

**Beloit Elementary Site Council Meeting Minutes**  
**Monday, November 27, 2023**

The Beloit Elementary Site Council meeting was called to order by the President, Stephanie Porter. Members present were: Lynne Easter Lynn Feldmann, Charle Green, Stephanie Porter, Luke Long, Amber Quayle, Gary Lowry, and Janet Porter. Guests included: Heather Johnson, Leanne Litton, Jeff Travis, and Tiffany Schroeder. In Kim Martin's absence, Stephanie Porter served as Secretary.

The agenda was reviewed; no modifications were made. Amber moved to approve the agenda; Luke seconded. Motion carried. Minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed and approved as stated.

Janet Porter provided her Principal's Report, updating all that the Book Fair delivered supplies early and setup will occur Friday, December 1. The Book Fair will run from December 4th - December 8<sup>th</sup> in the BES Library (M-F: 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM and Thursday Evening: 6:00 PM - 8:30 PM). Late Thursday evening hours are offered as the 4<sup>th</sup> grade music program will begin at 7pm. Thursday, November 30<sup>th</sup>, the Character Assembly will take place. No preschool will be held on December 8<sup>th</sup>. BES has a full staff of janitors, which includes two NCK Tech students, who come in the evenings. Charle noted the good job she has seen in the evenings. On 12/21, BES will dismiss at 12:35pm due to the school meeting its food drive goal. That morning, BES will have a music program, where the junior orchestra will play with 5-8th grades. Fastbridge testing opens November 28th for winter testing.

Heather Johnson joined the group and reviewed the bond election. Janet circulated materials that provided detailed information on the two bond election questions. Heather chairs the Foundations for the Future Generations of 273. This is a newly formed foundation, specifically created for the upcoming, mail-in bond election being held on February 27, 2024. The group discussed the geographical boundaries of the district. Jeff Travis joined the group.

The bond election consists of two questions. Question one affects both the Elementary and High Schools. For BES, question one will fund the last phases (3 and 4) of the HVAC system. These two phases are the most expensive for the HVAC project. The group discussed the burst pipes, which historically occurred and disrupted Mrs. Henke's class. Pictures of the pipe issues at BES were circulated and discussed. Heather informed the group that the High School is the primary focus of question two.

Heather noted the lack of A/C in both gyms at the Elementary and High Schools. When it is 110 degrees, the gym is unusable but so is the outside at those temperatures. She reported that Volleyball/Basketball players drive twice a week for summer leagues in areas that house A/C gyms. This bond election hopes to bring that revenue back to Beloit. Another piece is paying off current lease for the gym and additional classrooms. Another piece is the new building that will sit west of the stadium and hold restroom facilities; these will be designed to be family-friendly. During the most recent Beloit relays, our High School janitor had to hand pump sewage to make it through the event. On another side of it is that there are no working restrooms in the locker rooms in the current stadium; players stand in line with all other spectators. Locker room is standing room only as well. The current stadium restrooms will be abandoned and area repurposed for storage.

The High School locker rooms are targeted for improvements in question two. Both the High School and Junior High boys' locker rooms are the same as when Heather attended. Question two also targets new turf for the football field, which is the buzz item thus far. In August, Jeff Travis was notified by the city that the school is second leading

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water consumer. If drought conditions had continued in August, the High School would not have been able to water the football field. Stephanie asked what percentage of the school's water usage is used on for the football field. Jeff Travis will get back to the group regarding total water usage costs last year and what percentage of the school's water usage goes to water the football field. Gary Lowry reported that the new turf has a life expectancy of 15-16 years, with replacement costs being a 1/3 from original cost of implementation. The group discussed that there are different types of turf, such as sod turf used during super bowls, which some NFL players have publicly disliked.

Heather noted that the football field is also important to our kids in the Band. Often times, our band cannot practice on the field during the season for many reasons. This is an issue, especially given the number of our band students who participate and move on to play at the collegiate level. Improving the track surface is also slated in question two. The track surface was last replaced 7 years ago, recoated before COVID. We have four total tennis courts, and last year, 25 kids participated in tennis. The tennis courts, when resurfaced, can allow for safe playing and potential tournaments to be hosted in Beloit. Question two of the bond election is contingent upon question one passing.

Heather moved to discuss why members of our community may vote against the bond election. One anticipated concern is financial. She provided history as to how our community pool was passed and was based upon sales tax. This special bond election is based solely on property tax. Jeff noted that the property appraisal value is used for the assessments, which were distributed to the group for review. It was also noted that the farm land assessments were based upon a three-year average per acre. One of Heather's initial foundation meetings had one of the largest land owners in Mitchell County present, who believed the bond election would generate a personal, 3-5K increase per year.

Jeff informed the group that the USD 273 Board spent 2-years to develop the current bond election plan. Jeff said our USD 273 buildings have been greatly maintained with both capital outlay and fed/state aid. Repainting, reflooring, etc. have been kept up to date. BES Library was redesigned with COVID funds. These are examples of the board using its funds in a purposeful manner. Inflation continues to hit our district and we cannot defer maintenance in order to build (save) up for the level of capital outlay needed for even the BES HVAC rooftop (~\$144K). The bond election concentrates on the lease purchases, which covers many things, such as the expanded daycare.

Heather reminded the group that USD 273 hasn't done a bond in 48-years. The last bond built the current High School. The group discussed the state of our neighboring school districts; We sit between Concordia and Russel. Someone noted that Concordia has rain coming into its school. Jeff commented that it's amazing what USD 273 has done with the recent funding (i.e. COVID).

Heather revisited the Foundations for Future Generations for 273; it's a group of 20 people who are focused on what needs to happen to pass the bond. It includes people from all spectrums; they are in process of working on presentations to highlight their talking points. Cole Eberle was in the BES building taking pictures to put together a video presentation. His wife, Colleen, is putting together a website; a Facebook page will kick off next week. All media efforts will tie together with a common logo/theme. Heather noted that there is a fine line with the

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foundation, as Jeff Travis and administration, including our Janet Porter, cannot be involved in any educational campaigns.

Heather reported that the foundation is planning four, focused community meetings. She's personally most excited about the goal of 1K votes (last mayor race had 400 votes; 1400 people voted for the pool). Leanne asked why we are conducting a mail-in election. Heather and Jeff spoke to this, citing that it was Suggested by the consultant company to do a mail-in this round. HTK out of Topeka, concentrates on schools, and they originally designed the current High School. PiperSandler is the finance firm; all parties involved agreed that mail-in option was best option. The group noted that a mail-in bond election is the first for Mitchell County.

The group discussed the recent Kansas SB 113 passing, which allows private school and home-school students to participate in all USD 273 activities, such as sports and debate programs, overseen by the Kansas State High School Activities Association. Jeff noted that there are 8 current kids coming to HS and facilities will open a lot more (i.e, sports and FFA).

The foundation's educational campaign is estimated to cost \$15K, and they plan to include USD 273 alumni. They will make the case that the bond election affects are seen and felt beyond that of a student. Someone noted that it takes a pool and school to recruit physicians and skills to the area that are needed beyond the Elementary School. Leanne noted how farmers have an interest in bond election passing for many reasons beyond education.

The 1K person campaign and our job is to find 10 people registered and for campaign. We have only had two special elections, one being pool and this current one. The pool bond – once paid for – that remaining increase remained earmarked for parks and recreation.

The group discussed contingency plan. Heather personally would immediately revamp and try again. Jeff noted that the question one items are not a "wish" but a "need." He does not see a contingency plan for the pipes, the HVAC, etc. at the Elementary School; he noted that these are immediate needs. The group discussed the last High School bond, which failed 6 times. Jeff noted that If another pipe burst/leak happens, 3-year old preschool through 1<sup>st</sup> grade will need shut down to fix, as those classrooms will be out of order. The group noted how question one will expand current facilities/offerings at the High School. Jeff reported that our FFA has 125 members with representation at national competitions. Kids are being turned away from offerings, such as Eli J. being turned away from welding his junior year.

Future Foundation meetings will be held at the High School, as those facilities can host a crowd and offer the technology to present video and presentations to the attendants.

The group discussed BES Site Council's prospective role. The foundation needs BES Site Council members educated on this project. Then, we are asked to be one of the hundred to get the 1K vote. Our suggestions are requested. The BES Site Council will keep communications open with the Foundations for the Future Generations of 273. A fundraiser initiative, a T-shirt campaign, will come out soon. Site Council is asked to engage and help via social media after understanding the bond. The Site Council will continue to discuss the bond election at future meetings.

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Heather Johnson, Jeff Travis, and Tiffany Schroeder left the meeting.

Three suggestions were made and approved for Friends of BES:

- Beloit Call for partnering to establish the Character Counts Corner
- Carter Olsen from Nicol home for providing Kettle drinks to all BES Staff
- Lynnette Pralle for donating snacks to Lynne's classroom.

Amber provided a PTO Report:

- Movie will be 12/19 for 4-year old Pre-School up to 5th grade. Elliot the Littlest Reindeer will be shown. The 6<sup>th</sup> grade will have a pool party.
- Just finished shirt sales (330 items which was 81 lower than last year). \$560 profit.
- Pizza hut raised \$420 on 10/23; Mrs. Bourbon's Kindergarten class was winner. 12/18 is the next event.
- Tree of wishes for the teachers is still going on at SnS.
- Plum creek fundraising, Tuesday, January 23rd

The Parent Involvement committee reported that there are many K-12 Outreach Programs offered by K-State, KSU, WSU, etc. A matrix is in development with the goal of presenting to Site Council at a future meeting. Our collective suggestion would then be presented to BES Staff. Janet provided that Albert Fincham reported back that Liz Hollway would be willing to reconvene Geography Bee and look into some math contests. Leanne Litton has had discussions about getting local beef served for lunch at USD 273. Garry noted that Jamie Conn from OPAA has to be involved per the food contract. Leanne informed the group that Farm Bureau will donate the processing costs and her family would donate the animal. First of May is her goal, as that is the national beef month. Leanne will learn more next week, as she will participate with Farm Bureau serving local beef for lunch at a Nebraska school.

Amber will report for the next BOE on December 11<sup>th</sup>. The next Site Council meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 18<sup>th</sup> at 4pm in the BES Library.

Due to time, Site Council adjourned.