

**SCHOOL CITY OF HOBART
BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES
WORK SESSION MEETING
February 6, 2025**

The Board of School Trustees of the School City of Hobart met in a work session on February 6, 2025, in the Board Room at Hobart High School, 2211 East Tenth Street, Hobart, Indiana.

ROLL CALL: President Rikki Guthrie asked Board Members to log in. The following Board Members and administrators were present or absent as noted:

Board Members Present:

Rikki A. Guthrie
Sandra J. Hillan
Frank Porras
Bradley Keehn
Donald H. Rogers
Kayla Davis, HHS student representative
Isis Fleming, HHS student representative (After meeting began)

Board Members Absent:

David W. Kostbade
Stuart B. Schultz

Administrators Present:

Peggy Buffington
Bob Glover
Christopher N. King
William J. Longer
Jonathan Mock
Tim Krieg
Russell Mellon
Felix Perry
Mathew McKee

CALL TO ORDER: President Guthrie called the meeting to order around 6:05 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: President Guthrie deferred the Pledge of Allegiance to the regular session meeting.

REVIEW: NEOLA Board Policy Updates: The Board began their review of the latest NEOLA updates to Board Policy. Attorney William Longer lead the review of fifteen proposed exhibits of proposed changed to Board Policy.

In addition, Dr. Buffington indicated that Exhibit 16 looks at open enrollment and mentioned that the exhibit was not included with the Board Policy updates being considered for first reading at the regular session meeting later this evening. She said the information was for their review and indicated she would be sharing early registration data with them. The Board could look at open enrollment in the lower elementary grades to generate revenue due to loss of enrollment. This would give everyone the opportunity to review a proposed policy to do this if they choose to do so. Dr. Buffington will have official data on the February ADM that will show the district has lost around 78 students from the Spring 2024 ADM count, which would translate to a loss of around a half million dollars to the school district.

AUDIENCE: The following were present via Zoom:

Jim Elizondo, Stifel
Dennis Ott, Bose McKinney

Short and Long Range Planning: Dr. Peggy Buffington welcomed Jim Elizondo from Stifel and Dennis Ott from Bose McKinney who joined the meeting via Zoom. She noted that Jim Elizondo, a financial planner, will share some financial information he had prepared to assist the Board as they are considering short and long-term planning. After this presentation, budget information for the Technology Department, Maintenance Department, and Transportation will be reviewed with the directors of those departments.

Mr. Elizondo reviewed his informational report that was comprised of the following information:

- Graph of Current Debt Service Rates from 2023 to 2038 for Existing Debt Service and Exempt Debt Service.
- Graph of Current Total Tax Rates from 2023 through 2047 for the Operating Fund, Operating Referendum, Existing Debt Service and Exempt Debt Service.
- \$19,810MM in 2025 + Capital Referendum in 2027
 - Graph of 2025 Bonds: \$19.81MM Non-Exempt for the years 2023 through 2044 for the years 2023 through 2044 for the Existing Debt Service and 2025 Bonds – Facility Improvements - \$19,810MM.
 - Graph of 2025 Bonds: \$19.810MM Non-Exempt for the years 2023 through 2047 for the Operations Fund, Existing Debt Service, 2025 Bonds – Facility Improvements - \$19.810MM, Operating Referendum and Exempt Debt Service.

- 2025 Bonds: \$19.810MM Non-Exempt + 2027 Bonds: \$51.490MM Referendum for the years 2023 through 2047 for the Operations Fund, Existing Debt Service, 2025 Bonds – Facility Improvements - \$19.810MM, Operating Referendum, Exempt Debt Service, and 2027 Bonds – New IS - \$51.49MM.
- 2025 Bonds + 2027 Referendum Bonds + Max Capacity in 2028 (\$52.75MM) for the years 2023 through 2047 for the Operations Fund, Existing Debt Service, 2025 Bonds – Facility Improvements - \$19.810MM, Operating Referendum, Exempt Debt Service, 2027 Bonds – New IS - \$51.49MM, and 2028 Future Capacity - \$52.75MM.
- 2025 Bonds: \$19.810MM Non-Exempt + 2027 Bonds: \$51,490MM Referendum with a breakdown of Par Amount, Construction Costs, Capitalized Interest and Cost of Issuance for 2025 Improvement – Non-Exempt and 2027 Intermediate School – Referendum with closing dates and estimated first lease payment dates for each.
- Upcoming Refunding Opportunities provided information about the refunding of the 2016 bonds that included a summary of the refunding results and was something the Board might want to consider next year.

Mr. Ott did not have anything to add to the presentation, but it was noted that he had presented a Timetable of the process involved with the issuance of bonds. The Board and Dr. Buffington thanked Mr. Elizondo and Mr. Ott for their information and being available for this meeting.

Dr. Buffington asked Directors Russ Mellon and Chris King from the Technology Department, Director Felix Perry from the Support Services Department (Maintenance), and Director Mat McKee from the Transportation Department to review their projected expenses in their respective departments for each of the school years 2025-2026 through 2035-2036. The projections showed the necessary funding to maintain their respective departments and/or provide necessary upgrades. The projected totals for the 2025-2028 school years are as follows: Technology Department \$3,286,191.78, Maintenance Department \$14,524,000.00, and Transportation Department \$1,700,000 for a grand total of \$19,510,191.78.

In the discussion, Dr. Buffington mentioned that loss of revenue from the current referendum was \$3.7 million due to circuit breaker caps, and the proposed referendum was only asking for the same rate of \$0.246 and nothing more. She noted the importance of maintaining the district’s facilities and not to put off doing this. The projected three-year projected needs would be covered by the bond issue. The Board has always been cognizant of its taxpayers and not wanting to raise taxes, and has done projects with this in mind to keep the tax rate revenue neutral. Enrollment has declined due to school choice/vouchers, and because of this, Dr. Buffington the loss of revenue because of this.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no other business designated for the work session, President Guthrie adjourned the meeting around 6:49 p.m.

BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES
SCHOOL CITY OF HOBART

Rikki A. Guthrie, President

ATTEST:

Frank Porras, Secretary

Submitted for Approval: February 20, 2025