sup> Street. Luke Deardorff, President of the Ames Community School District Board of Directors (School Board), called the meeting to order. Mr. Deardorff introduced School Board members present: Rodney Briggs, Mike Espeset, Alisa Frandsen, Tim Rasmussen, Lewis Rosser, and Bill Talbot.

City of Ames Mayor Ann Campbell introduced the City Council members present: Bronwyn Beatty-Hansen, Gloria Betcher, Amber Corrieri, Tim Gartin, Chris Nelson, and Peter Orazem.

The Agenda was approved by the School Board members. The School Mission Statement was read.

**PROJECT SUMMARY AND FUTURE OF AMES HIGH SCHOOL:** Dr. Tim Taylor, Superintendent of Ames Community Schools, advised that all of the elementary school projects had been finished. Those projects included the renovation of Kate Mitchell and Sawyer, and the newly constructed Meeker, Fellows, and Edwards Elementary Schools. Dr. Taylor reported that a bond issue in 2010 was passed to help facilitate those renovations and new construction; the bonds will be paid off in 2020. Even with all those improvements, property taxes attributable to the School District actually lowered by \$.45/\$1,000. The next project for the District will be a new Maintenance Facility that will be constructed on South Bell Avenue.

Dr. Taylor reported that discussions had also begun on improvements that are needed to the High School. It will have to be decided whether to renovate the existing building or build new. Regarding funding for future improvements, in addition to property taxes, an estimated \$3.4 million in annual Sales Tax Revenue, which can be used for buildings and technology, could be used.

At the request of Dr. Taylor, Jerry Peters, Director of Facilities Planning and Management, explained what had been done at Meeker Elementary School since last March when bacteria were found in the water. They are still attempting to find the source of the bacteria.

**SALE OF DISTRICT PROPERTY:** School Board President Deardorff stated that the District had sold seven properties in the past few years and wants to sell three other properties: the former Crawford Elementary/Administrative Offices building; the former Edwards Elementary building, and the former Maintenance Facility. The District is in the process of deciding what process will be used; some Board members have advocated for a Request for Proposals (RFP) process to be used similar to what had been used in the past. The School District is talking to

those whom have expressed interest in the properties, but has not gone out for formal bids or proposals.

Council Member Betcher asked if there was any kind of surety that could be given as to what is going to happen to the properties. Board Member Talbot offered that he doesn't know of any mechanism that could provide such a surety. Mayor Campbell disagreed, stating that she hoped that no sale would occur until any prospective buyers had checked with the City to determine if what they have planned for the property meets the City's zoning and other requirements.

Board President Luke Deardorff asked the City Council members what options they would like to have contained in a RFP. Council Member Nelson offered that compatibility with the existing neighborhood was important. The Council would also like to explore whether any of the buildings could be renovated in such a way as to take advantage of their historic character. Council Member Gartin shared that when people purchase a home, they want to be reasonably assured that the uses in the area will remain relatively the same. In that regard, he would like single-family housing to be the use allowed on any properties located in established neighborhoods. Council Member Betcher said that she would not be opposed to allowing the building to be used as office space or a type of community center. Mayor Campbell encouraged the use of a RFP process that would be well-publicized. Council Member Orazem said he would like the City to have the option of rejecting the RFP; specifically, ensuring that the zoning would be workable for what the purchaser has planned. He suggested that the School Board come up with a list of possible projects and run those by the City's Planning & Housing Department. City Manager Steve Schainker suggested that any possible developer first consult with the City.

Mr. Schainker stated that he had heard two comments from the SCAN (South Campus Area Neighborhood): [1] It desired the building in that Neighborhood to remain. [2] It could accept it being used as a restricted-use office building.

Mayor Campbell reiterated that the Council would like to ensure that any proposal would be run by the City first to check what actions would be needed to be accomplished by the City, e.g., Land Use Policy Plan change, rezoning, need for additional infrastructure, etc.

Council Member Corrieri asked what time frame would be desired by the School Board for disposal of the properties. Board President Deardorff said, ideally, it would like everything to be accomplished within a period of 18 months.

Council Member Nelson asked if the City could come up with a suggested list of what the City Council would like to see on any of the affected school properties that would be offered for sale. City Attorney Judy Parks was asked if the School District could initiate a rezoning. She answered that she would need to look into it and report back.

Board Member Briggs shared that, for the Edwards School property, he had heard that the neighborhood would only accept the following uses: a park, family homes, or a combination of those two. At the request of Mayor Campbell, Parks & Recreation Director Keith Abraham explained the parameters for creation of a park within the City. He explained the guidelines contained within the City's Park Master Plan. Mr. Abraham reported that parts of the Edwards Neighborhood are underserved when it comes to access to park facilities.

**INDOOR SWIMMING POOL:** Mayor Campbell gave the background of the operations of the Municipal Pool. The Pool has been jointly owned by the City and School District since its construction in 1965. After over 50 years, it is nearing the end of its useful life. Ms. Campbell referenced the many discussions that she and City Manager Schainker have had with School Board President Deardorff and Dr. Taylor on this subject over the past two years. Throughout those discussions, there had always been an emphasis on the desire for collaborative efforts between the School District and the City to provide for the ever-evolving interests of the Ames community.

It was shared by Mayor Campbell that it has become evident that the aquatic interests of Ames residents are wide and varied. Ames High School no longer offers swimming as part of its physical education curriculum; however, competitive swimming for both Ames High boys and girls teams has become more popular. The Ames Cyclone Aquatic Club (ACAC) has become a well-known and well-organized competitive swimming club for young swimmers. Additionally, strong interest for a cold water basin has been voiced for a master swimmers program as well as triathlon training for athletes of all ages. The Mayor noted that the success of the Furman Aquatic Center has been overwhelming and has generated more enthusiasm for water recreation options to be available year round. Demand for youth and adult swimming lessons is also increasing. Older adults are requesting water exercise, lap swimming, and water walking. Physical therapy patients continue to use water as a preferred recovery method. All of those activities would utilize warm water with no need for bleachers.

The Mayor advised that within the past few months, a new set of possible collaborative players along with the City and School District have emerged, i.e., MGMC, ISU, Heartland Senior Services, DMACC, Story County. All of those groups share a common desire for warm water aquatics opportunities. Mr. Deardorff commented that after several meetings with the Health Life Center Task Force, the School representatives have concluded that its warm water/recreation focus would not fit with the School's needs for a cold water facility.

According to Mayor Campbell, both she and Board President Deardorff are recommending that the City and School District move forward with separate pools with varied collaborators. The growing demand for community swimming and recreation have brought them to the time in Ames when needs can justify separate pools. The School District continues to leave open the opportunity for the City to construct a pool complex at the High School if deemed in the City's best interest.

Mr. Deardorff advised that the School District will most likely move forward with construction of a cold water facility, but the scope of the project is in question. At this time, through potential collaborative arrangements with ACAC, the District could likely support a 25-meter cold water basin; however, there is an opportunity to discuss the merits of a larger 50-meter cold water pool that could provide additional amenities to the Ames Community.

Board Member Espeset stated that the School District can afford to build the facility it needs and help with some operations costs. The School Board would like to know if the City is interested in partnering with the School on some of the operations costs if the cold water basin facility could be used by the community. The Mayor said that the City could not pay half of the operating costs at the School District's facility and, at the same time, pursue its own facility. Board Member

Rosser noted that the School District was not asking the City to do that. The Board hopes that the two entities can have discussions about a jointly used facility. The Mayor reiterated that there are other players that have come to the table now that might be interested in partnering with the City and the School District on an indoor facility.

Board Member Talbot advised that the School District is spending more on settlement with School employees than what was anticipated and it can't pay for operating costs of a pool. Board Member Talbot answered that estimates they had received were as low as \$150,000 and as high as \$250,000.

Mayor Campbell noted that the City would have to pass a Referendum, which would require 60% voter approval. She asked for an update on the Board's discussions of a 25-meter pool. Mr. Rasmussen stated that, if that is built, there wouldn't be much room for anything else on the School's property. He said that he believed the City's own survey revealed that Ames citizens wanted lap swimming. According to Mr. Rasmussen, that can't be done in a warm-water pool. Board Member Frandsen said that she had heard feedback that people wanted a cool-water pool, but not necessarily a competition pool. Parks & Recreation Director Abraham read the specific questions from the City's Resident Satisfaction Survey regarding a warm-water pool. Mr. Briggs offered his opinion that the City's Survey only represented a very small percent of Ames residents. Mr. Gartin stated that the Survey is very important to the City's planning; the results are not insignificant.

City Manager Schainker shared that, currently, both the City and the School District contribute \$50,000/year for pool maintenance. There are a lot of improvements that have to be made.

Mr. Briggs said that from what he had heard was that residents wanted to replace the Municipal Pool with a similar facility. Mr. Talbot said the School District could use a 50-meter pool. He asked if the City wanted to partner with the School District on that or not. Mr. Rasmussen said he believes that the 50-meter pool would be used by a lot of residents.

Council Member Orazem asked to know the cost estimate for staffing the 50-meter pool year-round. He also asked to know the expected current recurring expenses for therapeutic pool. City Manager Schainker answered that it would be approximately \$500,000 for the therapeutic pool, the 25-meter pool, and the 50-meter pool.

Discussion ensued as to the prospective usage of the different types of pools. Board Member Rosser believes that one of the biggest advantages would be that the facility could be multi-use. He offered his opinion that too much emphasis had been placed on cold-water versus warm-water facilities.

Council Member Corrieri noted that the City Council had never seen any concrete numbers or had a discussion about the City's needs or how joint use would work.

City Manager Schainker pointed out that the projected operation costs estimated by the City and those of the School Board are far apart. After being asked, Mr. Schainker indicated that the time frame to determine the City's best action could be months. The City would have to do a feasibility study for one thing. Capital and operating costs would have to be accurately estimated

so that the residents can reasonably know how their property taxes will be impacted. The City cannot commit to an agreement with the School District until more concrete information is known.

Council Member Orazem stated that the lack of information on this topic was extremely frustrating to him.

Referencing an earlier comment that had been made by Board Member Rosser, Council Member Gartin noted that tonight was the first time that he had heard that the temperature of the water did not matter that much.

Board Member Espeset pointed out that if the City were to be on board, the scale of the cold-water basin would change. If the City partners, the basin would be larger. City Manager Schinker again noted that the costs estimated by the City and those estimated by the School District are far apart. He was not saying that the City's estimates were correct, but wanted it noted that they are different. Board Member Briggs said that he believed efficiencies could be gained by partnering, rather than each entity building its own facility.

Again, Ms. Corrieri pointed out that the School Board had been discussing this topic for some time; however, this is the first time that the Council had heard this information. She commented that a lot more discussion is necessary before the City Council could take any action on this topic.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Moved by Rosser, seconded by Rasmussen to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

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Diane R. Voss, City Clerk

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Ann H. Campbell, Mayor