

Civic Center use agreement tops school board agenda

Written by By FAITH HUFFMAN, News-Telegram News Editor
Saturday, 07 June 2014 09:32

Sulphur Springs school board will hold their regular June meeting an hour later than normal Monday in order to give county commissioners ample time to conclude their afternoon meeting, then sit in on the school board meeting.

Hopkins County Commissioners Court's agenda for the 4 p.m. meeting Monday, June 9, at the courthouse includes consideration of a contract between the county and school regarding Hopkins County Regional Civic Center Auditorium. The commissioners' decision will then be reported to the school district, with commissioners slated to attend the 7 p.m. Sulphur Springs Independent School District Board of Trustees meeting as a "work session."

The school board then during the 7 p.m. meeting will then discuss and consider taking action on the "Agreement for the Joint Use of Facilities Between Sulphur Springs Independent School District and Hopkins County, and attendant Real Property Lease concerning Civic Center Auditorium."

Trustees and commissioners met May 23 in a joint-work session to discuss the potential agreement, which would see SSISD pouring at least \$2 million into auditorium repairs in exchange for a 25-year lease agreement which, aside from 15 agree upon days allotted to both entities, would make the district responsible for upkeep and scheduling of the facility during those years.

A few years ago, both entities gathered to discuss the possibility of Sulphur Springs Independent School District purchasing the auditorium from Hopkins County, but those talks stalled — not in small part due to a lack of consensus on what "common areas" would be.

The issue was raised again recently, with attorneys for both SSISD and the county working earnestly since at least December to formulate a document for the new proposal not for ownership but a long-term lease-use agreement. Discussions have gone back and forth between county and school officials and their respective attorneys.

Since the May 23 work session, attorneys were tasked with drafting a contract for the auditorium based on agreed upon terms discussed during the meeting. School and county

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officials this week then were to review the document, report any changes or issues to the attorneys to be amended.

SSISD school board, in other business Monday, will hear reports from Assistant Superintendent Randy Reed regarding credit by exam testing dates and the 45-day contract release date.

Assistant Superintendent Betty Lawson will report on summer activities throughout SSISD.

Other items on the agenda being presented for board approval include:

- Contract agreements for 2014-15 school year with Region VIII Education Service Center;
- Regional Day School Program for the deaf shared services with Greenville Independent School District;
- Budget Amendments for March-May 2014;
- Revision to local board policy DEC(Local).

During executive session, the board will consider professional personnel contracts; other personnel items; and any real property issues presented for board consideration. The board will then reconvene in open session for any decisions regarding topics from the closed session.