

**Minutes of the Finance and Facilities Committee Meeting of
Hawthorn Community Consolidated District #73, Lake County, Illinois
841 West End Ct, Vernon Hills, IL 60061
12:00pm on the 8th day of September 2026**

Board Members Present: George Fievet, Board Member and Stephanie Peters, Board Member

Board Members Absent: n/a

Guests: Annie Egler and VP Trinh

Others Present: Jennifer Akin, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Business Operations; Jennifer Ezop, Executive Assistant; Kevin Kolcz, Executive Director of Technology; Mike Labbe, Director of Facilities

1.1 Call to Order: 12:01 p.m.

1.2 Roll Call: George Fievet and Stephanie Peters in attendance.

1.3 Public Comment: None.

Discussion Items

2.1 FY28 Summer Projects

Annie Egler and VP Trinh presented drawings for the Aspen Library refresh, with construction anticipated to begin in June 2027. Two renderings were presented to Committee members showing potential layouts and options for consideration. Aspen staff will provide input on the use of the space, with sightlines and overall functionality considered as plans are finalized. The project budget is \$1.5 million.

Jennifer Akin reported that the Elementary North playground and Middle South flooring projects are also planned for summer 2027. The projects are anticipated to utilize government contract pricing, with a current estimated total of \$1 million. A hard quote could be approximately 15% higher than the current estimate. Final costs will be brought back to the Committee for review.

2.2 CFST Communication Review

Mrs. Akin provided an update on the County Facilities Sales Tax (CFST), which will appear on the upcoming November 2026 ballot. The Committee discussed the importance of providing families with factual information and education regarding the measure. Information will be included in the parent newsletter along with a link to the county website for additional details. Committee members noted the importance of educating the community and communicating that the funding would provide additional funding without increasing community property taxes.

2.3 Five Year Facility Plan

Mrs. Akin noted that no projects have been added to the 2031 column at this time. The District is maintaining a four-year projection, and future projects may be impacted by the results of the upcoming 10-year Life Safety audit.

2.4 SMPG Grant Plan Discussion

The Committee discussed plans for the School Maintenance Project Grant (SMPG), which will open on September 28. The District plans to apply for the maximum \$50,000 grant award to support the approximately \$500,000 second-floor flooring project at Middle South. Although the grant requires a dollar-for-dollar local match, the total project cost significantly exceeds the required match; therefore, the District would be responsible for funding the remaining approximately \$450,000. The proposed grant application will be presented to the Board of Education for discussion in September, with approval anticipated in October.

2.5 Transportation Update

Mrs. Akin reported on anticipated transportation delays related to the Route 45 railroad closure. Mr. Fievet will include this information in his committee report at the next Board meeting. The District will work with First Student to make necessary route and schedule adjustments.

Transportation to and from the Sullivan Center for PALS students continues to present the greatest challenge. Mrs. Akin is working on a shuttle solution to improve transportation for these students.

Mrs. Akin reported that transportation-related behavior concerns have been minimal, with only a few write-ups received so far this school year.

2.6 Food Service Update

Mrs. Akin informed the Committee that four lunch entrée choices are now offered daily and noted an increase in meal participation this school year. The Snack Pack option provides students with the opportunity to purchase an additional meal during lunch to eat after school before practices or other extracurricular activities. A K-5 Parent/Student Food Advisory Committee meeting is planned for the end of September to gather feedback on the food service program.

2.7 Grant Funding Update

The Committee received a positive update on the District's grants and preliminary audit results, noting that the District has done a good job utilizing available funding opportunities. It was reported that the Title III ISEP grant is sunseting, with additional funding being directed toward LIPLEP to support multilingual and bilingual learners.

2.8 Operational Technology Update

Kevin Kolcz discussed the PowerSchool optimization and the preparation is underway by Kevin and Liz for the upcoming data services transition to iCloud. The Technology Department has received positive feedback regarding the learning systems and support currently in place for teachers and staff. The department continues to experience a high volume of support tickets.

The Technology webpage will be updated to reflect current information and resources. The department currently has one full-time vacancy. Wayne has transitioned to the Technology Department, bringing an AV specialty to the team. He will also assist with technology support tickets and serve as a backup for Apple TV support.

Technology staff will be assigned to specific buildings to provide more consistent support. Middle schools will have dedicated full-day coverage, while elementary schools will share staff with half-day coverage at each building.

Action Items

3.1 Approval of Site and Facilities Minutes - May 12, 2026 Motion to approve Stephanie Peters and seconded by George Fievet

3.2 Approval of Finance and Facilities Minutes - August 4, 2026 Mr. Fievet made a motion to approve the August 4, 2026 Finance and Facilities Committee meeting minutes. Mrs. Peters abstained, as she was not in attendance at the August 4 meeting.

Future Meeting Topics

With no further items to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 12:57p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Ezop

Jennifer Akin, Asst Superintendent
of Finance and Business Operations

George Fievet, Board Member

Date Minutes Approved:_____