

# Special Committee of the Whole Meeting (public)

# Minutes



## Special Committee of the Whole Meeting

January 24, 2018 at 6:30 pm

Albert McMahon Elementary, 32865 Cherry Avenue, Mission, BC

### Members Present:

Chair Tracy Loffler  
Trustee Rick McKamey  
Trustee Shelley Carter  
Trustee Jim Taylor

### Staff Present:

Superintendent Angus Wilson  
Secretary Treasurer Corien Becker  
Assistant Superintendent Larry Jepsen  
Executive Assistant Aleksandra Zwierzchowska (Recorder)

### Absent:

Trustee Randy Cairns

## 1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by the Chairperson. The Chair acknowledged the meeting was being held on Stó:lō Territory. There are four First Nation Bands within the boundaries of the Mission School District: Leq:a'mel, Sq'èwlets, Kwantlen, and Matsqui First Nations.

## 2. Adoption of Agenda

**MOVED and Seconded that the Agenda be adopted as presented.**

**CARRIED**

## 3. Delegations/Presentations

### 3.1 Stave Falls Community Association

Prior to the first presentation, one of the members from the association circulated a document titled, "the cost to open Stave Falls Elementary School vs the cost of two portables."

Julia Renkema, Director of the association read a report to the Committee of the Whole. Highlights from the report include:

- Stave Falls Elementary School was built in 1994 to replace Old Bell Road school;
- Stave Falls Elementary School closed in 2008;
- Stave Falls Community Association formed in 2016;
- Public interest for the school to offer environmental education, after school daycare, and preschool;
- A reference was made to the supreme court ruling to restore class size and composition to 2002 levels;
- Trustees agreed to conduct a preliminary registration for Stave Falls Elementary School for enrolment for 2018/2019, 2019/2020, and 2020/2021 school years.
- Results showed 90 registration submissions;
- A total of 192 students can attend Stave Falls Elementary School;

- The District of Mission provided the association with a letter listing several potentially uses for the school;
- Pre-registration does not reflect accurate information as some individuals were apprehensive in submitting a registration for personal reasons;
- Quoted an article from the Mission Record titled, “Population on the Rise”;
- The Mission Public Schools amended budget includes \$300,000 for portables which could be used to re-open the Stave Falls Elementary School;
- Stave West project is developing recreational, cultural, and educational opportunities in the community. The Stave West Master Plan notes that Stave Falls Elementary School can help deliver nature based education;
- Referenced a motion that was passed at the Public Board meeting that the Board supports rural schools;
- Thanked the Board for the opportunity to engage in the discussion about Stave Falls Elementary.

The Board Chair provided insight on meeting process and noted that there will be a speaker list, and requested that speakers raise their hand to be added to the list. Due to time constraints, a request was made to limit speaking opportunity to two minutes. It was noted that this is not a decision making meeting and that decisions are made at the public Board meeting. A sign-in sheet will circulate the room for individuals to add their contact information to receive updates on the Stave Falls Elementary School.

#### **4. Unfinished Business**

No unfinished business was presented.

#### **5. Staff Reports**

##### **5.1 Stave Falls Elementary School – Preliminary Registration Report**

The Superintendent of Schools presented a PowerPoint presentation providing follow-up information on Stave Falls Elementary.

Highlights from the presentation include:

- Overview on data collection process and presentation on the results;
- 11 students from Silverdale and 6 students from other schools in the district;
- The Board needs to consider that opening one school could mean closing another school;
- 26 would be new students;
- To qualify for rural grant, a school needs to be 5km from another school. As school enrolment grows, additional funding declines;
- \$782,000 was the last running available cost for the school;
- 60 students need 4 educators = total annual cost of approximately \$625,000;
- Growth projections are for Southern parts of Mission versus Stave Falls area;

- The school has not been maintained and new building code requirements will need to be satisfied with re-opening the building;

The Secretary Treasurer provided additional commentary about the DDC, light, and control systems. There is an additional \$95,000 in costs versus the cost that was highlighted in the Superintendents presentation.

The Superintendent continued his presentation by discussing several items for the Board to consider.

### 1. Re-Opening costs

- \$388,000 in estimated costs to re-open the school;
- All costs are not required immediately;
- Time constraints on completing the work;

### 2. Bussing

- Turning a bus around does not increase the cost, the main cost is the driver but students will be required to travel in a new direction;
- New bus is approximately \$145,000;
- It is not recommended for MPSD buses to enter other municipalities to pick up students.

### 3. Support for Opening the school

- Stave Falls maybe eligible for \$164,000 in extra funding as a rural school;
- Possibility to lease out part of the school.

### Ongoing Cost Considerations

- \$23,000 in utilities (last cost available from 2008) plus additional maintenance;
- \$100,000 in salary cost per Teacher;
- Each student generates about \$7300;
- A classroom breaks even between 15-25 students.

### Options for the School

- Re-open full school;
- Re-open a small school (eg Primary),
  - Add grade 7 into the school environment;
- Hold;
- Lease to another party;
- Re-open and lease/share or partial lease;
- Sell the property.

### Other Implications

- Overflow school does not make sense due to geographic location;

- Other schools have space in them;
- Re-opening the school could impact building future schools in other growing areas of Mission.

## Leases and Hybrids

- The building could be leased out but most of the costs outlined would need to be undertaken; this means a breakeven point could take 4+ years;
- A smaller lease could be initiated, in which a school shares space;
- Longer leases are more attractive but there are downsides to this;
- Sharing space is complicating and presents admin costs;
- A hybrid relies on other users to be sustainable.

## Sale of the Property

- The property is assessed at over \$3.2 million;
- Requires approval of the Ministry of Education;
- No need to do upgrades or repairs;
- Loss of potential school for future.

Portables are a bad long range investment, but they can be moved around. Opening one school does not eliminate the need for satisfying the need at other schools. The Board has several options to consider and determine how they would impact the district as a whole.

The Board Chair opened floor to speakers:

Trustee Taylor:

- At this point there has not been significant Trustee input,
- The Board needs to have a discussion that is open to the Public to participate as observers,
- A reference was made to three handouts distributed on behalf of Trustee Taylor at the start of the meeting,
- The handouts summarized Staff data without changing any figures,
- The three handouts are listed below:
  1. Financial risks
  2. Cost breakdown of reopening Stave Falls
  3. Possible revenue generation

Steve

Q: What is the breakeven cost?

R: Numbers have not been considered in a cost / benefit analysis. The Secretary Treasurer would need to prepare this information and put into different business case formats.

Courtney

If the school offered grade 7 as an option, how would you accommodate students from Whonnock Elementary at the high school.

R: Small numbers can be accommodated. We have been adding portables, which have space. What this district really needs is a new high school.

Tamara

The registration presented several limitations and returned modest numbers. It was available for a short period of time, technology was not applied, it was inefficiently available to all families, and tools like Survey Monkey could have been used instead.

Roberta

Attempted to apply just to check on the process. Found that you had to print the form, complete it, scan it, and email back to the school district. Overall, it was very difficult to submit.

Amber

How many registrations were submitted for reopening Hillside? The school district needs to consider what happened with this school and the same consideration should be provided for Stave Falls Elementary School.

Dion

Q: Would Steelhead be considered a courtesy ride?

R: There is policy that if you're not attending your catchment school, you could lose your spot. The board would have to make additional consideration.

Hanna

Big win to capture any students who wish to attend any school in the district. There are many developments on the rise, keep that mind when considering reopening. It's a win for the district.

Janise

Back then, our district did not offer the course selection it does today. If a student does attend K-7 at Stave Falls Elementary School, why wouldn't they complete their grade high school education in our district?

R: It is an option to offer K-7 education at the school.

Eddie

6 years ago the school district was going to lease the space to a school from overseas, but the Province said no to this.

Steve

Would a down payment from parents demonstrate how serious they are about enrolling their children at Stave Falls school?

R: The purpose of the school is to offer free public education and it cannot take money from parents.

Board Chair noted there was 10 minutes remaining in the meeting and the Board would have to pass a motion to extend the meeting further.

Q: What items still need to be discussed?

Secretary Treasurer would like direction from the Board on the information they would like to review and discuss. This information could be presented at the next Committee of the Whole meeting.

Trustee Taylor:

Is recommending to have this discussion at a Public board meeting versus a Committee of the Whole.

**MOVED and Seconded that the conclusion time for the Special Committee of the Whole meeting be extended to 8:30pm**

Julia

Made a request that the special meetings be added to the district homepage so they are more visible.

Board Chair requested input from Trustees on the direction items for staff.

Trustee McKamey

1. Would like Staff to look into the essential costs to reopen the school and include financial risks;
2. Enrollment numbers that would support breakeven costs.

The school district budget provides figures that forecast into the next year and this budget needs to be supported with information and findings. We don't want to set expectations of reopening a school if this will put the district in a hole. Trustee Rick McKamey would like to have the noted information presented at the next Committee of the Whole meeting. This information is key to make to any decision and without such information it would be difficult to favour any motion.

Trustee Carter

Noted she is supportive of rural schools and is in agreeance that the Board needs extra information brought forward. Trustee Shelley Carter would like clarification on holding a Public meeting, as recommended by Trustee Taylor, and is looking for Staff to provide some direction.

Trustee Loffler

In terms of process, we requested that staff complete a preliminary registration. We have received this information and it was presented here today. We need to decide where we are going from here. She agreed that the Board needs more information and it seems that staff is prepared to provide this information. It is important to hear community advocates and listen to the information they seek to present as this brings more information forward. We have been elected to look at the whole picture. A boundary and catchment review needs to happen. There is a concern about the making the right long-term decision. The population in Deroche is different than that of Stave Falls Elementary.

The Superintendent suggested holding a Committee of the Whole meeting where the Board can decide to have fulsome discussion amongst one another without taking questions from the Public unless there is enough time to do so.

The Board Chair requested that the Board pass another motion to extend the time.

**MOVED and Seconded that the conclusion time for the Special Committee of the Whole meeting be extended until 8:40pm.**

The Secretary Treasurer provided a summary of items that would come as information items for the Boards consideration:

- 1) Breakdown of costs,

- 2) Essential reopening costs and costs that can be deferred,
- 3) Options and risks analysis,
- 4) Enrolment analysis with more accurate projections,
- 5) Boundary and catchment review,
- 6) Present this information within a business case with a variety of enrollment projections with some targets looking at growth and consideration with different revenue streams.

Trustee Taylor

Looks forward to receiving the information and asked clarification at what meeting will the information be presented?

Trustee Taylor requested that the three documents that were distributed at the start of the meeting, be forwarded to the next meeting as Unfinished Business.

Trustee Loffler

The Board can make that decision.

The Secretary Treasurer recommended Tuesday February 13<sup>th</sup> 2019 at 3:30pm for a Special Committee of the Whole at the School Board Office for discussion about Stave Falls Elementary School. Would the board like to make this meeting strictly for Board discussion?

Trustee Taylor

Noted that at start of the meeting that the Board move a motion that the discussion is between the Board and Staff.

The Superintendent offered to answer additional questions and comments that were not addressed at the meeting by way of calling or emailing him directly.

## **New Business**

### **4. Minutes of Previous Meetings**

No minutes were presented.

### **5. Information Items**

Any information that was presented at the meeting will be included at the end of the meeting and noted as handouts.

# Minutes



**6. Adjournment**

**Moved and Seconded to adjourn the meeting.  
CARRIED**

The meeting adjourned at 8:42 pm.

Certified Correct:

Original Signed by Tracy Loffler

Chair, Board of Education

February 13, 2018

Date

Original Signed by Corien Becker

Secretary Treasurer

February 13, 2018

Date