

**El Paso Independent School District
Citizens' Bond Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
June 15, 2023**

Present:

Ana Elena Allen
Michael Apodaca
Norma Chavez
Toni Lunsford

Miguel S. Venegas
Russell Wiggs

Not in Attendance:

Alexsandra R Anello
Raul Arizpe
Angelica Bharat
Roger Scott Brown
Bob Burns

Yolanda Clay
Debbie Fetzer
Kelvin Joel Kroeker, P.E.
Dan Longoria
Christian Lopez
Ross Moore

Presenters:

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Mr. Russell Wiggs, Chair.

2. Welcoming Remarks

Mr. Manny Verduzco, Interim Chief Operations Officer, welcomed everyone on behalf of the Superintendent, Diana Saavedra, and looked forward to the progress of the bond projects being presented by the Project Managers.

3. Review of Meeting Minutes

Meeting minutes for April 15, 2021, through March 30, 2023, were not approved due to lack of quorum. The minutes will carry over to the next scheduled meeting for approval.

4. Projects Update

Ms. Irene Ramirez, Executive Director of Facilities & Construction, presented the following.

Completed Construction Projects

Listed Projects have been completed, with some of the projects having minor pieces still going on.

- Andress High School
- Austin High School
- Dr. Joseph Torres
- Burges High School
- Coach Archie Duran
- El Paso High School
- Irvin High School
- Don Haskins PK-8
- Gen. D. MacArthur PK-8
- Memorial Park Softball Field (Austin)
- Washington Park Baseball Field (Jefferson)
- Crockett Renovations

The following projects were presented by the assigned project manager:

Dr. Josefina Villamil Tinajero PK-8 *(Mr. Manny Rivera, Project Manager)*

Mr. Miguel Venegas asked when the warranty walkthrough is conducted, what types of items are seen, minor touch-ups/major. Mr. Rivera responded that they were minor touch ups that were workmanship related. Mr. Venegas continued to ask if the overall project was good. Mr. Rivera responded yes.

Charles Q. Murphree PK-8 *(Mr. Manny Rivera, Project Manager)*

No questions/ concerns.

Coach Wally Hartley PK-8 -(Mr. Manny Rivera, Project Manager)

Mr. Verduzco mentioned a correction to the Anticipated Project Completion date of March 2024, to November 2023.

Mr. Wiggs asked if the grayed-out areas of the site plan (slide 9) were to be demolished. Mr. Rivera responded no. It is an existing 2-story building which will remain as well as the multipurpose building.

Mr. Venegas asked if the baseball field improvements were being funded with the building funds or the athletic improvement funds. Ms. Ramirez responded the funds being used to address the baseball field improvements were coming from the Hartley project.

Ms. Norma Chavez asked if she could obtain a brick from Ross prior to the demolition. Ms. Ramirez responded that she would look into it.

Coronado High School- (Mr. Joel Olivas, Project Manager)

Mr. Wiggs asked if the project was ahead of schedule since the completion date is December 2023, and he thought the final completion was previously presented to be in 2024. Mr. Olivas responded that the current substantial completion date is March 3, 2023. However, there have been some delays and a change order is scheduled to be presented to the Board for approval extending the project to October 31, 2023. Although he foresees the completion of the project until December 2023.

Mr. Venegas asked if any of the completed buildings were occupied. Mr. Olivas responded yes, the field house and building "A" are currently occupied.

Mr. Wiggs asked if the expected date was in March 2023, and since it is now nine months from that date, is the contractor being held accountable? Ms. Ramirez responded that there were delays due to the Electric Company and additional Fire Department requirements adding days to the project and the reason a change order will be presented to the Board for approval extending the contract to October 31, 2023. Mr. Olivas added that the 240 calendar days were justified.

Ms. Ana Elena Allen inquired about the \$740,000 for general conditions requested by the contractor previously reported. Mr. Olivas responded that the request for general conditions to be added to the change order was denied.

Mr. Venegas asked if new rules by the Fire Department need to be added during construction to meet code. Ms. Ramirez responded that the review of plans is done by a different team at the fire department. Construction inspections are done by the fire marshal who may have a different perspective and will ask for modifications. Although we have gotten a green light for the permit, we do need to make those changes.

Bobby Joe Hill School -(Mr. Oscar Jaloma, Project Manager)

Mr. Wiggs asked if the relocated portables were located on top of the basketball courts/blacktop. Mr. Jaloma responded that the portables were removed and relocated to a different site and that the blacktops were removed for regrading for new basketball courts and lighting which is part of the scope of work.

Mr. Wiggs asked what was decided to do at the ponding area. Ms. Ramirez responded that quotes are being requested and having discussions with the architect on what other options can be done.

Mr. Wiggs asked if there was anything that could be done about the dead trees that have been there for years. Ms. Ramirez responded that she is working with the EPISD Maintenance Department to get that done since they were existing and not part of the project.

Jefferson/Silva- (Mr. Oscar Jaloma, Project Manager)

Mr. Wiggs asked where the fencing facing UMC ended. Mr. Jaloma responded that the fence ends at the second point of access west of the student parking lot. Mr. Wiggs added that the principal is asking for fencing all along Alameda in its entirety. Ms. Ramirez responded that the principal was advised that it would be looked into, along with other options for perimeter fencing.

Ms. Norma Chavez commented it would look nicer if it was the same black wrought iron fencing all the way across being that it is in front of UMC and the Children's Hospital.

Mr. Verduzco added there is another project with ESSER funding for safety and security which includes perimeter fencing.

Captain Gabriel L. Navarrete Middle School- *(Mr. Oscar Garcia, Project Manager)*

Mr. Wiggs asked for the status of the furniture for the hallway. Mr. Oscar Garcia responded that he is currently working with the furniture designer to present to the principal prior to ordering.

Ms. Chavez commented that the walking path on Hayes is not good. There are students walking on the street. Ms. Ramirez responded that she has spoken to the City about what could be done, e.g. traffic control devices, but the right of way in the area is very limited. Ms. Chavez asked if the property inside the fence be utilized. Ms. Ramirez responded that they are working with the City on options that could be done within the perimeters of the lease.

Mr. Wiggs asked if the crossing traffic signs at closed campuses can be used at Navarrete. Ms. Ramirez responded that she had asked the street department. Since they are the ones that installed them, due to how old they are, they don't consider it a wise decision to relocate them. The District is looking into options along with the cost of \$150,000.

Ms. Chavez suggested looking into grant possibilities for funding. Mr. Venegas added that maybe involving the City and Ft. Bliss would help with assisting with the cost.

Additional Projects Completed – *(Ms. Irene Ramirez)*

- Memorial Park Softball Field (Austin)
- Washington Park Baseball Field (Jefferson)
- Outdoor Learning - 37 Playgrounds/Canopies
- Athletic Upgrades - Running tracks, tennis courts with lighting, baseball fields with lighting and football synthetic turfs
- Transportation - Bus Replacement Program - 81 combo buses purchased

Mr. Wiggs asked if there were funds for another set of bleachers at the Chapin track. Ms. Ramirez responded that the Athletic Department had funded the bleachers and had told her of the possibility of adding more bleachers the next fiscal year.

Mr. Venegas requested digital photos of the Chapin track. Mr. Olivas responded that the general contractor will be providing aerial photos once the sod is 100% complete.

5. Bond IT, Safety & Security Projects Update

Ms. Claudia Alonzo, IT Project Coordinator, presented on the following.

Broadband Fiber Refresh – Improvement of data speed. Project completion by September 2023

- Andress
- Austin
- Coronado
- Irvin
- Jefferson
- Murphree
- Burges (completed)

Classroom Technology – The installation of Mini PC to the Promethean boards installed in the bond classrooms. Project completion by July 2023.

Mr. Wiggs asked if this is in all the new schools. Ms. Claudia Alonzo responded that they are in all the bond campus classrooms. Ms. Alonzo mentioned that there is additional funding (Title 1). They are looking into this initiative, where every classroom would eventually have the same technology.

Austin Jumbo Tron –Project completion between July 15-August 1.

Archie Duran Video Wall –Project completion September 2023.

Surveillance –Project completed at the sites indicated on slide 56.

Mr. Venegas asked who was watching the cameras. Ms. Alonzo responded that the campus administrators have access to the system as well as EPISD Dispatch.

Digital Marquees

Mr. Wiggs commented that the El Paso High School marquee was not part of the bond but an existing marquee that was provided by the alumni.

Ms. Chavez asked if N/A indicated that the campus did not receive a marquee and if so why. Mr. Verduzco responded that it was not part of the bond. Ms. Alonzo clarified that it was not included in the initial scope of work of the project. Ms. Ramirez added that it is being looked into on how much it would cost to add to the project.

Mr. Verduzco stated that it could be added to the prioritized list to the Board for consideration with the remaining bond funds.

Ms. Chavez commented that although the bond committee does not take part in the prioritized list could they recommend what they would like to see? Ms. Ramirez responded yes.

Access Control – Installation is complete but pending programming of the card access.

Mr. Verduzco stated that the controller/server capacity was never considered/budgeted for expansion and was the reason for the programming issues. Mr. Verduzco along with engineers are working on migrating the programming of users and controllers to the cloud to take care of this issue which is faster than building new servers.

Mr. Wiggs stated why this issue was not considered. The servers needed to know the amount of access control being installed. He has also seen some places at Burges with wires sticking out as well as Irvin's main building having magnetic readers only on one side and the doorbell not working at the main entrance as well as being able to enter the school by yanking the doors open.

Mr. Verduzco responded that there were multiple variables, When the design occurred the cloud did not exist, everything was done in the interim. There were also multiple grants at the time which got mixed in with the bond scope. The technology was never added in the design for expansion/upgrading which was saturated and could not add more users to the system. In addition, the vendor informed the District that they were no longer supporting the technology system being used (On-premises technology). After weighing all options, the migration to the cloud was determined to be the best option in order to accelerate and complete by mid-July.

Mr. Wiggs expressed the importance of the safety of our schools is a priority. With all the money used to build the schools, it should all work.

Mr. Wiggs asked about the fencing at Jefferson and Burges. It looks great but should have springs so that they automatically shut. Mr. Verduzco responded that is part of automation. He was not sure if it was thought about during design, but it is being assessed under the safety assessment and as best practice to establish a standard.

Mr. Wiggs asked how many schools had been inspected by the State Safety Auditor. Mr. Verduzco responded that the current priority is the exterior doors and vestibules and some back entrances that the EPISD Chief of Police has designated as primary entrances. Mr. Verduzco stated that EPISD had also hired an Emergency Operations Manager who has helped start the numbering of school buildings which has helped with checking of doors and noting any mechanical or electronic failures that need to be replaced.

Ms. Chavez asked if using the cloud caused a delay. Mr. Verduzco responded that it would speed up.

Mr. Apodaca asked what the difference was between interior and exterior access. Ms. Alonzo responded classrooms are interior and the outside doors are exterior.

Mr. Apodaca asked if all classrooms would have locks. Mr. Verduzco responded that during the design some projects included all doors on campus and others didn't, but the goal was to prioritize the TEA mandated exterior doors and the vestibules, and analyze the sustainable cost of all interior doors that will be proposed to administration

Mr. Apodaca asked if the other schools (not bond) had not received access control. Mr. Verduzco responded correct. But with safety grants, it would be expanded to all schools.

Mr. Wiggs stated that in November 2022, it was reported that 13 schools had been visited by the state auditor and inquired if any more campuses had been inspected. Mr. Verduzco responded that he would reach out to the EPISD Chief of Police and see if he could present at a future meeting.

6. Periodic Financial Reports

Mr. David Martinez, Compliance and Job Cost Accounting Manager, presented the periodic reports as of May 31, 2023.

- **Fund Report Managed by the District**

Ms. Toni Lunsford asked if these projects were included in the Bond. Mr. Martinez responded yes.

Mr. Wiggs asked if there was anything left to be done under the Athletic Upgrades. Mr. Martinez responded that Facilities was looking into doing a playground project. Mr. Ramirez added that it may be enough to do one more playground and canopy project.

Ms. Lunsford asked if the \$200,000 in perimeter security could be used to provide needed security to schools. Ms. Ramirez responded yes at a bond school.

Ms. Lunsford asked if the schools that don't have interior access could get there access from the perimeter security funds. Ms. Ramirez responded yes and would look into that.

- **Fund Status Report Breakdown by Project**

Mr. Wiggs asked when the money would be moved. Mr. Martinez responded that he has tasked the departments to review expenditures and unencumber any funds no longer needed to have a clear picture on what would need to be moved prior to meeting with Ms. Ramirez and Mr. Verduzco to discuss the moving of funds but only after he has verified that all projects are completely done.

Mr. Wiggs asked about the \$5 million at Irvin. Mr. Martinez responded that the ROTC Stairwell will be presented to the Board in June and there is also the rocket project pending. Ms. Ramirez explained that an exterior stairwell in bad condition is being replaced which will be managed by Ms. Luz Favela.

Mr. Wiggs commented that there were tables placed in the courtyard but since the trees were removed there is no shade, and it is too hot for the students to use. Mr. Wiggs added that the blacktops where the portables were sitting are a mess and unusable.

Mr. Venegas asked if the entire funds would be used for what was approved by the Board. Mr. Martinez responded that the bond funds used comply with what was approved in the Voters Compact.

- **Interest Revenue/Admin Expenses to Date**
- **Bond Program Status- Budget**
- **Bond Program Status – Program Contingency**

Ms. Lunsford asked if the balance of \$2.5 million needs to be spent on bond schools. Mr. Martinez responded yes, all funds remaining will be allocated towards bond projects that will be presented to the board and the same applies to bond interest funds.

Ms. Lunsford asked if the funds would only be used for bond schools. Mr. Martinez responded yes.

Mr. Wiggs commented that he understood that items that did not make it into the project

would be a priority. Ms. Ramirez responded that it would be included in the list to the Board but it may not be considered a priority. Ms. Chavez commented that security should be considered a priority.

Mr. Apodaca asked if the plumbing issues in Building "A" were due to the contractor. Ms. Ramirez responded that the same contractor is currently working on Building "B". Although Building "A" has been occupied for a year, plumbing issues have already arisen. The contractor inserted a camera into the pipes and found an area of rocks that got into the system. The contractor will need to cut into the flooring and this will not affect bond funding.

Ms. Lunsford asked if the flooding at Bobby Joe Hill had been resolved. Ms. Ramirez responded yes, a ponding area would take care of any flooding that might occur.
Mr. Wiggs adjourned the meeting.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

Date Approved by CBAC Secretary: September 13, 2023

Date Approved by Chair: September 14, 2023