

Parking Lot Questions & Comments

Smithville ISD Community Facility Committee Meeting #3

May 24, 2016 / 7 p.m.

Smithville ISD Administration Building

Q: When will the bonds represented by the \$0.16 (I&S tax rate) be retired?

A: The bonds from previous elections that are being repaid through our current I&S tax rate will be retired in 2026. However, as market conditions become more favorable, we have been able to refinance or retire some of the issues early. That has resulted in reductions to the tax rate in previous years and may allow us to reduce the I&S tax rate to \$0.14 for 2016-2017.

Q: If any capital improvements require a certain % spent on ADA compliance, is it the same % for renovations as for new construction? If new classrooms are added, can ADA improvements be added to that cost?

A: Any new construction or renovations will be designed to meet today's standards and codes, including for ADA compliance. Any costs associated with meeting ADA standards will already be included in the total project cost.

Q: Has anyone addressed adding tennis courts? A large number of students participate, but we're unable to host events/tournaments due to inadequate facilities.

A: Consideration has been given to adding an 8-court tennis facility, which would cost an estimated \$850,000 to \$1,000,000 and could potentially be funded through the SISD Fund Balance Facility Improvement budget at a later date.

Q: What are the ramifications of pursuing a bond just after the tax increase in Bastrop County? Has this been considered?

A: We certainly take into account the impact a bond issue will have on taxpayers. SISD's tax rate currently is lower than two other school districts in Bastrop County. Whether a bond election is held in May or November, taxpayers will be aware of their tax obligations since tax projections are mailed in April and tax bills are mailed in October. The Community Facility Committee will continue to receive financial projections regarding the potential impact to the SISD tax rate in considering various bond proposals. The SISD Board of Trustees will be relying on the Committee as representatives of the community at large to help them determine the level of support for a bond election and subsequent tax increase.

Incidentally, while we do not yet know what Bastrop County's tax rate will be for 2016-17, the County actually reduced its tax rate slightly in 2015. However, we understand that rising values also impact the actual tax bill.

Comment: Transportation—we don't need a \$2.5 million facility. Do we need a lower cost facility?

A: SISD is also looking at lower cost options to address transportation facility needs.

Q: No matter which we do, build new or do major repairs, we need to be able to maintain what we have. Maintenance needs a central location for operations. Bus maintenance—there is no place near the bus lot to repair a broken bus; must travel back and forth to the Maintenance Building for tools or have vehicle towed there. Bus lot? The current lot is unsafe, crowded and not up to any kind of standards.

A: O'Connell Robertson and SISD administrators will consider whether there are lower cost alternatives to help accommodate the identified Maintenance and Transportation needs. Committee members will have an opportunity to review more specific project estimates before making their recommendation to the Board.

Q: Has consideration been given to a PAC in relation to the impact on the community, i.e., having a space available for large community events, indoor graduation alternative, etc.?

A: SISD Administration has considered benefits to the school district as well as the larger community related to the addition of a performing arts center in the district. Shared use and the multi-purpose opportunities such a facility could provide are part of the consideration.