

Oak Park and River Forest High School District 200

201 North Scoville Avenue • Oak Park, IL 60302-2296

TO: Board of Education
FROM: Jeff Weissglass, Board President
DATE: January 12, 2016
RE: Discussion of potential to withdraw bonds and defer referendum

BACKGROUND

At the November 10, 2015, Special Board of Education meeting, the Board approved a resolution declaring its intent to issue \$17.5 million in Working Cash Fund bonds. This resolution was the next step to move forward with the pool project approved by the last Board on April 23, 2015, for a 50-meter pool to be built on the site where the parking garage currently is located. Previously, on October 14, 2015, the current Board had approved funding the \$37.5 million total cost of the pool project with a combination of \$20 million from available fund balances and the remainder with non-referendum bonds.

Following approval of the resolution of intent, Illinois law mandated a 30-day window during which a petition signed by at least 10% of registered voters in the community could be submitted to require the bond issue to go to referendum. Local residents submitted a petition with a sufficient number of signatures within the required time frame. The petition subsequently was challenged by two local residents. However, a hearing officer ruled on Jan. 11, 2016, that the challenge was not filed in a timely manner. Currently, the referendum question is certified to appear on the March 15, 2016 ballot.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The Board has the right to withdraw the resolution of intent to issue bonds and remove the referendum question from the ballot in March. This action must be taken within the next week or so to be sure that the ballot question will not appear if that is the Board's decision.

The primary reasons the Board might withdraw the resolution of intent are to:

1. Defer the timing of a referendum to allow completion of the parking plan needed to replace the current garage parking.
2. Provide time for the Park District to conduct its feasibility study regarding a community center, which could possibly include a pool.
3. Provide more time for public education prior to the next opportunity for a referendum, on November 8, 2016.

The Board expects to hold two special meetings related to this matter:

1. Thursday, January 14, 2016, to listen to community input on the question of whether to withdraw the bonds and to have a preliminary conversation among the Board.
2. Tuesday, January 19, 2016, to make a decision about whether to withdraw the bonds.

I encourage community input, in writing or in public comment, as the Board prepares to make this decision.

NEXT STEPS

This is a discussion item only, to help determine any actions that may be necessary at the special meeting on January 19, 2016.