

# **SAN RAFAEL CITY SCHOOLS AGENDA ONLINE MINUTES**

## **Study Session - SRCS Board of Education**

March 12, 2018 4:00 PM

District Office - Boardroom

310 Nova Albion Way

San Rafael, CA 94903

## **Attendance Taken at 4:00 PM:**

### Present:

Linda Jackson

Rachel Kertz

Greg Knell

Ms. Maika Llorens Gulati

Natu Tuatagaloa

## **I. OPEN SESSION**

### Minutes:

President Knell convened the meeting to Public Session at 4:00 PM.

## **II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

### Minutes:

Director of Fiscal Services John Bartolome led the Pledge of Allegiance.

## **III. PUBLIC COMMENTS on Agendized Items (Public comment on items that appear on the agenda will be taken at the time the item is addressed by the Board.)**

### Minutes:

None.

## **IV. STUDY SESSION - CAPITAL FACILITIES PROGRAM- Update on Solar**

### Minutes:

Senior Director Dr. Dan Zaich introduced the update to the Board on solar. He introduced Elliott Feldman of Sage Renewable, a solar consultant, who provided a draft investment grade solar feasibility report.

Mr. Feldman provided an overview of the investment grade report, design considerations, the eight targeted sites for solar, high level 25 year savings estimate, timeline for solar construction and next steps.

- The work started with visits to all 12 sites to evaluate solar possibilities, landed on eight targeted sites and created designs for all. The available system size for the eight sites is 2.2 mega watts.

- Based on current usage for eight sites, modeling a 90% usage offset; cannot reduce 100% of utility cost as there are still administrative charges from the utility companies

- Financing options were reviewed as solar was not included in the bond: Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) - a solar contractor is hired who would own the systems, with the District purchasing the energy; 2nd option would be a lease purchase, modeling a 20 year term at 3.75% interest and 2% cost of issuance. PPA was the recommendation

- Projected total project costs are over \$9M

- Other benefits of solar are the environmental considerations and providing shade structures

- Examples of solar projects at other schools were shown: shade structures in parking areas, blacktop areas, ground mounted solar, rooftop solar which is a popular choice but the condition of the roofs have to be taken into consideration and it is generally only recommended for new construction

- Ground mounted solar needs to be surrounded by a 6' fence for safety

- Looking for usage offset target of 95%, not cost beneficial to look at a bigger array than is needed

Recommendations for arrays at the eight target sites were reviewed:

- BV: carport and shade structures and one on the newly installed lunch shelter; targeted system size and solar PV feasibility. In response to Trustee Llorens Gulati's question about solar on the BV roof as a newer school, staff explained that the design of the roof only results in a small amount of solar that can be placed on it

- Coleman: all rooftop which is the only option for solar at this site

- DMS: mix of all solar types - new building roof, carport shade structures and large array on campus; looking at summer construction 2019. In response to trustee questions, staff provided additional information: not recommending the parking lot area because have to be mindful of adjacent property; these are preliminary plans so further consideration will be given to directional exposure placement; DMS would be at 100%.

- Glenwood: one large carport in front parking lot

- SRHS: mix of shade structures, carports in front parking lot and new field parking lot, and solar on new construction; 75% usage for this site

- Sun Valley: carports

- TL: showing more than needed; recommended shade structures on campus; have option to add to new building

- VV: 2 options - ground mounted arrays on field taking soccer and field usage into consideration is the most cost effective design; or solar on new roofs. In response to Mr. Marquand's question about

what is more cost effective, shade structures or roof mount, Mr. Feldman responded they are comparable

Mr. Feldman reviewed how solar value is derived and how MCE credits back to the district. Trustees discussed the rates for surplus and potential battery storage of solar in the future.

Mr. Feldman also reviewed:

- The only type of solar panels for spec are top tier panels; size will be left up to the solar contractor to calculate

- Financials for solar project: 25 years recommended because that is the warranty life of a solar panel; if the district does not go with solar the energy costs over 25 years are projected to be \$28M; \$9M in capital costs for solar at the 8 targeted sites; with a Power Purchase agreement (PPA) there is only a small cost out of pocket- \$125K which can be rolled into the financing; savings analysis is that a PPA would be more beneficial, saving \$3M. President Knell questioned that there would only be a \$3M savings over 25 years asking about ways to increase savings. Mr. Feldman noted next steps will be to finalize the investment grade report and if the district moves forward they will go out for RFPs and then can look at savings based on real bids; it takes 1 1/2 months for proposals and negotiations; design permitting in winter and spring and then construction in September 2019.

In response to Trustee Jackson's concerns about the security of 6' fences around ground mounted arrays, animals not being able to get into fenced areas and design impacts on school and how sites are providing feedback, Mr. Feldman and Dr. Zaich provided additional information: when comparing ground mounted vs roof mounted keep in mind that with a PPA the district would not own the arrays; the challenge with roof arrays is water leakage; next steps will include public outreach meetings to update sites with the designs to get feedback.

Trustee Jackson suggested displays inside schools that could show energy usage.

In response to Trustee Llorens Gulati's questions about implementation and vendors, Mr. Feldman noted that higher quality vendors will be solicited.

In response to President Knell and Trustee Jackson's suggestions to talk with MCE about future production and potential financing options, Dr. Zaich noted that he and Mr. Feldman would be meeting with MCE and will bring a follow up to the Board.

The following individuals addressed the Board on this topic:

- Brad Honsberger, CBOC member: lower the return of power volume and motivate students to do their share to lower energy usage on campuses

- Steve Temple, SRHS teacher: include consumption production meters; students compete in county for reductions in energy consumption for Green Schools competition

- Peter Gebbie, CBOC member: regarding district relationship with PG&E and any possibility of aggregating all sites to be looked at as single unit; grants for solar?; underwhelming \$3M savings over 25 years, would there be more savings in buying the solar and amortizing over 25 years or go with a PPA

- Louise Blavet, from MG services, formerly Opterra: introduction to their services for customized energy programs to lower energy spending by implementing sustainability and bringing in student involvement.

Dr. Zaich noted finance options are being looked at if the Board wants to pursue RFP/Q process or there is the option of waiting and look at solar in a future bond measure. California Energy Commission Zero Interest Loans will be available in September.

Trustee Tuatagaloa commented on adding projects to a future bond program, the need to be more proactive with energy storage on sites, and looking at savings over time is better than no savings, and it helps the environment.

In response to President Knell's question about what happens when sites are not used over the summer, Mr. Feldman noted that the credits build and are banked.

Board consensus was for the work toward solar and discussions continue. Dr. Zaich will bring a recommendation to the Board at a later date.

#### **V. ADJOURNMENT: 4:59 P.M.**

Minutes:

There being no further business the Study Session was adjourned at 5:00 PM.

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President

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Superintendent