

MEETING MINUTES

LONG RANGE FACILITIES USE PLANNING COMMITTEE

AUGUST 20, 2007

Chairman, Mike Heinrich, called the LRFUPC meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. at the SWSD DSC. Members present were: Mike Heinrich, Kathy Landel, Dan Poolman, Walt Blackford, Frank Rose, Leigh Anderson, Ray Gabelein, Jill Enstrom, Donna Evans, Linda Kast, Scott Mauk, Tom Sage, Leo Langer, and Donna Riley. Sharla Matthews, Director of WIA, attended with Kathleen Landel and will be attending in her place for September and October. Jamie Boyd, Principal for the Elementary Primary and Intermediate School, attended in place of Dayle Gray, who was absent. Dr. Fred McCarthy also attended the first part of the meeting. Absentees were: Steve Scoles, Dayle Gray, Jan McNeely, and Mike Shelton.

Corrections were made to the June 18, 2007, LRFUPC meeting minutes. Leigh Anderson moved that the minutes be approved; Jill Engstrom seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

On June 27, 2007, the LRFUPC interim report was presented to the South Whidbey School District's Board of Directors. Kathleen Landel for Mike Heinrich delivered the report. Copies of the report were made available to LRFUPC members at the August 20, 2007, meeting.

Dr. Fred McCarthy attended the August 20, 2007, meeting for the purpose of clearing up questions that had arisen due to articles that had appeared in the South Whidbey Record on July 11 and 28, 2007. Mike asked the committee members to voice their concerns to Dr. McCarthy. The concerns are listed, with Dr. McCarthy's comments, as follows:

- Is there a parallel process in place besides the LRFUPC? It appears that others are doing the same work.
 - There is no parallel process existing with the School Board. It was a misquote in the Record that got that idea going.
- What criteria will the School Board use in making its decisions?
 - It is vital for a quality educational system to put the needs of students first.
 - Dr. McCarthy explained the difference between recommending bodies and deciding bodies. LRFUPC is a recommending body. When its recommendation is made, the School Board may seek an outside opinion. There is a remote possibility that the recommendation will not be accepted.

- We want to be sure that decisions be based on what is best for students.
 - Dr. McCarthy has spoken with past administrators of the SWSD. The consensus of opinion is to let the best education decision for students drive the decision.
- Is there a hidden agenda?
 - There is no hidden agenda.
- The South Whidbey Record's article made it feel as if there is no room to complete the task.
 - There is nothing going on to hinder the LRFUPC's work. The School Board has full confidence in the committee to make recommendations.
- Other people have asked LRFUPC members what is going on. Members were unsure how to answer.
 - In spite of what was implied in the South Whidbey Record, no decisions have been made. Dr. McCarthy explained his rationale for inviting McMenamins to look at the Middle School. He simply wanted to look at all possibilities. It is highly doubtful that McMenamins will be interested in the Middle School.
- Clarity of LRFUPC 's role is needed.
 - This was not answered so as not to restrict LRFUPC decisions.
- Will the recommendations by LRFUPC be honored?
 - The South Whidbey School Board does honor and value the LRFUPC's work. SWSD is unique, and both Dr. McCarthy and the Board are confident that the mix of school personnel and community members is such that recommendations will be germane for SWSD.

Dr. McCarthy spoke briefly about the Strategic Plan for the SWSD. This will be a body of approximately 150 people who will implement the School Board's decisions on recommending committees. It may be started before the LRFUPC is finished. Both groups could help one another in their tasks.

Discussion on various issues ensued.

- Sale of excess property.
 - ✓ There are no easy answers. The problem is complex because of the rising value and uncertainty of the future. Perhaps excess property could be used for affordable housing. A recommendation should be presented as a minority opinion.
- Best education and student groupings.
 - ✓ Let Strategic Planning decide those issues. LRFUPC's focus is on facilities.
- Vacant classrooms in the four schools.
 - ✓ Committee members wondered how many rooms are empty, and what they are used for if not actual student education.
 - ✓ Could empty rooms be given over to community use?
 - ✓ Some rooms (such as at the Middle and High Schools) are only used for part of the day.
 - ✓ Could wings in the schools be closed down to save on expenses?
- School maps
 - ✓ Donna Evans has asked each school secretary prepare a classroom map of her school. If possible, she will email these to the committee members.
- Logistical visits of schools
 - ✓ It was decided that the LRFUPC would benefit from visiting the four schools in question (Primary, Intermediate, Middle, and High Schools). Tom Sage agreed to set up a visitation schedule for the next LRFUPC meeting in September.

The LRFUPC meeting was adjourned at 9:07 p.m.