

JOINT ASSEMBLY/JSD FACILITIES COMMITTEE MINUTES - DRAFT

March 21, 2025 at 12:00 PM

Assembly Chambers/Zoom Webinar



<https://juneau.zoom.us/j/87158300522> or 1-253-215-8782 Webinar ID: 871 5830 0522

A. CALL TO ORDER

B. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to acknowledge that the City & Borough of Juneau is on Tlingit land, and wish to honor the indigenous people of this land. For more than ten thousand years, Alaska Native people have been and continue to be integral to the well-being of our community. We are grateful to be in this place, a part of this community, and to honor the culture, traditions, and resilience of the Tlingit people. Gunalchéesh!

C. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Chair Woll; Mayor Weldon; Mr. Steininger; Ms. Adkison; Ms. Sorensen; Ms. Cioni-Haywood; Mr. Kelly

Members Absent: Mr. Muldoon

Other Assembly Members Present: Ms. Hall

City & Borough of Juneau Staff Members Present: Denise Koch, EPW Director; Nate Rumsey, EPW Deputy Director; Breckan Hendricks, EPW Admin Officer; Jeanne Rynne, City Architect; Beth McEwen, City Clerk; Kevin Allen, Meeting Clerk

School District Staff Present: Frank Hauser, Superintendent; Kristine Germain, Director of Operations

D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA - Chair Woll moved the Dzantik'i Heeni Playground Project above the Potential JSD Project for Bond. The agenda was approved as amended.

Chair Woll noted that Mr. Kelly was in attendance but had conflicted out of the Dzantik'i Heeni (DH) Playground Project discussion and that Ms. Adkison would sit in for that agenda topic. Mr. Kelly would then sit in for the Potential JSD Project for Bond.

E. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. January 22, 2025 - Regular Meeting - Approved with no changes.

F. AGENDA TOPICS

3. Dzantik'i Heeni (DH) Playground Project

Mr. Kelly recused himself for this discussion.

Director Koch explained that initially there was a \$75,000 CIP for design for a playground, but they do not have a CIP for construction for a playground for any size. She stated that the thought process was that \$75,000 in that design was given with the thinking that maybe the playground would be in the \$750,000 range. She expressed that with the interactions that have been requested for designs, they have exhausted the \$75,000 design funds. She added that if any decisions are made on construction, a funding source needs to be identified.

Ms. Rynne walked them through Attachment A of the packet. She stated that staff looked at options between \$575,000 and \$1.8 million total project cost, divided the difference equally, and worked back

to construction cost by dividing by 1.4, which is standard. She stated that all the options in these scenarios have a concrete slab with play surfacing and include an ADA compliant sidewalk; however, in the budget ranges, they were not able to do anything with fencing. The \$880,000 and \$1.5 million options provide some equipment and areas completed with play surfacing to receive future equipment, as it would be easier to add equipment later than to add concrete slab and play surfacing later. The \$880,000 option includes one piece of K-5 play equipment, but the other two options have equipment for both K-5 and pre-K. Ms. Rynne then discussed Attachment B, which is a summary of the play facilities at all of the elementary schools in the district. She added that Dzantik'I Heeni also have middle schoolers and high schoolers. They compared field space, cover play area, and schools with pre-K areas or K-5 areas. She said they also included options they are looking at for Dzantik'I Heeni to identify finish play surface area to be included in the options but do not have equipment.

Chair Woll asked for any questions for staff.

Mayor Weldon asked why they need a concrete slab for a play area.

Ms. Rynne responded that arose from the public input meetings, as the existing site is a field that is not well draining, and play surfacing holds up better over time. She said the recommendation from the consultant and desire from the public was to have an accessible playground that is easily maintained.

Chair Woll stated that in comparison table in Attachment B, the student capacity column was helpful as we compare facilities, but she understands that Dzantik'I Heeni has a lot of capacity for students but not a lot of elementary aged students there to be using it. She asked what the current size of K-5 student body is at Dzantik'I Heeni is.

Mr. Hauser responded that the current enrollment projected for FY26 for the Dzantik'I Heeni campus is projected around 340 to 350 students Pre-k through 12th grade.

Mr. Steininger asked what the specific answer was for K-5.

Mr. Hauser answered K-6 includes Montessori Borealis and JCCS, which would be approximatively 250-260 students.

Mayor Weldon asked what the music elements are and if they are included because they are inexpensive.

Ms. Rynne responded that another request was to provide some playground elements for children who may not be as physically capable as other students, so the music element is one of interactive elements for that, and there is also a communications board.

Mr. Steininger expressed that at the last meeting there was a \$575,000 plan discussed. He asked what the difference is between that playground design and this \$880,000 playground design.

Ms. Rynne explained that they had three versions of the \$575,000 design, but they were not able to include the ADA sidewalk in most of those versions and they were concrete slab only. She said a complete playground cannot be done for \$575,000, so they were insufficient and would only allow affordability for one piece of play equipment.

Chair Woll stated there were many comments about insufficiency to meet ADA requirements. She inquired if all of the proposals did not meet standards or if the original proposal by the designer lacked in the same way these proposals are lacking. She also asked how other playgrounds at elementary schools compare to these comments.

Mr. Hauser responded that in looking at the comments made, it is looking at the Alaska School of Design on construction standards that were established in 2022, and one of the big things was ADA compliance and accessibility on the playground. He said with this playground, the concrete slab has the play

surfacing on top of it, so it is the foundation for the play surfacing that would be fully ADA accessible to all the play equipment and elements on the surface of the playground. He said in comparison with the different playgrounds across the district, many of the playgrounds were constructed prior to 2022.

Ms. Germain added that in the month of January, they had the senior risk agent through their city insurance company walk through all of their facilities as a security assessment, and they did a comprehensive playground safety assessment on three facilities. She said they looked at the size for entrapments or entanglements in the equipment and the fall surface, and they had work to do on some fall surfacing on some of the current playgrounds. She noted that some of the playgrounds that had pea gravel were frozen and the playground should have been closed and not used because fall surface is not adequate when pea gravel is frozen. She stated that from the beginning of this project, ADA accessibility has been a goal and they would like to have all playgrounds moving forward achieve that.

Chair Woll asked if those design standards were incorporated into the original design that was presented by the contractor. She struggled with the difference between a \$1.5 million and \$1.8 million and if the school board would have made the same comments on all of those proposals on lack of accessibility.

Ms. Rynne responded that the \$1.8 million design met ADA and drainage requirements, but the \$575,000 options did meet the drainage requirements but not ADA. She added that the most recent options meet ADA and drainage requirements, and they have been basing those variations on the 65% design documents they got from Corvus, who have a civil engineer on board.

Mayor Weldon asked if none of the proposals except for the \$1.5 million were acceptable then.

Ms. Sorensen responded that people that supervise large groups of children on a playground is different than taking your child to the park, as they can have up to 100 students on a playground three times a day and need visibility. She said the lack of swings is a big deal, as swings are where introverted students go to get fresh air and be alone and they give calming attributes, and toys that spin are not a great playground option. She expressed that they need to look to people that have experience with large numbers of students on playground when selecting how much they spend. She added that it is important that the playground be fenced, as fencing has been an issue since the start of the school year with keeping bears out and students in, and that has been one of their biggest priorities is to get adequate fencing this year. She commented that since this is a dual purpose playground, they also need to make sure they are maintaining the construction standards.

Ms. Adkinson asked about what specifically needs to change on the design standards.

Ms. Sorensen responded that surfacing is the primary ADA compliance piece, but her concerns are regarding functionality for school usage, as there is a different level of usage and durability than just a park playground.

Chair Woll asked Ms. Sorensen if she had the same concerns about the original designs that were presented by the contractor.

Ms. Sorensen answered that she has always been concerned about the giant play structure, but she feels that is a cost that could be examined and they could get input from people that spend many hours supervising playgrounds. She expressed that she does not want money spent that will not be used to provide the most purposeful equipment and elements for the playground. She mentioned that she is the board liaison for the charter school, and they are looking for other community support to help with the project, but her biggest concern is that it is a safe and useful school playground.

Chair Woll expressed that the challenge is that a design came before the Assembly and the vibes from the Assembly did not have the appetite for spending \$1.8 million on a playground, so we are trying to figure out how to move forward. She said that if they decide they cannot build a playground for that

amount of money, the Assembly will want to know that, but it probably will not result in them redesigning the process with more dollars.

Mayor Weldon stated that she is getting the impression that the only option that satisfies them is the \$1.8 million one and she does not know if that includes a fence. She asked if they need to start over again and put a fence up first and then start going down through one of the phases. She stated that she sees it as a phased project but it does not sound like the school district wants a phased project.

Ms. Sorensen responded that she does not think the school district is opposed to a phased project, and some of the big pieces are being ADA compliant, having a useful play area, and a perimeter fence for playground safety. She suggested consulting with the school district to determine what the most used and desirable play structures are and how they can get them phased in on potentially \$1.5 million plan. She added that they need to move forward or the children will continue playing in the street.

Ms. Adkinson voiced she was not opposed to a phase project and having fencing makes sense. She was hesitant to spend more design dollars than they already have, as they allocated a good amount. She said she would rather move forward with the phases they have here than wait for a little while longer and spend more money.

Mr. Steininger asked how the designs were formulated and how different features were prioritized to get to these options, including a spinner being prioritized over swing areas and the lack of fencing.

Ms. Germain responded that they formed a committee, which included herself, principals of both programs housed in Dzantik'I Heeni, a neighborhood representative, members of the Engineering Department, and the maintenance supervisor. She said they held two public meetings, one where Corvus Design presented the first options of play equipment and put out a survey to show the designs, and another meeting when they were at the 65% design phase. She noted that fencing was costed out, as they felt like there may be other funding sources for fencing, so they decided to prioritize the play surfacing and play equipment. She shared that their priorities going in were ADA accessibility, fall surfacing, and maintenance of the equipment. Ms. Germain stated that the spinner was included in the design due to the public input.

Ms. Adkinson moved forward to the Full Assembly the \$880,000 total project cost option. She asked for unanimous consent.

Mayor Weldon objected and expressed that if they are confused at this committee, it makes no sense to forward this to the Assembly, and more conversations need to happen between this committee and the school district. She added that she cannot get a clear vision of what they want.

Ms. Adkinson responded that if the mayor and others want to keep discussing this, then she would be happy to remove her motion, as she was just trying to move the conversation along. She removed her motion.

Mayor Weldon moved to keep this in Committee and reconvening. The motion passed.

Chair Woll stated she was happy to talk to the school board people offline to make sure that when they come back to the conversation it is more productive.

2. Potential JSD Project for Bond

Ms. Germain explained that a conversation from a previous finance meeting said to look at the option of a bond at the \$5, \$10, and \$15 million range, recognizing that the moratorium on school bond debt reimbursement may be discontinued. She voiced that after speaking with Ms. Rynne and knowing the ongoing list of maintenance projects, it seems like possible bonds combine into three main project types, which are roofs, heating and ventilation, and safety and security projects. She went over all of the documents and priorities that were included in their packet regarding this topic. She said their hope is

to achieve one cohesive system that is in line with the City and JSD in whatever bond or project they choose.

Mr. Kelly asked why Glacier Valley is listed as the second priority when there are others with a more recent expiration.

Ms. Germain answered that it is due to the amount and frequency of water coming through into the school, as JDHS has constant and ongoing leaks. She noted that some areas leak to the outside and cause safety concerns about large ice rinks where playground kids line up.

Mayor Weldon inquired if any of these projects listed in their CIP are included in our CIP list.

Director Koch responded that she could not confirm that each individual project was on CBJ's CIP list, but that she does agree with the process where they have identified the 6-year CIP as the logical place to start for what the priorities are, but many of these projects are on those unfunded out years in the CBJ's 6-year CIP.

Mr. Steininger asked if the security item project was run by anyone at the law section, as he has previous recollections of past discussions on if software licensing is allowable for bond.

Ms. Rynne said software licensing is not allowed, but purchase and installation of equipment is.

Chair Woll expressed that the trick with putting together bond proposals is figuring out how to create packages that will appeal to the voters. She said some of these have other potential funding sources included, but it is unknown whether they will come in or not. She asked how those questions would play into it if they want to put those on the bond proposal.

Ms. Germain responded that regarding additional funding sources, a great example is the HVAC, as they have received the Renew America's Schools Grant through the Alaska Municipal League. She stated that they are currently only funded in the first phase, which is the audit, and there is no guarantee of the construction phase. She added that their HVAC system is in need of tremendous help in the ability to control and maintain, and the computers are outdated and not very energy efficient. She explained that the JDHS boiler experienced a catastrophic failure, which caused them to patch and replace a section and both boilers through their deferred maintenance funds.

Chair Woll stated that a bond proposal would likely include both specific and broad elements, allowing flexibility if funding is found for certain items (e.g., roofs, HVAC, safety/security) after voter approval. She requested clarification on this approach.

Director Koch agreed with trying to have that balance of communicating to the voting public with some specificity about what the funds would be used for but not totally putting themselves into a corner.

Mayor Weldon asked how much money is in the Capital Improvement Fund.

Ms. Rynne responded that the Deferred Maintenance Fund is currently funded at \$3.5 million, but they have allocated all but a little over a million of that, with the addition of replacing both boilers at JDHS, which obligated \$1.5 million of that. She noted the school district is spending it well.

Mayor Weldon voiced that in looking at the chart, it shows that the boiler room renovation is set for FY27. She asked if it had already been spent or was allocated to be spent.

Ms. Rynne answered that the CIP request was put together before the boiler failed at JDHS, which was the newer one of the two, so they decided it was prudent to replace both at the same time so they are never reliant on just one. She said total renovation for the boiler room at JDHS is estimated at \$3.5 million, so they can revise the total dollar amount in the out-year request to reflect the balance of work needed to be done.

Mr. Kelly appreciated all the options being provided to them and the helpful responses they have gotten from the school district and CBJ staff. He was interested in hearing from the school board members at the table about which of these they see as a priority or what their thoughts are on the matter.

Ms. Cioni-Haywood expressed that it is hard to prioritize roof over HVAC over safety, because they have a number of issues that are concerning for parents. She was happy they had the audit done through the insurance company to provide more information on how to move forward. She said in her opinion that a roof is always important, as it protects the rest of the structure, but having adequate heating and the catastrophic failures of boilers are things that also have to be fixed, so it is a hard question to answer.

Ms. Sorensen stated that when talking about the HVAC systems being outdated, it is important to understand that the maintenance department is shopping on eBay to replace technology because it is so outdated. She agreed that roofs are important, but heat is a really big deal. She noted that they learned during the pandemic that air circulation and air filtration is important, but it is also important to be able to have the capacity to monitor their building and have the ability for first responders to be able to access our security systems and have the building be able to monitor its security systems without having to switch between different programs and have all cameras working. She said they are all important.

Mayor Weldon pointed out that the paperwork shows they are only proposing one bond package for \$5 million for the roofs, but she does not see anywhere the \$10 million or \$15 million ideas. She requested to see more concise packages of what they are looking for.

Chair Woll responded that it was the charge of this committee to come up with those numbers, so if they need more information from staff they can ask for it. However, there is a summary in the packet of what was identified by staff as potential needs.

Director Koch agreed this is scalable and both EPW and the school district were looking for guidance on what level of bond package they would like for them to present.

Mayor Weldon said that in the packet where it shows the Capital Improvement Plan 6-year priorities, some of it seems to be funded and some does not, and that is confusing. She added she is also confused on what they are asking for.

Mr. Hauser responded that the deferred maintenance is funded, but the other items are not funded. He explained that they did receive the Renew America's Schools Grant for the HVAC systems, but there is a required 25% match, and those funds are not yet guaranteed. He said that looking at the bond as an option, they would be able to provide that certainty if it went before the voters and it was voted to be approved if they were able to put together a \$5, \$10, or \$15 million bond. He shared that they are trying to identify the highest priority items, and roofs, HVAC, and safety and security items are at the top, and they believe they could get a bond to address that and still be able to have items to move up into the priority list if it passed once they get guaranteed funding.

Chair Woll added that if they don't fund these things by bond, they will be on the CIP in the future and maybe in the Assembly's CIP, but it is just a list until the Assembly passes a budget.

Mayor Weldon highlighted that on the deferred maintenance planning list there are no dollar signs other than the top two. She asked if that meant they are just want the top two. She voiced that is not how a bond works, that they do not make it so big that it could be used for anything. She said she is still struggling with what they are trying to get to.

Chair Woll responded that she does not believe the school has approached them with an ask for this, but it is a depiction of what staff has come up with based on the guidance we gave them to.

Mayor Weldon expressed that explanation was helpful.

Chair Woll shared that she was feeling more confident with potential directions now but she does not know where anyone else is on this. She asked if anyone has an idea on how they would like this conversation to move forward.

Mayor Weldon stated that it seems they have a \$5 million bond already out there, so she recommended the next step is to try to identify things to go into a \$10 million bond and then to a \$15 million bond.

Mr. Steininger commented that the roof list is very well laid out, and would like to see that for HVAC and safety and security. He asked that they rank all three of those so they could drop down to \$5, \$10, or \$15 million for those.

Chair Woll stated that she is hearing from school board members that they put a package together that includes all that is preferable, so that may be the right way to go.

Mr. Kelly asked if they thought there would be enough time to refer this back to the School Board Facilities Committee and have them come back with those proposals.

Chair Woll responded that she thinks they can bring this to the Assembly based on this conversation.

Ms. Sorensen appreciated the suggestion that they flush out roofs, HVAC, and safety and security more completely and get it back to them and run it past the Board so they are all sure of what everyone is asking for specifically and give a best guess on how much it will cost.

Chair Woll stated they will send it back over to the school board for more discussion and then bring it to the Full Assembly, as she does not see a need for this committee to get together again on it.

Mayor Weldon suggested the \$10 million would be the roofs, the two boilers for HVAC, and security system, and then they could come up with something for \$15 million.

Chair Woll asked staff what direction they are looking for that the committee has not given.

Mr. Hauser responded that he thinks they have a good, clear expectation of what they need to put together to bring before the Assembly to move forward.

G. NEXT MEETING DATE

4. TBD

H. ADJOURNMENT

ADA accommodations available upon request: Please contact the Clerk's office 36 hours prior to any meeting so arrangements can be made for closed captioning or sign language interpreter services depending on the meeting format. The Clerk's office telephone number is 586-5278, e-mail: city.clerk@juneau.gov.