



Waunakee Rotary Club

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The Waunakee school board will have to decide soon whether to present a comprehensive school building plan for a February referendum, or whether to spread it out over separate election periods.

And likely, that decision will come at its Nov. 30 meeting.

Randy Guttenberg, school superintendent, attended the Nov. 19 Rotary meeting to describe the school board's progress on planning for growth.

Guttenberg said this time around, the board has revised the way it looks at enrollment and growth trends.

Waunakee's growth trends seem to buck the norm, with higher end homes being constructed and families with young children moving in, Guttenberg said.

"There has been an explosion of growth...much quicker than what was projected," Guttenberg added.

The UW Applied Population Lab has met with area developers and municipalities to arrive at a more accurate projection of future growth this time around, Guttenberg said.

Meanwhile, Waunakee's schools – every one of them – are nearing or at capacity. Currently, 3,564 students attend Waunakee schools, and the the district's maximum capacity is 3,792.

The student numbers are projected to exceed that capacity in the 2011-2012 school year, Guttenberg noted, with grades 5-6 to exceed capacity next year.

Guttenberg said the growth is positive from a state funding formula standpoint, but the challenge is to maintain facilities as the district grows.

The school board has considered several options and narrowed them down to a succinct K-6 plan.

That plan calls for a new six-track, K-4 school, remodeling the Heritage/Inter-mediate school for grades 5-6 and adding onto Prairie Elementary. At that time, redistricting would be done to alleviate crowding at Arboretum Elementary.

The school board is still solving the riddle of resolving 7-12 space needs, Guttenberg said.

"There are large driving questions that we need to answer yet," he said.

For instance, should the district operate one large middle school or two smaller middle schools?

Should the middle school grade configuration stay at 7-8 or should it be reconfigured to 7-9, leaving the high school with grades 10-12?

Guttenberg presented five paths the school board could take, some calling for building one middle school and using the current middle school as part of a high school campus, and others that involve changing the grade configurations and adding onto the existing buildings.

Guttenberg said the prospect of phasing the project into two referendums has its pluses and minuses. Some community members have asked the board not to rush the project. And yet, if the district were to build in the next year or two, it would be eligible for federal stimulus money to reduce the borrowing costs by up to \$6.3 million.

"That's part of the conversation the board will have on Nov. 30," Guttenberg said.

Other news:

•Peggy Acker-Farber reminded the club of the Dec. 5 Santa at the Depot event. Cookies can be brought to the Dec. 3 Rotary meeting. If you signed up to bring cookies but realize now you can't provide them, let Peggy know.

OFFICERS

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Calendar of Events:

- Nov. 26, *Thanksgiving breakfast at the Senior Center/Village Center*
- Dec. 5, *Santa Visit at Village Center*
- Dec. 17, *Christmas party at Rex's*

Guests: Genna Eaton, guest of Ellen Schaaf.

Visiting Rotarians: None.

Birthdays: Nov. 30, Susan Vergeront; Dec. 6, Bud Zander; Dec. 8, Neil King; Dec. 8, Roberta Baumann.

Anniversaries: Dec. 1, Bob and Nancy Hoskins.

Prayers: Nov. 26, Thanksgiving; Dec. 3, Susan Vergeront; Dec. 10, Leonard Allen.

Programs: Nov. 26, no meeting Thanksgiving Day; Dec. 3, Club Assembly; Dec. 10, Katie Kennedy Shepherd, Ben Pechan, classification speeches.

Greeters: Nov. 26, Thanksgiving Day; Dec. 3, Amy Fluke and Greg Garton; Dec. 10, Jeremiah Gollon and Rich Harris.

Make up meetings online

It's easy to make up a meeting on the Internet. The site is www.rotaryclubone.org. Print out the form and give it to Phil Willems, the club secretary.