

August 8, 2023

// A special called joint meeting of the School Board and the Council of the City of Lynchburg was held on the 8th day of August, 2023, at 4:00 p.m. at the Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance, Stephanie Reed, President, presiding. The following City Councilmembers were present:

Present: Stephanie Reed, Martin Misjuns, Jeff Helgeson, Jerry Taylor, MaryJane Dolan, Sterling

A. Wilder, Chris Faraldi 7

Absent: 0

The following School Board Members were present:

Present: Atul Gupta, Sharon Carter, Anthony Andrews, Randall Trost, Gloria Preston, Letitia

Lowery, Christian DePaul, Farid Jalil 8

Absent: Martin Day 1

// In the matter of the Welcome Remarks, Mayor Reed stated that the entirety of the meeting was dedicated to the Facilities Master Plan, and MGT Consulting representatives would provide a presentation and answer questions. She stated that members would be updated on the work to-date. She explained that the meeting participants would eventually break out into four smaller groups to discuss different topics, and then they would all rejoin the meeting to share their discussion points.

// In the matter of the Facilities Master Plan, the School Board and the Council received a presentation from MGT Consulting representatives Dr. Lance Richards and Ms. Monica Farirai. After the presentation, Dr. Edwards stated that the meeting would break into four discussion groups to gain consensus on the core actions. She explained the goals of the discussion and the decision-making timeline, with an anticipated deadline of November 1 for a general idea of the next phase for Fall 2024. Mayor Reed opened the floor for questions for MGT Consultants.

School Board Member Lowery asked whether the historical and projected enrollment by grade-band data was based on businesses and colleges in the area. She noted that fewer people appeared to be moving out of the City during the summer. Dr. Richards responded that they used a program called Lightcast, which aggregated census and local data. He said that he was unsure if they had the means to track people's movement over the summer months because the data was over a broader timeframe.

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Vice Mayor Faraldi clarified that removing the 2% adjustment for the mobile classrooms would be a 2% gain and asked whether that would apply to every category. Dr. Richards stated that it would be applied for each category.

School Board Member Jalil asked if there was data on how families on the Pre-K waitlist responded when buildings were at or near capacity. Dr. Edwards responded that part of the Pre-K program was to work collaboratively to place children in local Pre-K programs and Headstart. She said she was unsure how families responded without affordable Pre-K.

Councilmember Misjuns asked if the facilities study data was available. Dr. Richards responded that the data was delivered to the City about a year ago. Councilmember Misjuns requested a copy of the facilities study data. Dr. Edwards stated that the first consultant they worked with was Dominion 7, which performed the building facilities assessment. She noted that a joint meeting had been held with Dominion 7. Councilmember Misjuns asked whether the demographic study of the students factored into the report. Dr. Richards responded that it was not necessarily part of the report, but the school division collected data.

// In the matter of Group Discussion, the boardmembers and councilmembers broke into four groups to discuss the core actions and gain input on the scenarios. After the discussion, each group presented a summary of the pros and cons they discussed.

Deputy Superintendent of Instruction Ms. Amy Pugh said that their table, comprised of Mayor Reed, Councilmember Wilder, School Board Member Andrews, and School Board Member Trost, discussed how rezoning some schools would allow programs to be moved to different locations, which was a pro. She said that this scenario allowed access for Fort Hill community students to some of the programs at Heritage High School. She said the cons included high costs and not enough savings, and there would be learning disruptions depending on the timing of renovations. She said they discussed closer-to-home zoning as a positive, and allowing for renovation of schools with high needs was another positive. She noted that a pro for scenario two was the utilization rate stayed between 80-90%, and there was \$3.7M in savings. She said a con for scenario two was the negative optics of closing Dearington Elementary School and the impact on the community. She said that scenario three had a higher savings at \$4.4M. She stated that for TC Miller in scenario three, there would be an opportunity to rezone

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students to schools with auditoriums because TC Miller did not have an auditorium. She noted that closing multiple schools would be difficult, and renovating four schools had a very high cost. She said that scenario four seemed to be the best return on investment, but it had a high utilization score, and it was not well received by the community.

Deputy Superintendent of Operations Dr. Reid A. Wodicka said his group, comprised of Vice Mayor Faraldi, Councilmember Dolan, School Board Member Lowery, School Board Member DePaul, liked the idea of a new Sandusky Elementary, which provided some opportunities for pre-K and did not close traditional neighborhood schools. He noted that it did make the only elementary school south of the city unavailable, which was a con. He explained that scenario two had small class sizes at Dearington, and it would impact the least number of students and would not be as expensive. He noted that it would close a historic school, which would lead to community pushback, and there would not be as much in savings. He said for scenario three, there was a good mix between savings and costs. He noted it would close Sandusky, and it provided an option for TC Miller to be pre-K. He said that there was low support in the community, which was a con. He stated that scenario four provided the most savings and provided options to convert to pre-K. He said there were lots of variables, which was a good thing. He noted that some people did not like the option in the community, particularly regarding closing Paul Monroe.

Director of Instruction and Programs Ms. Jennifer Crews said that her group, comprised of Councilmember Helgeson, Councilmember Taylor, School Board Member Carter, and School Board Member Preston, talked about the need for rezoning and staying close to home. She said that Paul Monroe was a huge topic at their table, with concerns expressed about its closure and the scores being well received. She noted that her table also discussed Sandusky Elementary's closure. She mentioned cons such as construction concerns, maximum distance, and miles from school. She said that option two had needs for renovation as a pro, but the close-to-home concern with Dearington's closure was mentioned. She explained that Bass had a year-round calendar which would need to be considered if consolidation were to happen. She said that for scenario four, renovations, building capacity, and consolidations could be a pro for some of the schools for programmatic purposes.

Chief Academic and Student Services Officer Dr. Derrick Brown stated that his group, comprised of Councilmember Misjuns, School Board Member Gupta, and School Board Member Jalil, did not reach

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a consensus on which scenario worked best, but they found consensus on some of the pros and cons. He noted that for scenario one, rezoning close to home was a huge pro for the group. He said that cons for scenario one included rebuilding Sandusky Elementary, closing Fort Hill, and converting Heritage Elementary. He noted it also had the least operational savings. He said that Councilmember Misjuns had some ideas about public-private partnerships, but scenario one did not fit with that idea. He said that in terms of scenario two and four, closing and converting Dearington Elementary was a pro. He said that scenario two was not as comprehensive of a plan, and they had a hard time determining the effectiveness of that option. He said that for scenario three, closing Sandusky Elementary School was a con.

// The meeting adjourned at 6:36 p.m.

Clerk of Council