

Board votes for split shifts, another bond issue attempt

4/10/75

Adoption of a new procedural policy last night (Wednesday) helped the Grinnell-Newburg Board of Education complete in less than two hours a meeting which could have taken all night.

Tempers were cool and bickering was held to a minimum as the board calmly resigned itself to split shifting for at least part of next school year, and voted, 4-1, to support Superintendent Mike Slusher's suggestion to hold a two-part bond issue on the junior high as quickly as possible.

Smooth Operation

The meeting was the first conducted under the new rules of conduct for citizens, which were adopted during the last meeting, and it ran smoothly. Contributing to the smoothness, though, was a set of rules for operation of a board meeting drawn up by Slusher and adopted in a slightly modified version by the board. The new guides for conduct limit the time for speakers, both from the board and from the audience; provide that the board president must relinquish the gavel to either speak or to make a motion; and define many minor procedural moves never before set forth in school board policy.

Supt. Slusher started the meeting rolling with a series of

comments on the junior high school building, terming it "not acceptable," and noting that all buildings eventually become obsolete. He suggested a two-part bond issue, however, to determine the feelings of the G-N citizens on the structure. Included in that bond issue would be two "yes-no" questions: 1) Should the G-N district vote bonds not to exceed \$250,000 to bring the junior high up to the fire marshal's standards? and 2) Should the G-N district vote bonds not to exceed \$1.5 million for renovation and remodeling of the junior high?

New Structure?

Questioned on why the opportunity to vote for a new junior high did not appear in his suggested bond vote, Slusher commented that people favoring a new structure had been given two chances to vote recently, but also noted that, on an attorney's opinion, he had decided not to include anything of that nature. The possibility exists, he said, of approving items requiring contradictory action.

His proposal, Slusher said, did not address two important questions: split shifting and use of money from the general fund to bring the junior high up to the fire marshal's standards.

Split shifting, said the top G-

N administrator, is inevitable for at least all of the secondary school students next year. Even if the money were available instantly to conform to state fire codes, the work could not be finished in time for the beginning of the next school year.

As to using general fund money for the fire code renovation, Slusher noted that despite two recent visits to the state comptroller's office by citizens groups—one including the superintendent himself—rumors continue to float around within the district that \$250,000 is available from the general fund. "I challenge that statement," said the administrator.

Split Shifts

Slusher then moved to an area he termed "unfortunate." The board, he said, should move to terminate all supplemental salary increments, because in a split shifting plan there may not be time for athletics or other school activities. Voting the contract terminations would not blemish the name of the teachers involved, he said, and all contracts would be reawarded as soon as possible after the end of split shifting, or when it became apparent that the activity could be held despite split shifting. Board