

Special School Board Meeting

Tuesday, May 28, 2024 7:00 PM

Conference Room 1148 MS/HS, 1401 7th St SW, Pipestone, MN 56164

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Pledge of Allegiance**
3. **Approve Agenda**
4. **Sioux Valley Energy - Solar Field**
5. **Approve Food Service Contract for 2024-2025**
6. **Recommendation to Approve an Additional 6th Grade Position**
7. **Recommendation to Approve an Additional SpEd Position**
8. **Adjourn**

PAS Solar

Ben Pierson, BSEE, MBA, PE

Manager of Beneficial Electrification



Renewable History

- 750 kW Wind Turbine
- Interconnection Agreement

L&O Grant Program

- 20 kW Solar Array
 - Large enough to meet interconnection requirement
 - Small enough that it doesn't take up much space

L&O Grant Program – Initial Costs Covered

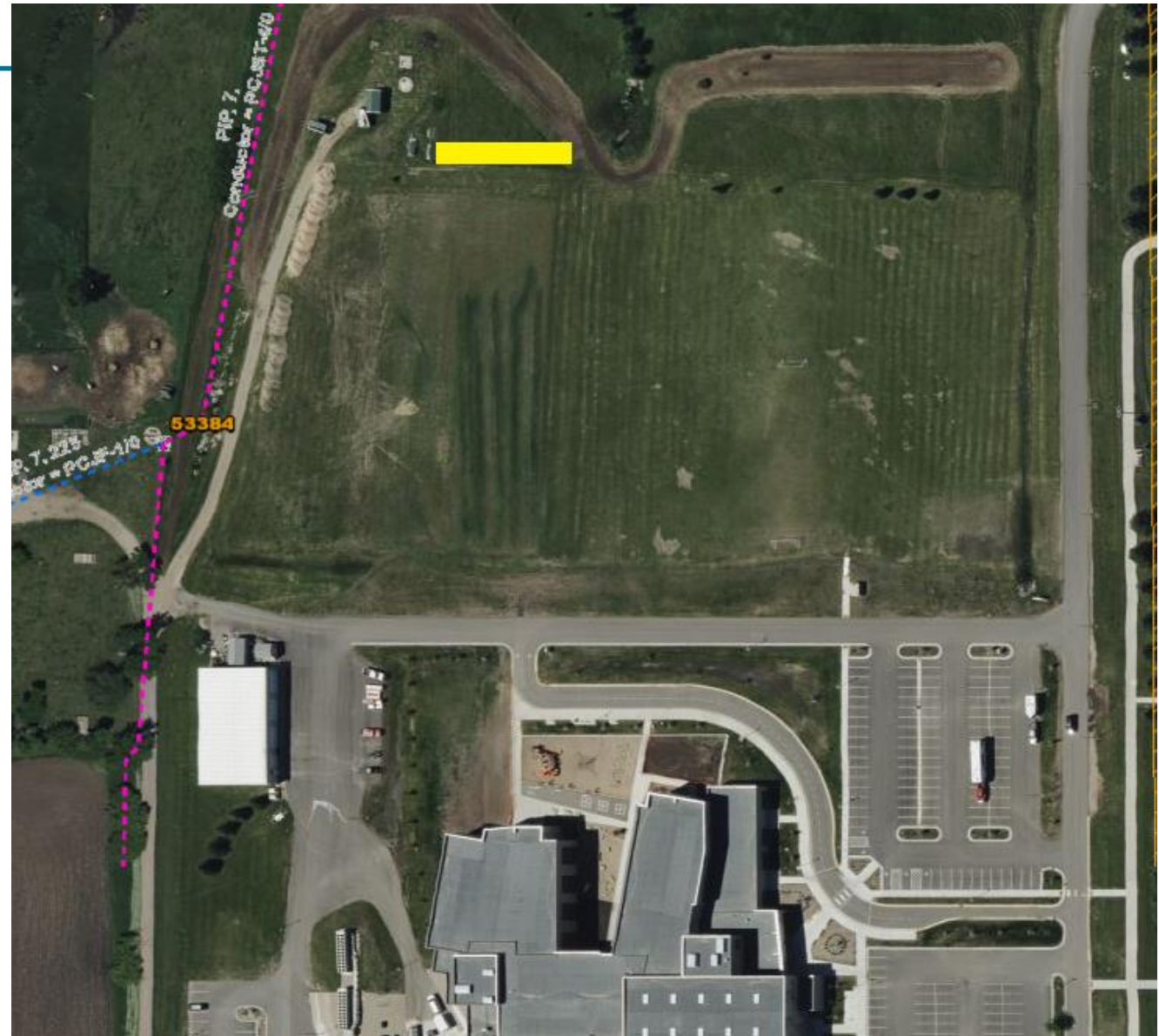
- 100% of Material and Labor (Midwest Solar)
- 100% of Service Cost (SVE)
- 100% of Landscaping (Pater Landscaping)

L&O Grant Program – Ongoing Costs Covered

- Inflation assumed on all ongoing costs
- 100% of Maintenance costs paid upfront
 - SVE to assist with any maintenance issues
- 100% of Insurance costs paid upfront (\$200/yr)
- 100% of Cellular Monitoring paid upfront (\$100/yr)
- 100% of Monthly SVE Facility Charge paid upfront (\$65/mo)
- End of life
 - Will last approximately 20 years, SVE will assist with either disposal or coordination of installing new solar panels

Solar Footprint

- Potential site



Solar Footprint

- 50 kW example



PAS Benefits

- PAS receives reimbursement from production (\$0.037/kWh, Large Power Rate)
- \$100/Month average from kWh production
 - Basin pays “avoided cost” rate monthly – Currently \$0.0137/kWh
 - L&O will reimburse difference up front to get to Large Power Rate, taking rate increases into account
- Educational opportunity
 - SVE will assist with education surrounding Solar/Renewable Energy
- SVE Partnership
 - Construction
 - Maintenance
 - Future needs

PAS Solar – Next Steps

- Feedback
- Agreement presented
- Board approval
- Construction
 - Potentially start in late July, early August
 - Needs to be operational by end of 2024

Questions?

Thank you!

Ben.Pierson@SiouxValleyEnergy.com

605-256-1652

The administration recommends the board approves proceeding with Taher Food Company as the Child Nutrition provider for the Pipestone Area Schools and complete the contractual agreement with Taher for presentation and final approval at the June board meeting.

Rationale:

As was shared earlier this year, the district needed to proceed to bid for child nutrition services. As part of the bid process, under the advisement of the Minnesota Department of Education, the district utilized a 100-point matrix to evaluate the Child Nutrition providers that bid on the Pipestone Area School Child Nutrition Program.

The district was required to award the highest point value on price (28 points). Then, the district administration included the following as additional categories:

District manager support (10 points)

Employee training and development (17 points)

Evaluation of references (13 points)

Integrity and reliability of projected operation budget (5 points)

Manager candidate (17 points)

Plans to increase participation (10 points)

The district received proposals from three vendors. The three vendors were:

Taher

Chartwells

Lunchtime Solutions

After reviewing the proposals based on the criteria, Taher provided the most comprehensive bid, including value to the district, through the competitive process. We have requested a copy of a proposed contract from Taher, and, pending the action of the board, will finalize the contract with a review by legal counsel and the Minnesota Department of Education. We would proceed to inform Taher and the other vendors accordingly.

Middle School Schedule Regarding Staffing

Several of the middle school teachers have concerns about the upcoming schedule in regards to staffing. All students in grades 6-12 will share the same schedule which will result in the middle and high school having class at the same time as opposed to this year where there has been a separate schedule for 6th grade, 7th and 8th grade (7 period day), and 9th through 12th grade (block schedule).

MS Teachers Recommend Hiring Enough Staff for 4 Sections

However, with the new schedule for next year, each grade is four sections except, first of all, 11th and 12th grade, as these students have less specific graduation requirements and more options to choose from; therefore, 11th and 12th grade classes do not necessarily warrant 4 sections. However, besides the exception of 11th and 12th grade, 7th grade is the only grade to have 3 sections instead of 4 sections. As a result, the middle school can not have 4 core (reading, math, science, and social) teachers for each grade level where the teachers can truly support their middle school students and master their content area for that grade to prepare students for the standards and standards-based testing (MCAs). The class sizes and sections of the middle school have varied for years. Occasionally, middle school is allowed to have 4 sections for all grades 6-8. However, too often, there is one grade that suffers and is given the short end of the stick and is crammed into 3 sections instead of 4. The middle school teachers would highly recommend hiring the necessary number of staff for the middle school to have 4 sections for all grades 6-8.

Elementary Grades Are All 4 Sections

If we start by looking at the elementary, each grade is 4 sections. This includes 4th and 5th grade which are both divided into 4 sections for next year. Looking back specifically over the past 5 years, both 4th and 5th grade have had 4 sections all but one year, and the numbers easily could have warranted keeping 4 sections those years as well.

Years	4th Grade	Sections	5th Grade	Sections
2023-2024	84	4	78	4
2022-2023	76	4	<u>70</u>	<u>3</u>
2021-2022	<u>69</u>	<u>3</u>	87	4
2020-2021	84	4	72	4
2019-2020	70	4	82	4

We recognize that the elementary needs to be given small class sizes as this is important to all students' learning. Students are tested consistently at each grade level in the elementary.

Large Class Sizes Impact MCA Tests in Grades 6-8

Likewise, middle schoolers are also tested each year in grades 6, 7, and 8 in reading and math. (In high school, students are tested just once: MCA reading test in 10th grade, MCA math test in 11th grade, and MCA science test typically in 11th grade.) We have seen our test scores suffer overall, and perhaps this is in part, due to larger class sizes and less consistency when we transition to the tumultuous phase of middle school where students are experiencing a unique time in their academic and emotional development. Staff should be supported and granted 4 sections, not just in the elementary, but in the middle school level as well. We would not recommend an elementary class to fit 26 or more students into their classrooms. However, with the current numbers, that always fluctuate and typically increase throughout the year as several students move into the district, the middle school teachers will be expected to fit 26 or more students in their classrooms, typically with less para support than granted in the elementary during their formative years. This past year, teachers with 7th graders already had Prime classes of 30 students or more, and in some classrooms 2-3 students are unable to have their own desks. Thankfully, this class is not a core class and is only 14 minutes long.

Smaller Class Sizes Increase Academic Achievement

Research shows, and I think we can all agree, that with smaller class sizes we see increased academic achievement, less behavior issues, and more time for teachers to differentiate and provide more one-on-one support. With smaller class sizes, teachers are able to grade and return work faster to give students more immediate feedback and more easily identify and support specific students who are struggling and falling significantly behind. Those arguing against smaller class sizes typically discuss how the quality of the teachers is more important. It is crucial to keep in mind that amidst the teacher shortage, it will be more difficult to find and keep teachers when they are juggling higher class sizes especially for teachers new to the profession without the years of experience to handle large classes.

MS Staff Will Be Overloaded

Another item to keep in mind is with the proposed schedule, several teachers will have to cross over and teach over 135 students across the middle school and high school; contrastingly, if the class sizes were smaller, these teachers would only have to teach roughly 100-110 students at the most. Typically on the middle school side, teaching over 100-110 students (not including a study hall/Prime/WIN class) is considered a 6th assignment or overload; however, that would not be the case on this proposed schedule when there are only 3 sections instead of 4 for each grade, specifically 7th grade next year.

6th Graders Will Lack Core Teachers

Additionally, on our current schedule if we are unable to have 4 sections for all of the middle school, there will be 3 teachers sharing a core class. For example, 3 different teachers will be teaching 6th grade math, and 3 different teachers will have 6th grade English language arts. Keep in mind our 6th graders are tested on both reading and math. Additionally, 6th grade science will most likely have two teachers. The 6th graders will not have one main core teacher for math or reading; 6th grade is a critical grade with the start of middle school where students are transitioning from elementary and learning to become more independent. Therefore, our foundation of middle school, 6th grade, will be short changed by not having the support of 4 core teachers like the 7th or 8th graders will have.

MS Grades Are Being Disserved

While this upcoming school year the 6th and 7th graders will be more affected, each year middle school will face a similar problem if we do not hire another teacher or two. There will always be a grade or even two grades being disserved since neither the students nor the staff will have consistency.

For all of these reasons, the middle school staff would appreciate the school board's support in hiring the necessary staff to provide 4 sections for grades 6, 7, and 8. This will provide smaller class sizes for our students, one core teacher for each subject in each grade level, and increases in students' academic growth and performance including on standardized tests.

Todd Tinklenberg Todd Tinklenberg
Jodie Minet Jodie Minet
Kourtney Bauman Kourtney Bauman
Ingrid Wielenberg Ingrid Wielenberg
Paul Young Paul Young
Emily Williamson Emily Williamson
Mike Zaske Mike Zaske
Nicholas Welsh Nicholas Welsh
Trisha Hess Trisha Hess
Mitchel Carson Mitchel Carson
Tamera Kremin Tamera Kremin



PIPESTONE AREA SCHOOLS District No. 2689

Dr. Klint W. Willert, Superintendent
Sonja Ortman, MS/HS Principal
Jennifer Moravetz, Elementary Principal

Jacque Kennedy, Business Manager
Rick Zollner, Activities Director
Jean Bailey, Food Service Director

Dear Parent,
Your child, _____, has been assigned Summer School due to failing the following classes this year:

Summer School starts June 17th. The hours are 10 a.m.-noon (2 hours per day) and will run Monday-Thursday (no Fridays). This is a six-week program intended to offer credit recovery to students who need it. Please contact me with any questions.

Please sign and return this form to the high school office as soon as you can.

Mrs. Ortman

_____ Parent Signature of Committal

_____ Student Signature of Committal

"Inspire life-long learners. Build Character. Prepare them for their future."