

Joint Assembly School Board Facility Planning Committee
MINUTES – REGULAR MEETING
Zoom Webinar
April 17, 2023

A. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 12:02 PM

Members Present: Chair Michelle Hale, Deedie Sorenson, Brian Holst and Mayor Weldon.

Members Present Via Zoom: Maria Gladziszewski and Will Muldoon.

City & Borough of Juneau Staff Members Present: Katie Koester, EPW Director; Robert Barr, Deputy City Manager; Breckan Hendricks, Administrative Officer.

School District Staff Present: Cassee Olin, Director of Administrative Services. Bridget Weiss, Superintendent, joined the meeting at 12:04 p.m.

B. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Chair Hale read the Land Acknowledgement

C. ROLL CALL

D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

No objection, Agenda approved.

E. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. April 7, 2022 – Regular Meeting

No objection. Minutes approved.

F. ITEMS FOR ACTION

None.

G. INFORMATION ITEMS

2. Summary of February 3, 2023 meeting

Chair Hale provided a brief summary of the February, discussed Charter and what the Committee is charged with, discussed declining enrollment and the projection, aging population, funding formula and impacts of consolidating and closing schools, touched on childcare and procedurally how the JSD makes decisions.

3. Procedure and decision-making in context of CBJ Charter and JSD Mission

Ms. Koester directed members to the Procedures and decision-making in the context of CBJ Charter and the JSD Mission memo on page 8 of the packet. She explained the recommended procedures and decisions bullet points listed on page 9. The Committee will follow the rules and procedures of the CBJ standing committees as outline in Resolution 2976. The memo also explained that the Joint Assembly / School Facilities Committee is an advisory committee to the Assembly.

Ms. Koester clarified that the JSD has all of the authority of operating decisions of Juneau's schools and that the CBJ Assembly has final say in matters concerning school construction and capital improvements.

Mr. Holst asked the Committee, is the \$1 million that the JSD gets through the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) sufficient to meet the ongoing major maintenance rehabilitation projects the JSD is responsible for.

Ms. Mayor inquired if additional projects exist in the CIP for the JSD. Ms. Koester confirmed and explained that recently three roof replacements were funded through the CIP, which was additive to the \$1 million.

Ms. Hale explained that major deferred maintenance needs are growing and that SOA funding has decreased.

Ms. Hale explained that the Committee should draft a prioritized list of major maintenance needs.

Mr. Holst explained that he believed this Committee primarily focuses on bond initiatives.

Mayor Weldon reminded the Committee that they can review the larger projects, but reminded the group that they've been asked to make their larger projects smaller so that could be included in the CIP projects.

Ms. Koester read aloud the JSD mission statement "In Juneau, we partner to provide each student with meaningful, relevant, and rigorous learning experiences in order to graduate diverse, engaged citizens ready for a changing world." She explained that the final bullet point in the memo is tied into the mission statement, so that the Committee considers the facility needs of the JSD to meet educational needs.

Mr. Holst acknowledged the schools are not just a resource for the students, but that they are available for the community to use for various other needs. While they are primarily targeted at youth, they are used by other groups and private clubs.

Ms. Hale explained that the Assembly is all very cognizant of the use of the schools by the community, but that the core mission of the schools is the core thing that they need to fund.

4. Childcare in JSD Facilities

Ms. Koester explained that the report that was present at the Joint Assembly and JSD Facility Committee on May 17, 2019.

Ms. Koester shared that AEYC is undertaking the need to provide childcare for the community.

Mr. Barr explained that the Assembly funds \$800,000 per year to subsidize the childcare industry in Juneau. Voters approved an additional half million last fall at the ballot. He stated that childcare is an important economic development factor and is a benefit to our entire community.

Mr. Barr shared that AEYC obtained a \$5 million congressionally designated funding appropriation thanks to senator Murkowski. The objective is for AEYC to build or acquire a space for a family services center and for a childcare operation. While the \$5 million is not sufficient to build a new building, it is a start. He explained that we could explore a partnership to evaluate if these funds could be used to create a childcare within existing JSD facilities.

Ms. Hale brought up that the requirements of a childcare facility cannot be easily met in existing JSD facilities, but that significant renovations would be required. Ms. Weiss confirmed this is accurate.

Ms. Weiss explained that the enrollment in the school determines the number of teachers and classrooms that they will offer. The number of classrooms will differ year to year, so that they run the risk of having to relocate the classroom the following year. They try not to have preschools in facilities that are more vulnerable to these changes.

Mr. Muldoon pointed out the change in number of classrooms may even change in the spring. Ms. Weiss confirmed that this can occur in the spring and in the fall. On average three to five classrooms could change.

Mr. Holst explained that previously, people wanted schools to be neighborhood based. An alternative would be to consolidate and a neighborhood would no longer have a school in close proximity.

Mr. Holst inquired if the \$5 million could be distributed amongst multiple buildings.

Mr. Barr explained that AEYC is looking for a single space, but that may be an option in the future.

5. Current Space Use Analysis by JSD

Ms. Koester explained that the Presentation ties into the previous agenda item. The presentation could be used when considering if there is room in JSD facilities for other activities.

Ms. Olin provided an overview on the floor plans and the use of each JSD facility including Auke Bay Elementary (92% Capacity, 1 Rally Room, 1 Integrated PreK), Gastineau Elementary (84% Capacity, 1 Rally Room, 1 HeadStart, 1 KindeReady, 1 Integrated PreK), Glacier Valley Elementary (81% Capacity, 1 Rally Room, 1 LEAP, 1 KindeReady, 1 Integrated PreK), Harborview Elementary (59% Capacity, 1 Rally Room, 1 LEAP, 1 KindeReady, 1 Integrated PreK), Mendenhall River Elementary (2 HeadStart, 1 KindeReady, 2 Integrated PreK), Dzantik'í Heeni Middle School (90% Capacity), Floyd Dryden Middle School (113% Capacity), Thunder Mountain High School (71% Capacity, Student Services), Juneau Charter School (61% Capacity, Juneau Charter School), Marie

Drake (27 classrooms of which 20 are in use, 2 storage, 2 homebridge, 1 engineering classroom)

Discussion occurred on the Juneau Charter School operations in the Juneau Douglas Highschool (JDHS) facility.

Ms. Hale inquired on the finances for the Juneau Charter School. Ms. Weiss confirmed that the Juneau Charter School is its own entity and Charter School finances and JDHS finances are separate.

Ms. Hale asked for confirmation that the Juneau Charter School leases the same. Ms. Mayor inquired how much the Juneau Charter School pays the JDHS. Ms. Olin confirmed the Juneau Charter School's lease is currently \$130,000 and will increase to \$150,000 next year.

Ms. Mayor inquired why the Juneau Charter School utilizes 10 classrooms. Ms. Weiss confirmed that it is intentional to separate the students so that first graders are not mixing with the elder students. She confirmed that the entire wing is designated to the Charter School.

Ms. Hale acknowledged that the presentation showed how the Juneau School District has become creative in utilizing their facilities to the fullest capacity.

Ms. Hale shared interest in exploring incorporating AEYC into an existing JSD facility. She explained that a wing of a JSD facility may be a possibility with significant renovations. Mr. Barr confirmed that it would be difficult to renovate a space to accommodate ages 0-3, but that it would be doable.

Mr. Holst inquired if AEYC has determined what their space needs are. Mr. Barr explained that it was very early, but that he could locate the early design documents.

Ms. Hale explained that the intent is not that they are just building a childcare facility for 0-3, but also to have the main office and training spaces for providers.

6. 2023 Goals for Joint Assembly/School Facilities Committee

Ms. Koester directed the Committee to page 31 of the packet. She explained that the memo address near term goals which is a good launching point for committee discussion.

Ms. Hale explained that she had hoped to report back to the Assembly that night with the goals of the Committee.

Mr. Holst shared his experience responding to the public's common questions around declining enrollment and why we are not closing schools. He asked that the Committee consider adding a goal to improve communication on the JSD's use of facilities to better educate the public on how spaces are utilized.

Ms. Mayor explained that the communication goal may fall to the JSD and may not be appropriate to add to the Committee's goals.

Ms. Hale confirmed that the Committee would put the goals at the top of the next Agenda.

H. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Ms. Hale confirmed that there were no public participants in the audience. No Public Participation was taken.

I. FUTURE MEETING DATES/ length of meeting

Ms. Hale confirmed the next future meeting date would be May 8, 2023, from 12-1:30PM

J. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 1:34 p.m.