

OJHS Land Trust Community Council Notes, August 26, 2019

Attending Council Members: Joshua LeRoy, Susan Hollberg, Robert Brough, Katie Graham, Julie Jackson, John May, Melissa Olsen

Non-attending Council Member(s): Jody Matsumori

Additional Attendees: Sue Ellen Cummings, Susan Gedge, Heather Hale, Heather Johnsen, Sarah Nelson, Suzy Rasch, Elise Soukup

1. Meeting opened by introduction of primary topic—junior and senior high school reconfiguration. Introductions made by Council members and guest attendees. The floor was opened to attendees to make statements/ask questions.
2. Sue Ellen Cummings: Stated she believes the vote on the issue was being rushed. Felt that information had not been provided to parents regarding reconfiguration. Had contacted the School Board and failed to hear back from Todd Zenger or Ben Horsley (she did receive a response from Connie Anderson). S.E.Cummings raised questions about special permits / attendance requirements following reconfiguration; graduation rates; whether there was enough room in the high school to accept all freshmen from the various feeder schools; and whether there is sufficient parking at Olympus High School.
 - a. Julie Jackson responded on behalf of the Council providing the 5-year history of the OJHS Community Council's deliberate decision making process, including the Council's initial decision to not vote in favor of reconfiguration to allow other schools to test the process first. Noted that last Oct/Nov, the Council sent a letter to the School Board seeking information about reconfiguration. The information received has since been distributed via Principal Wagstaff's newsletters, in two OJHS PTSA reconfiguration meetings, in OJHS Community Council meeting discussion, and via posting of notes on the OJHS Community Council web page. It was also noted that prior to today's meeting, there has been very little guest attendance at OJHS Community Council meetings in which reconfiguration has been an ongoing topic of discussion.
3. Suzy Rasch: Noted that extracurricular activities for students are also impacted by and supporting reconfiguration (citing example of little league football, and 9th grade students needing to leave OJHS classes early to get to OHS to participate in athletics).
 - a. Susan Holberg added that 9th graders leaving early to participate in high school athletics also affects academics.
 - b. Principal LeRoy noted that GTI stopped taking 9th grade students.
4. Katie Graham: Responding to the concerns/questions raised by S.E.Cummings, it was noted that all such issues had previously been reviewed and considered by the Council, except academy.
 - a. Special permit question for OHS is a valid concern. It is an ongoing issue that needs to be addresses by affected parents/students directly with Olympus High School and the OHS Community Council.
 - i. Julie Jackson noted at the Spring 2019 meeting it was stated that special permit students residing out of district would be most affected (per Pershon). Katie

Graham further noted that what qualifies for special permit is decided at the high school level. More conversation at the high school level is anticipated to continue on that point.

- b. OHS parking issues have previously been discussed, but again this is a high school issue. It was also noted that parking is less of a concern for 9th graders as their parents will likely be dropping off/picking up students because they do not yet have driver licenses.
 - c. Graduation rates. OJHS discussed and decided to remain 7-period day. This decision was made in the best interests of the OJHS students at the time, pending decision on reconfiguration.
 - i. Leroy noted that District-wide graduation rates are up over the last few years following reconfiguration decision at other schools.
 - d. OJHS Community Council discussion of the process supporting move to reconfiguration has traditionally focused on (1) what is in the best interests of students and their opportunities to learn, (2) athletic have moved to a 9-12 model which impacts students' class choices.
 - e. OJHS watched the Bonneville reconfiguration model and felt that 6/7/8 was the best way to attract teachers and retain classes/programs. The District is running on a 4x4 model so the OJHS Community Council believes we need to keep pace in the interest of the students.
5. Principal LeRoy noted that once the School District vote on reconfiguration happens, based on his experience with prior reconfiguration at Churchill, it becomes a valuable use of time to have meeting to educate parents on the process (such meeting held prior to the District vote would have not been useful as the reconfiguration decision may be negative. **It is anticipated that the School District will vote in November 2019 on the reconfiguration question.**
6. Julie Jackson: In response to question, Why reconfiguration next year? Because principals have stated that the schools are ready. There is a unique situation this year in relation to teacher retirements. The move to reconfiguration will benefit academics and athletics. There will be more academic opportunities in the 6/7/8 junior high model.
7. Robert Brough stated that today's 9th graders are more mature than 5 years ago (again, it was noted that this is one of the reasons that the OJHS Community Council previously voted against pursuing information about reconfiguration). He added that today 9th graders don't want to be in middle school—they are more prepared to participate at the high school level. Ninth grader participation in extracurricular activities is down (fun run, etc.).
 - a. Principal LeRoy noted that at Churchill, participation in after school clubs and activities increased after they went through reconfiguration.
8. Julie Jackson noted that the implementation of Proficiency Based Grading ("PBG") is also a consideration in favor of reconfiguration. District-wide, middle schools are going to PBG, but high schools are not, so some teachers with 8th and 9th grade student will have to based grades on both PBG and letter grade systems.

9. Sarah Nelson noted that she is in favor of reconfiguration.
10. Elise Soukup noted that she is strongly in favor of reconfiguration and in doing it right away (added that she is on the Cottonwood Elementary Community Council).
11. John May noted prior email received on the issue from Mary Ann Fuhriman (not in attendance at this meeting). Noted that all issues in Fuhriman email had been addressed but for electives. Council proceeded to discuss electives—they will be impacted. Ninth grade electives will go to high school, and 6th graders will have more elective opportunities. It is believed that 6th graders want to be involved in electives, so need for the number of teachers teaching electives will remain constant.
12. MOTIONS:
 - a. Motion to vote in favor of reconfiguration received from Robert Brough; seconded by Julie Jackson. All Community Council members present voted in favor (7-0).
 - b. Motion for implementation of reconfiguration for the 2020-21 school year received from Robert Brough; seconded by Julie Jackson. All Community Council members present voted in favor (7-0).

Meeting adjourned.