

The Bear Lake County Commissioners met in a special meeting on February 19, 2019 at 7:00 pm. at the Oregon Trail Center in Montpelier, Idaho. The meeting was held for the purpose of hearing public input on a request from Bear Lake School District #33 to make some land in Allinger Park available to build a school.

In attendance were Commissioners Vaughn Rasmussen, Bradley Jensen, and Rex Payne, and Amy Bishop, Chief Deputy Clerk. Others in attendance included Pamela Harmon and Michelle Higley, News-Examiner, David Higley, Ted Slavinski, Montpelier City Council, Mayor Jared Sharp, Leslie Tueller, Heber Dunford, Sheila Payne, Russ Roper, Kolby Romrell, Joey Probst and Steve Allred.

PUBLIC HEARING

Commissioner Rasmussen began the meeting by reading aloud the public hearing notice.

Then, Commissioner Payne moved to begin the public hearing. Commissioner Jensen seconded. Motion carries.

Commissioner Rasmussen reviewed the rules for the hearing, including showing respect each other and not discussing the school bond. He also clarified the legislation in the works to possibly levy taxes for the courthouse. Those in attendance were asked to sign in, marking whether they wanted to speak for or against the proposed land request. They were also asked to state their name and where they live.

Commissioner Rasmussen then provided some background on the request. The School District had approached Vaughn regarding using some property to build a new school. Commissioner Rasmussen informed them that they needed to make request in a public meeting and then the board of commissioners would hold a hearing.

He also clarified that the board did not intend to make a decision that night. He stated that once the public hearing is closed, they will not take additional comments, but they may hold another hearing later because there was an important school event the same night which prevented some from attending.

Commissioner Rasmussen showed a map of the area requested. The lower corner on the map is not county land. The requested land is about 3 acres.

The parcel of land in question was shown on the map with a green line. The land was school property at one time, but was quit claim deeded to the county on 9-3-2010. The land was being used more as part of the park than for school purposes and the school did not want to maintain it. The school had purchased the land in 1980.

The north part of the park was donated to the county in 1924 by the Clark family. There is a deed restriction on that piece, but the request from the school does not include that piece. There is also a small piece of land that is designated as a road. It is believed to be the road to old gravel pit.

Commissioner Payne asked if the land would only be given to the school if the bond passes. Commissioner Rasmussen stated that it was up to the commissioners to decide, but he recommended they make a decision upon bond approval.

It was noted that the county has an MOU with the City for maintenance of park and golf course. The county owns the park, but the city maintains it.

Dave Higley asked if the ball diamond would still be a regulation sized field. He was told that yes it would. Rasmussen displayed a map showing the building's foot print.

It was also asked if the new field/play area would be big enough for soccer, and they believed that it possibly would be large enough. The volleyball courts would be affected.

Higley also stated that as a former police chief, he did not like the idea of building a school along a highway.

Kolby Romrell asked if there were any stipulations with the Allinger Family on the use of the land. Rasmussen stated that we was unable to find any such stipulations listed on the property deeds.

Rasmussen noted that there may have been some federal money used to construct the skate park, and they would need to review any stipulations related to that.

Commissioner Rasmussen then reviewed the sign-in sheet, asking all who signed in if they wanted to comment.

Mayor Jared Sharp of Montpelier stated that the City does use the field for soccer games. They have different age groups, with about 200 kids playing in multiple groups at a time. The field also is used at all baseball tournaments. He asked the commissioners to hold a 2nd hearing when more can attend. He recommended that the 2nd hearing be held after the bond election.

Commissioner Rasmussen asked why soccer was not held at Adams Park. Sharp stated that the football league needs to be there also, as they play during the same season.

Commissioner Jensen asked if the proposed parking around the school would provide better access to the ball fields? He was told that they currently let those with accessibility difficulties drive down the path. Sharp noted that families who stay all day use the grassy area that would be lost to the proposed school construction. The 2nd little picnic pavilion may also be lost. He stated that the city is required by the maintenance agreement to spend \$15,000 each year in capital improvements. They have recently re-done the bathrooms and the roofs on the pavilions.

Pamela Harmon from Bennington asked a question about footprint of building, wondering if there is room for building to grow in the future. She was told there was possibly enough room.

Jennifer Jensen from Bennington asked about the building being built on a hill. She asked if the ground would be built up and what kind of a slope would be toward the ball fields. She also asked what would be between the building and ball fields. Joey Probst responded that the building is designed to contour with the landscape. Jensen clarified that she was concerned about whether drainage will run onto the ball fields? Probst responded that the architect was working on that problem.

Commissioner Rasmussen then thanked people for coming.

Commissioner Jensen moved to close the public hearing. Commissioner Payne seconded. Motion carries.

Regarding the recommendation to set another hearing, Commissioner Rasmussen noted that they would add a discussion about the best date to the agenda for a meeting scheduled the following day.

