

Facilities Committee Minutes
Meeting of October 20, 2008

Present: Rose Davis, Mark Pugh, Jim Huss, Connie Johnson, Denise Weiss, Holly Witham, Duane Paterson, Mark Egli, Dave Thomas and Merle Rambo

Superintendent Egli introduced Dave Thomas and Merle Rambo, CEO, of Facilities Cost Management Group prior to a building tour of the middle school facility.

Following the tour, Merle Rambo presented his approach to facilities planning. He emphasized that FCMG offers an independent perspective regarding architectural and structural issues. FCMG also looks at facilities relative to projected enrollment, educational needs and tax management. Several of FCMG's staff members are past school superintendents or educators.

Rambo proposed that we must look 3 to 5 decades into the future when deciding upon a facilities plan. His analogy was to look at the buildings as egg cartons with each room containing an egg; then take all of the "eggs" out. Now consider where you would want to put eggs back in and how many cartons are needed. MNW has 5.5 acres, about 240,000 square feet, under roof. That is approximately 60,000 square feet above what Mr. Rambo would consider adequate for a district of our enrollment, the greatest overage in facilities he has seen in over 30 years of facilities planning.

He stated that the District needs to put educational needs ahead of only looking at the space available. Questions to ask: What are we hoping to do with curriculum? What are we doing now, what are our needs for the future? What do we need in terms of a long-range facilities plan? A long-range facilities plan looks at facilities and tax management. Are the 40 to 50-year-old segments of our facilities too old to project out 30-50 years? What option would be most efficient and effective in the long term? We are creating a business plan to deliver education with attention to tax management, balancing effective teaching with the least tax payer cost long term.

Mr. Rambo suggested that we must discover how complicated the entire situation is before trying to figure out the best solution. Before any brainstorming and problem solving is done, the group will tour the elementary and high school facilities at its next meeting. Rambo stated that he would be coming to the District prior to the next meeting with 2 of his staff persons to examine the District's facilities further.

Superintendent Egli commented that Mr. Rambo had given the committee a new perspective that was no longer black and white, this building or that building. Instead the committee is now looking at how to plan for MNW's facilities to deliver the best possible education to our students over the next 50 years.

The committee's next meeting will be November 10, 6 p.m. in the elementary music room.