

**In Attendance**

The meeting was held in the Burlington-Edison School District Board Room. All Board members were in attendance. Superintendent, Laurel Browning; Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Jeff Drayer; Director of Teaching and Learning, K.C. Knudson; Finance Director, Joe Stewart; Director of Auxiliary Services, John Leander; and Special Education Coordinator, Jeff Brown, were also in attendance.

**Call to Order/Introduction**

President Bott called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. She introduced Dr. John Fotheringham, independent facilitator hired by the district.

**Presentation to the Board**

Dr. Fotheringham talked about his qualifications and his experience working with school districts. Below are bulleted highlights from his presentation regarding issues related to the district's property:

- The district has non-voted debt, and it believed passage of a bond measure would pay for it. Including interest, that debt amount is \$9M. The land that the district purchased (non-voted debt) is the Pulver/Peterson property (29 acres) that the district slated for the building of a new K-8 elementary school.
- The property is an ideal site for a school as it is located where there is the greatest growth (west of the freeway).
- Less than two months after the Burlington-Edison School District voted to buy the property, the County ruled it would not accept zoning change. The property is zoned for agricultural and the Skagitonians (farmland advocates) do not want it zoned, but preserved.
- The district bought the land at \$63,000 per acre, not the \$7,000 to \$10,000 it should have drawn as agricultural land. The appraisal of the land was a mistake. The property was also not zoned for "urban growth area." It is 200 feet away from even butting up against the UGA.
- The Board bought the land thinking it had support from the City of Burlington and Skagit County and that the district's bond measures would pass.
- Three bond measures have failed.
- Dr. Fotheringham stated that the only way for the district to avoid insolvency and harming the quality of education for the district's students for decades to come is to pass a very limited bond or levy. Following are his recommendations:
  - Put before the voters a 15-year bond measure for \$5.4M, which would cost the homeowner of a \$300,000 home \$55.20 per year. It would require a 60 percent plurality.
  - Opt for a one-year, \$5.3M capital projects levy which would cost the taxpayer of a \$300,000 home a one-time fee of \$552 and would require a 50 percent plurality.
  - Sell all properties.
  - Refinance.
  - Combination of above.

- The district will need to educate the community.
- If the district does nothing, it will have to pay approximately \$640,000 per year for the next 17 years to liquidate the \$9M debt.

Dr. Fotheringham will provide the Board with a written, updated report within a week. He requested that staff and community members contact him if they have other options regarding this issue. He also answered questions from the Board.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business before the Board with no action taken, the work session was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

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Board President

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Board Secretary