

Questions from Facilities/Bond Town Hall January 28, 2020

The questions/comments will be categorized into: Finances, Facilities, USD 321/Maple Hill, Logistics

Finances:

1. If buildings are sold, what happens to proceeds? Goes back into the district's budget, which could be used to reduce debt.
2. Tax increases? The Piper Jaffray spreadsheet shows the tax implications/increases as to what is being paid now for homes, businesses and agriculture.
3. Will the bond have tax implications on vehicles? Most all the tax increases/decreases would occur in your local property taxes. The motor vehicle levy is behind 2 years so there won't show up as an increase until then.
4. Have federal funds been explored? We receive some federal funds for food service/meal reimbursements and some Title programs dealing with At-Risk, professional development and technology. Nothing associated with federal funding is used on bond & interest. FEMA funds are available for Storm Shelters but it is generally very limited and cannot be assured.
5. What cost savings methods has the BOE/district already taken? There has already been a reduction in spending by reducing professional development, longer times between athletic uniform rotations, no vehicles purchased, textbook purchases suspended, part time summer personnel reduced, delayed phone purchase updates, changes in food service provider, went to a 2-day shorter school year calendar. These actions reduced our budget. Our expenses have risen 9% rate since 2012, while during that same time period inflation was a 9.7% rate.
6. What is the timeline for the bond election and why is there such a "rush"? The present bond comes off the books with the last payment in Sept 2020 as part of the 20-21 budget. To continue with the present bond mil levy and not have the 9-12 mils come off the books and then the new rate come on the books in the 21-22 budget year there must be an election this year.
7. Enrollments-
 - a. 2012-13 473 students
 - b. 2019-20 451 students
 - c. 2023-24 430 students
 - i. Average projections since 2012-13 452 students
 - ii. Actual students since 2012-13 442 students
 - d. Presently-
 - i. Alma-222 students
 - ii. Maple Hill-93 students
 - iii. Paxico-90 students
 - iv. McFarland-56 students
8. What is meant that revenues are maxed out? We cannot add any more mils to our budgets. By statute we can only go to 33% in our Supplemental General (Local Option Budget)-which we presently do and can only get to 8 mils in Capital Outlay-which we

presently do. Each school year the district receives tax money to meet our adopted budget. Next year's projections look to be \$100,000 in state aid more to our budgets. However, with a modest 3% increase in expenses and having the additional annual maintenance expense of \$184,000 due to 100,000 more square feet of buildings compared to other school districts our size, we cannot keep up. In the past, we used the cash balances/reserves/savings to pay for the difference. Presently, we have approximately one month of expenses in our cash balances.

9. What are the savings in each option? If buildings were closed, personnel reduced, annual (utilities, insurance, Internet, trash) and deferred maintenance (no need to replace roofs or HVAC systems) the savings annually and over 20 years of the bond are as follows:
 - a. Option 10- \$826,660 annually and \$5,579,700 over 20 years
 - b. Option 12-\$527,438 annually and \$4,829,775 over 20 years
 - c. Option 16-\$648,678 annually and \$5,031,562 over 20 years
10. What has changed since the last bond that the buildings cannot be maintained? The cost of \$2.4 million in 20-year-old out of warranty roofs-when there's a leak or issue they're fixed. And the \$250,000-\$400,000 of HVAC systems that have lived their industry standard lives. The HVAC systems are on a maintenance plan, but every year we have some die and need replaced.
11. How much do you get for Capital Outlay annually? 8 mils which equals \$373,736 annually plus vehicle taxes amounting to \$52,000 and \$26,000 state aid. Capital Outlay money unfortunately has had to be used for some operating expenses (salaries for maintenance/custodial staff and technology)
12. Why does it seem no other districts are in the same "budget crisis"? They don't have 100,000 excess square footage-costing our district an annual excess maintenance/operating cost of \$184,000. Those is similar situations have closed buildings or consolidated.

Facilities

1. Lots of comments about not tearing down the old WHS limestone building HTK always prefers to renovate the existing building but usually find it is cost prohibitive. In Option #16, the new facility will cost \$8,489,000 plus Demolition of existing at \$250,000. We estimate the cost of complete renovation to bring the current HS to current standards to be around \$11,000,000. The cost includes temporary classroom space for the students for a two-year period while students are displaced. The most logical location for the temporary classrooms would be east of the street and may encroach into the parking lot. We may be able to partially removed portions of the current west front entry door stone and relocate or emulate in the new facility.

Is it just a maintenance issue? There are stone buildings all over the country that are several hundred years old.
2. Water concerns at Paxico if there's any building done there- in a flood plain, cost of flood insurance and is the water safe for the students? From our insurance provider, "based on current Property rate on the policy, the estimated additional premium to add

the new building is \$8,400. Since the building won't be completed until 2021, the Property rate will probably be higher so a ballpark estimate would be \$9K-\$12K.

As for the Flood estimate, our insurance provider can't really project cost since that is determined by the NFIP."

Water is safe for students and is tested regularly, it does contain a lot of minerals that "hardens" the water and is very costly on plumbing fixtures. The city of Paxico has a four-inch water line from the well to the tower and pretty much everything else is two inch. The closest point for the Jr. High School to hook on to the 4" main is at the SE corner of the school property (intersection of Elm Street and Topeka Avenue). The water utility supervisor said that the water pressure gauges typically read between 56 and 60 psi. The city of Paxico is also in the process of getting into a rural water district.

The District has pursued the flood plain issue and believe after reviewing the upcoming flood plain maps that the expanded facility at the Junior High site will comply with floor plain requirements.

3. Who picked the 22 people for the Facilities Committee who came up with the 3 options presented? Were they representing all cities involved? Each BOE member selected several patrons from their school BOE member district and asked if they would be willing to serve on a district Facilities Committee. The 22 people included in the meetings were (3 administrators/principals, 4 prospective BOE members (2 of which are now on the BOE), 2 HTK architects and then 2 Facility Committee Members (2 from each of the 7 BOE member positions). The Facility Committee Members actually were 11 in number rather than the 14 who'd been asked to help. The 11 Facility Committee Members met 3 times went over all the information that's been presented to the BOE, included in newspaper articles and posted on the website. They then voted as to what option they thought was best for the district. They unanimously agreed an Option 11 with a PK-6 at Paxico and a 7-12 at Alma and presented it to the BOE. This option was further updated by the BOE to become Option 16 which was presented at the Town Hall Bond/Facilities meeting.
4. Tours-video-people need to see what's wrong with each of the buildings. Several comments about having/setting up tours of each of the buildings so patrons can see what the issues are with each building.
5. What were the new facilities costs of other similarly sized school districts? Schools using the Construction Manager@Risk process are averaging \$220 per square foot and \$280 per square foot.
6. What about a LEED design? Project will not be LEED Certified. Certification process offers no value to the District. The Certificate will cost approximately \$5,000 and the Architectural fees will be approximately \$15,000 additional. However, the design techniques and methods HTK will meet certification requirements. We are also energy conscious and will exceed LEED and ASHRAE requirements.
7. Does the architectural firm have a licensed engineer on staff? Have the buildings been inspected by a licensed contractor? HTK does not have a licensed engineer. We will

however add several to our Team once any Bond Issue passes. The Buildings have not been inspected by a licensed contractor.

8. What would the new buildings look like? Metal or brick? Our estimates are built around using both brick and metal panels. We will also expect to strategically include native limestone.
9. Where would the kids be going during the building periods? New square footage and additions will be built first then students move into those spaces then any renovations can occur.
10. Design Build Project or more Traditional Design Bid Build? The two most common systems are Construction Management at Risk and Design/Bid/Build. The District has not decided on which system might be employed.
11. Capacities of new facilities? Potential for growth? All options are based on the same population information. Each classroom is designed to house between 18 to 25 students. 24 or 25 students in a room will be at capacity, 22 will be comfortable. Most likely you will reach capacity in student age bubbles, where one or two age groups will have more children as they move through the District. You are currently at around 445 students and it is expected the new design will allow around 520-540 students District Wide in the future.
12. If sketches are only ideas, how reliable are the costs associated with the bond to cover the construction? High or low? Sketches may seem like only ideas, but for us we translate those sketches into projected construction costs. We daily check and verify current construction costs for our area and that allows us to develop project costs based on previous knowledge and expectation. HTK's estimates are meant to be conservative since the District depends on those numbers to provide what has been promised to the District patrons at a maximum price.
13. When do we get input from teachers/staff? Shouldn't they be doing that now or have done it before? HTK will spend dozens of hours with Teachers, para's, janitors, coaches, bus drivers, administration and all staff once the Bond Issue passes to receive their input. It is very expensive for a District to pay for these services out of their normal budget and must wait for the Bond to pass to afford the service. HTK has completed dozens of projects similar to this one and use that knowledge to estimate and make assumptions on what will be needed based on what you currently have and what you should expect for the future.
14. How long has the mold been in the buildings? The mold referenced at the Town Hall meeting at WHS has been eradicated by professionals and the air quality tested for student/staff safety. The mold/water damage in the WJH modular just happened this fall. An estimate was obtained to eradicate it and classes were no longer allowed in the modular.
15. When would buildings be closing? According to BOE policy a decision about closing buildings for the next school year need to happen by the April BOE meeting. However, there is a provision that the BOE may close a building in situations that are deemed emergencies.
16. What was Mission Valley's bond amount when they completed a K-12 building in 2014? They already had consolidated and had a K-12 in a centralized location. \$12,515,000 a

14.25 mil levy increase, according to their information for them to do a similar bond in 2019 (5 years) was \$15.208 million and in 2024 (10 years) was \$18.503 million. These amounts are very similar as to what our HTK cost estimates are.

USD 321-Maple Hill

1. Many questions/concerns with Maple Hill. Why won't USD 329 consider releasing/annexing Maple Hill to USD 321? What does any of the options presented do to help Maple Hill? How can you close a community school? What's been done to get or keep students in the district? For USD 329 to annex in or change school district boundaries it would take both BOE's to agree to it and then the state BOE to vote for that to happen. If that did happen, the "prescribed" lines of the annex proposal are fluid-in other words anyone that wanted to change district lines would be able to do so-not just those within the proposed annex boundary lines. Neither BOE has taken any official action into wanting to change district boundaries.

As long as districts accept out of district students, there will be schools of choice. Maple Hill students are free to attend whatever school district is willing to accept them. Some will choose to go to private-church related schools. Transportation-convenience or safety-there's a state law that allows students living so many miles away from their attendance center may request the receiving school (USD 321) to come into the reciprocating school (USD 329) with a vehicle to pick up students-the receiving school district must notify the reciprocating school of this request-to date there's never been a request.

Regarding safety-of the information provided regarding accidents and fatalities comparing going Maple Hill to St. Marys vs going to Alma from Maple Hill. What are the number of student accidents that happened during the time students either are driving to or from school? How many of these accidents were in school transportation? I believe the statistics would be very similar using these criteria. Safety is paramount in any student/school decisions. Our school route buses safely traveled 169,256 route miles last year and 21,540 extra duty activity/athletic trips.

Money-with each student who goes out of district, the FTE weightedness of around \$8,900 state aid goes with them to the receiving district. USD 329 continues to receive the local property tax amounts (which are 30% of the district budget-70% comes from state aid collected from the state 20 mil levy of every school district). It does take money. If we and USD 321 want to continue to provide our students & staff the best possible education and educational environment it takes money.

Closing community schools is a huge decision. No one wants to close any schools; however, decisions need to be made with the thought process of what's in the best interest of students and the total district.

USD 329 owns the city ball park area south of Maple Hill Elementary and when or if MHE is closed, the district would make reasonable accommodations with the city of Maple Hill regarding the city ball park area.

If a bond issue did pass that provided new construction Maple Hill students and families would be able to attend new, upgraded facilities. And dependent upon locations of these facilities, some the same approximate miles they travel to USD 321.

The question of what's been done to keep students? I would ask what's not being done? Our academic scores are above area and league schools-our graduates are proving they are prepared to be successful/effective citizens when they leave USD 329 schools. Athletically, we are competing and winning state championships. Our vocational, family & consumer science programs garner state and national recognition. Music and drama programs too are receiving state accolades-many times considerably better than area and league schools. Our district has taken intentional and distinct steps to address mental health. We have provided our students & staff with a CASSELL endorsed effective mental/social/emotional model-The Leader in Me-to be successful/effective. And have the data to prove we're doing well. With all that being said, facilities may play into people's decisions as too where their students will attend. We are attempting to solve several issues with this bond election-help our budget and produce facilities that may attract and keep students and their families.

Logistics

1. **How was the architect chosen?** As we began the possible bond possibility we contacted the Kansas Association of School Boards about who to help us. HTK architectural firm was who was recommended because they have done numerous school architectural work.
2. **What about closing the city street?** If need be the Alma City Council will make that decision. There are numerous utility "main" lines under the street. For the district it is a safety/security issue. With construction we want our students & staff to always been within a limited access building-not having to walk outside. If the BOE approved building option includes the possibility of closing the street, the hope would be that the BOE and the city of Alma would negotiate to come up with a win-win for all parties. The dollars to do that are reflected in the budget. If we decide that approach is too expensive we may pursue closing off the street during school days and placing the building east of the street and providing an elevated walkway. The dollars to do this are included in the budget.
3. **Does the ownership of the Alma buildings need to change from Alma District 16 to USD 329?** According to Kansas Association of School Boards legal director-the only time these buildings would need to change ownership with the Register of Deeds would be when they would be sold or have a change of ownership.
4. **On average how far does a Mission Valley student travel to their K-12 school?** According to USD 330 Mission Valley Superintendent, Bill Clark "we have 10 students who live within a 5-mile radius of the school. I would estimate that the average

driving distance (house directly to school) that our students live from the school would be 12-15 miles. A typical student who rides the bus probably rides at least 20 miles/day. Our earliest pick-up is 6:30 a.m. with drop-off at school being 7:30 p.m.

We run 7 route busses which run approximately 250 miles in the AM & PM. So on average....each bus runs 36 miles per AM & PM route. In the past 3 years we have went from 9 regular routes to 7 regular routes.”

5. When was the last audit of the district done? School districts are audited twice annually, one done by the Kansas Department of Education-confirming our enrollment and weighting numbers match our budget (see how much money you receive) and the other done by an outside agency. Varney & Associates from Manhattan conducted the external audit and found no issues-a very clean audit.
6. If Option 10 was approved, what will you be asking for in 20-25 years? Hopefully not another bond request. With the anticipated budget savings from the bond we would have the money to operate the district including making some capital financial decisions regarding maintenance, buses, facility upgrades, etc.
7. How would practices work for 7/8th grade and high school students with only 2 gyms in Alma? The WHS new gym would be split in 2 with a gym curtain giving us 3 gyms in Alma. If more are needed, dependent upon which option is chosen-we'd have continued practices at Wabaunsee Jr. High in Paxico. Again, dependent upon options there may be the necessity of having early morning-before school practices.
8. How does any Option presented unify/unite the district? By eliminating or replacing older buildings with large maintenance needs, provide new facilities for students & staff that would promote/provide community and school pride, bring grade level teachers together for collaboration, bring content level 7-12 teachers together, provide more up to date & relevant vocational/technical classes, possibly minimize transportation for all students throughout the entire district, less transitions-which research shows creates academic dips-with less transitions academic achievement should rise, and provide compromise throughout all district communities to help ensure the bond will pass.
9. What is the plan to sell the BOE selected option? Upon selection of a building option, the BOE would then continue with providing the most up to date, accurate information to our patrons through the use of community meetings, social medias, the local paper, website and by employing public relations firm to help in these endeavors.