

League of Women Voters of Pullman Observer Report

Name of Agency: Pullman School Board Date: 11 March 2020

Observer Reporting: Ndambuki Length of Meeting: Watched video

Members Present: Jim Evermann, Allison Munch-Rotolo, Susan Weed, Amanda Tanner, Nathan Roberts, Bob Maxwell, Roberta Kramer, Diane Hodge, Joe Thornton, Garren Shannon (Director of Information Services), Larry Clark (Citizens for Pullman Schools Co-Chairs), Corey Plaguer (D.A. Davidson Wealth Management—filling in for Faith Pettis) Members Absent: 0

Others Present (e.g., media, public): No public permitted at school board meetings at this time.

Quality Instructional Programming:

- **Levies and bond passed**, District gave certificates of recognition to Cheryl Olsen (unable to attend) and Larry Clark who were co-chairs of the foundation *Citizens for Pullman Schools*. Director of Information Technology gave a report and connected the passage of the Technology Levy to the district's ability to provide quality instruction through the aid of technology:
 - **Have chrome books enough for every student in the district**
 - Have sufficient funds to repair and upgrade as needed the chrome book carts as well as staff desktop computers
 - Question was asked if there are enough computers for one for every student, why not continue students' education this spring through on-line measures
 - Answer that **not all students have access to Wi-Fi**
 - That eventually the secondary students would be able to do that through hotspots provided by the district but that online education for primary students would not be effective nor would special education be well-served by such a format
- **Community College at the high school**
 - Partnership with CC on West Side for Veterinary Science

Responsible Use of Public Funds:

- **Technology Levy** has never increased its asking amount, the department has been able to make decisions conservatively to keep the district supported, keeping in mind that the students are the first clients of the department
- Board approved the **Lincoln Middle School Remodel and Expansion** to proceed to bid
- Bond goal at zero tax rate increase, retire one, add new, June sale date, pricing with investors in May, **state co-signs bond (protection against failure** which has never happened in our state but the backing by the state lowers the rate due to the assurance)
 - We are moving to take advantage of the current situation of low interest rates, but it is also a volatile situation
 - We do have some flexibility, but we are trying to move quickly to take advantage of low rates
 - **Highest grade of investment according to Moody's** which reduces our borrowing costs, was **increased last year** based upon the excellent leadership and stewardship of the public funds by the district
 - **Delegation Resolution** is up for first reading tonight
 - Authorize selling bonds
 - Authorize Dr. Maxwell and Ms. Hodge to proceed on behalf of the Board with the sale
 - Amount, term less than 20 years, limit return, total interest 5% or less

Public Meetings of interest to League:

Following the regular board meeting there was a "public" hearing about how left-over funds from 2013 and 2016 bonds would be spent. No one showed up for that. The list of items that would be paid for by left-over funds is "in the board packet." Board appreciated the "transparency" of these plans for the public.

Your additional comments/opinions: Board packet is very, very difficult to download, at least for me and we supposedly have 5G? I am usually not successful in downloading it, it takes soooooo long??