

| When | Where | Who |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Monday, Nov. 18 | | |
| 7 p.m. | LHS (cafeteria) | Anyone |
| 5:30 p.m. | McDermott (gym) | Anyone |
| Tuesday, Nov. 19 | | |
| 5:30 p.m. | Depot | Liberal Young Professionals |
| 12:20 p.m. | Senior Citizens Center | Seniors |
| 7 p.m. | LHS (commons) | Anyone |
| 7 p.m. | MacArthur (gym) | Parents |
| Wednesday, Nov. 20 | | |
| 7 a.m. | Depot | Anyone |
| Noon | American Title | SW Realtor's Board |
| 12:30 p.m. | Depot | Chamber members |
| 7 p.m. | Billy's BBQ | Anyone |
| Thursday, Nov. 21 | | |
| 8 a.m. | Depot | Anyone |
| Noon | Depot | Anyone |
| 5:30 p.m. | Cottonwood (commons) | Anyone |
| 5:30 p.m. | Southdown (gym) | Anyone |
| 7:30 p.m. | Salty Dog | Beta Sigma Phi |
| Friday, Nov. 22 | | |
| 9 a.m. | Emmanuel Baptist Church | MOPS |

School district announces 16 community meetings

By RACHEL COLEMAN

• Leader & Times

Although the first round of community meetings about potential school improvements and a bond issue often turned prickly rather than congenial, USD 480 board members described the process as a success. They're so pleased with the results, they are ready for Round Two.

"It seemed to me, we were getting good, important feedback," said board president Delvin Kinser at the Monday meeting.

Superintendent of schools Paul Larkin agreed, noting that “it’s especially good to hear some of the negative thoughts,” because the point of the community meetings is to gain a better sense of what the public thinks and feels.

With help from the architecture firm DLR, the district will host a second series of meetings in just 10 days, with 16 presentations and listening sessions planned for Nov. 18-22. Since the point of the meetings is to hear from a wide variety of community members, the venues span a broad spectrum: meetings will occur at school facilities like Liberal High School cafeteria and McDermott and MacArthur Elementary School gymnasiums, Rock Island Depot, the Senior Citizens Center, restaurants, and a church.

In its first round of meetings, the district focused on daytime meeting places, including coffee shops and civic groups in various locations around town. This time, the planners made an effort to include several evening locations to accommodate the schedules of shift workers and those unable to attend during normal business hours. Planners also homed in on ways to involve younger adults and parents of preschoolers, since those groups are most likely to benefit from expansion in the district. The Liberal Young Professionals group, an offshoot of the Chamber of Commerce, will host a meeting, as will the Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS) group.

This next series of meetings, noted Larkin, “is a really important one, and it starts off with the VISION team meeting on Nov. 18 at noon, at the Rock Island Depot.”

The VISION team, comprised of about 40 laypeople in the community, has met for nearly a year to brainstorm ideas about school and facility needs. Primarily made up of volunteers rather than district employees, it seeks to craft a proposal that taxpayers will approve.

At last month’s community meetings, DLR and district representatives continued to invite people to participate in the VISION meetings, which take a more direct approach in forming the potential bond issue details. For more information about the upcoming meetings, and potential projects, check out the district’s web page at www.usd480.net, or contact director of auxiliary services Robert Burkey at 604-1010.

Public input wanted

Friday, 08 November 2013 11:21
