

AT A JOINT MEETING OF THE ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
AND THE ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD HELD AT MAURY RIVER MIDDLE SCHOOL  
AT 600 WADDELL STREET, LEXINGTON, VIRGINIA,  
ON THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2020 AT 5:00 P.M.

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BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: D. E. LYONS  
R. W. DAY  
L.E. AYERS  
D.B. MCDANIEL  
A.J. "JAY" LEWIS, II.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR: SPENCER H. SUTER

FISCAL SERVICES  
DIRECTOR: STEVEN J. BOLSTER

COUNTY ATTORNEY: VICKIE L. HUFFMAN

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CALLED TO ORDER:

Chairman Lyons called the meeting to order. He then expressed his appreciation to the School Board and stated that the Board of Supervisors would support them in any way they can.

**Additions to the Agenda:**

There were none.

**FY2022-2026 RCPS Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Overview:**

School Superintendent Dr. Phillip Thompson briefly reviewed the Rockbridge County Public Schools previously approved CIP noting the following achievements:

1. Roof replacement at the Floyd S. Kay Vo-Tech Center.
2. Track replacement at the Rockbridge County High School.

3. Constructed multi-sport practice field at Maury River Middle School.

The new practice field will reduce travel time for teams and also allow community use.

Superintendent Thompson then presented the following information pertaining to projects requested for the current FY2022-2026 CIP:

1. Fairfield and Central Elementary Schools HVAC replacement.

2. Central Elementary School field drainage issues.

3. Transportation Office Building.

4. Rockbridge County High School Stadium concrete repair.

5. Replace telephone systems across school locations.

Supervisor Lewis commented on the HVAC replacement at both Fairfield and Central Elementary Schools, stating that this had been on the list for a number of years and the Board fully supports them being ungraded.

Supervisor McDaniel asked for the quote of the HVAC replacements.

Superintendent Thompson replied, it would be available soon.

Chairman Lyons stated that the items on the list had all been discussed previously.

Supervisor McDaniel suggested that, when looking at financing options for the HVAC replacements at the two (2) schools, staff look at sourcing other projects that may be financed given interest rates are currently low.

Chairman Lyons suggested that Finance Director Steven Bolster look into the different financing scenarios.

Mr. Bolster briefly detailed that each governing bodies' staff is working together to coordinate the timing of new debt with the payoff of debt coming to the end of its payment schedule.

Supervisor McDaniel noted that a considerably large amount of money would need to be put towards the Rockbridge County High School for repairs some day in the future.

Superintendent Thompson replied that the renovation of the Rockbridge County High School property was not included in the current CIP but would need to be considered at some point. He added that the Rockbridge County School Board and the Board of Supervisors would need to look into when they felt such a large CIP project could be considered.

Supervisor Lewis re-reviewed the list of needs as discussed.

**Central and Fairfield Elementary Schools - Trane Presentation:**

Superintendent Thompson stated that administration realized that the HVAC systems could not be replaced last year, but that an MOU citing a division-wide HVAC replacement schedule was agreed upon by both Boards.

Mr. Scott Wise, Sales Engineer of TRANE Energy Solutions Group, provided a slide presentation, which reflected the following information:

Central Elementary School: replace with same system and include rooftop ductwork replacement (new insulation and metal jacket). The estimated cost equals \$1.2M with a project schedule of summer 2021.

Fairfield Elementary School: replace the rooftop equipment and specific interior components of HVAC system. Forecasted project cost is \$2.7M. Project scheduled continues to be developed.

Supervisor Lewis asked why the HVAC estimates differed in the CIP verses Trane's presentation.

Supervisor Day asked what the life expectancy and warranty were on the systems.

Mr. Wise replied that the life expectancy was approximately 20 years and the warranty 5.

Superintendent Thompson noted that the HVAC system was not updated as part of the remodel project 20 years ago at Fairfield Elementary School.

Ms. Hostetter asked if the 5-year warranty would include the roofing, insulation, and metal jackets at Central Elementary School.

Mr. Wise replied, the manufacturer's warranty covers pieces of equipment parts and labor, as well as any refrigerant that needs replacing during the 5-year period. He noted that the contractor workmanship would be a 1-year parts and labor warranty.

Ms. Burant asked if the operations and maintenance work would need to be contracted out or if school division staff would be trained.

Mr. Wise replied that there were school staff members who complete day-to-day work on the HVAC units, and that Trane would typically do the maintenance on more complex issues.

Ms. Burant asked if Trane's estimates could be altered.

Superintendent Thompson replied, they could. He then asked Mr. Wise if the COVID pandemic had slowed down business for Trane.

Mr. Wise replied, it had not.

Mr. Bolster asked Mr. Wise if he could produce a budget for the project so that the completion dates and costs would be known at the front end of the project.

## **RCPS Average Daily Membership (ADM) / Budget Projections for FY2021**

### **(Current Year):**

Superintendent Thompson advised that the "average daily membership (ADM)" largely drives state funding and that the figure of 2,492 used for the FY21 budget was actually 2,439. He advised that there had been loss in revenues but that the VDOE calculation tool showed a way to make up those lost revenues using the "Hold Harmless" provision.

Supervisor McDaniel asked if the reduction in ADM was due to children moving, withdrawing, being transferred to private schools, or being home schooled.

Superintendent Thompson replied, for all of those reasons, but really hoped that the ADM would change as soon as schools re-open.

Supervisor Ayers what is expected for students returning to school next year.

Superintendent Thompson replied that the schools had seen a reduction last year in attendance prior to COVID19 and anticipated even more of a reduction this year. He added that the pandemic increased the number of students who left school and anticipated some students returning later in the school year.

Ms. Lovell noted that the numbers of Kindergarteners were lower this year because parents were waiting to enroll their children.

Superintendent Thompson added that he anticipated the number of kindergarteners to be larger than usual next year as result of parents not enrolling them this year.

Supervisor Ayers advised that a constituent's child had struggled with reading and was reached out to by school staff who assisted with managing the child's learning and reading level.

Ms. Lovell added that most of the feedback received during this unusual time was positive.

Supervisor Lewis asked everyone if they were comfortable with the "Hold Harmless" funds being new monies or if it was being pulled from another line.

School Division Finance Director David Daniels advised that the "Hold Harmless" funding was money that would not be taken from another line and would replace lost revenues.

Superintendent Thompson noted that, as of March 31, 2020, the ADM for the state was 2516, the local ADM used for budgeting was 2492, and the actual ADM was 2439.

Supervisor McDaniel asked if the school division needs to start planning for an approximately \$350,000 revenue reduction from the stated in FY2022.

Superintendent Thompson replied that the schools would take this into consideration for the FY2022 budget.

Ms. Hostetter requested confirmation that the "Hold Harmless" provision was not actually new money.

Superintendent Thompson replied that the "Hold Harmless" monies were not new, but rather money that they were going to receive originally.

Chairman Lyons asked what ADM the schools used when budgeting for FY21.

Mr. Daniels replied that the ADM that was used was 2492 which was the same estimate used by the State.

**Additional Discussion:**

Supervisor Lewis requested a priority listing and planning schedule for the school's CIP projects, to include items from feasibility presentation.

Superintendent Thompson replied that they are developing project priorities.

Supervisor McDaniel inquired about the school's IT projects.

The Director of Technology and Human Resources Jason Kirby advised that bandwidth and other technical issues were analyzed and that they had plenty of bandwidth. However, he advised, access points were needed at all locations except for the middle school. Mr. Kirby explained that there were a total of about 200 access points that were needed at around \$1,000 each. He added that the school division could not afford such a project in a 1-year effort. However, they are looking at an approximately 3-year project.

Supervisor McDaniel asked if fiber was installed in all the buildings.

Mr. Kirby advised that E-rate money has been used to assist with that and noted that some of the older Chromebooks are needing to be updated.

Supervisor McDaniel asked what Chromebooks were being used, currently.

Mr. Kirby replied, Lenovo's are being used and each costs about \$200 whereas the new ones will cost around \$300 each.

Supervisor McDaniel asked if synchronous learning would be an option.

Mr. Kirby replied, it would.

Ms. Burant asked if the community would be able to adjust to the format.

Mr. Kirby stated that there would always be some families who have access problems when using any format.

Ms. Hostetter asked if it were correct that approximately 25% of families did not have access.

Mr. Kirby advised that 100 wi-fi hotspots had been provided to students and that less than 10 students are using paper/pencil or thumb drives.

Ms. Lovell shared her concern of families with multiple students using the same network and how there is strain on the bandwidth.

Supervisor McDaniel shared his full support of synchronous learning verses giving out assignments if virtual learning continued long term. He stated that options need to be provided for students to watch their teacher actually teach their lessons.

Ms. Lovell concurred with Supervisor McDaniel adding that there are students who work better under the virtual platform.

Superintendent Thompson advised that Rockbridge County was working hard at providing internet access throughout all parts of the County.

Supervisor McDaniel noted that that item did not need to be included in the CIP, but the numbers needed to be available.

Ms. Burant asked who was responsible for getting fiber to the homes.

Mr. Suter explained that Rockbridge County was farther along in expanding fiber than most localities and advised that BARC continued to expand services but not quite as fast as planned. He advised that the County continues to look for available grants and stated that a recent grant was awarded in the amount of \$770,000 in which the school's survey information was used to help with the grant.

Ms. Burant advised that a patron of Rockbridge County contacted the county because she was amazed at the cost of extending internet services to her home and was pleased at the result when she was assisted by Virginia Technology Services.

**Adjournment :**

Upon motion by Supervisor Lewis, seconded by Supervisor McDaniel, the meeting was adjourned by unanimous vote by the Board.