

for \$1.95 million. A memorandum of understanding was drawn up between the school district and the project architect and contractors. Stevens said that the amount agreed upon should be sufficient to replace the geothermal field. See www.ocn.me/v16n11.htm#d38-1011.

Approval of proposed easement

The board approved a proposal to accept \$63,068.81 from Woodmoor Water and Sanitation for an easement at Palmer Ridge High School. This will allow them access to construct or re-

construct parts of their system that are underground with the understanding that they will restore the surface to its prior condition.

Enrollment and financial impact presentation

Somers and Executive Director of Finance David Crews offered a presentation regarding the shortfall in anticipated enrollment this year and the financial impact that it presents. He said there would be 131 fewer students than the number upon which the year's

budget was based.

Somers commented that the 2019 graduating class was very large with far fewer entering kindergarten causing an imbalance. He also said that closing choice to students in grades K-8 could have had an influence. In addition, an increasing number of students opt to study online.

Some possible solutions to the income shortfall could be limiting overtime, saving energy, and streamlining the procurement process. He suggested a goal of saving 5 % per month.

Clawson said that he welcomes any suggestions, but would oppose anything that impacts compensation.

The Lewis-Palmer D38 Board of Education meets at 6 p.m. on the third Monday of each month in the district's learning center, 146 Jefferson St., Monument. The next meeting will be on Dec.16.

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Lewis-Palmer D-38 Board of Education Town Hall Meeting, Nov. 14

District 38 holds town hall meeting after failed bond issue



Above: During a town hall meeting Nov. 14 called by D-38, attendees broke into groups to come up with new ideas for the board. Because of the recent failure of the bond issue (4A) the board is looking for answers. Photo by Allison Robenstein

By Allison Robenstein
The Lewis-Palmer School District 38 Board of Education arranged a town hall meeting after the single-purpose

bond (4A) failed in the 2019 election. It was standing room only in the town hall meeting room for the Nov. 14 discussion.

Treasurer Chris Taylor kicked off the meeting by saying the board has had annual budget plans, but never a long-term comprehensive plan to follow. He wondered if that was one reason the bond request didn't pass. This meeting was called to begin the process of developing such a plan and discuss other issues.

Background: Ballot issue 4A would have authorized a \$28.985 million bond to fund a new elementary school and convert Bear Creek Elementary back to its original intent as a middle school. The issue failed with 55% voting against.

The full board attended the meeting, as well as newly-elected Ron Schwarz who will represent District 4.

Superintendent K.C. Somers said the town hall was intended to connect with stakeholders and gather new ideas. However, resident Ann Howe criticized the way the meeting was publicized, saying this isn't a town hall. She also objected to the audience composition saying those who opposed the bond were not represented. At the meeting, this reporter didn't see any public indication of how anyone had voted.

Meeting attendees were separated into groups and assigned to one of the many district administrators in attendance. The board asked each group to answer two questions. After an hour of

discussion the groups came back together to discuss their findings.

The questions were:

- "What are some specific ideas or suggestions that can be implemented to maintain the values articulated by our community?"
- "What are some specific ideas or suggestions that can be implemented to address the challenges we face in D-38?"

Both ended up having common answers from the groups including:

- The idea of Grace Best Education Center being restored and used as a school should be "put to bed."
- Focus should be placed on staff, their morale, competitive wages and improved benefits.
- The development and growth of our children should be of primary concern.
- The community should be educated to better support our schools.
- The board and the town's trustees should partner and consider increasing developer impact fees to pay for new schools.

Somers said the board planned to hold similar meetings to continue the process of gathering community input to develop the district's comprehensive plan.

Allison Robenstein can be reached at allisonrobenstein@ocn.me.

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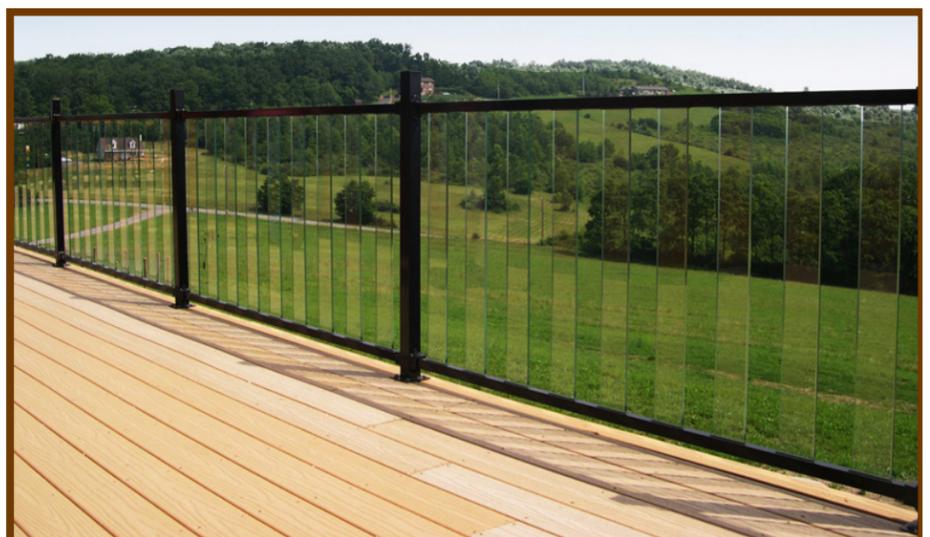
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