

Why is this referendum being run through the Village instead of the School District?

There are two reasons for this. First, due to the State's school funding formula, it would cost the taxpayers 41% more if the School District ran this referendum instead of the Village. For every \$1 of project cost, it would cost \$1.41 if run through the School District. So, an \$8 million Community Auditorium would cost \$11 million if the School District ran the referendum. That savings of \$3 million approaches the cost of replacing the Community Center.

Secondly, these are community facilities used by the entire community, not just the School District. The current Pool is used 60% of the time by Village programs and 40% by School District programs. Likewise, 60% of Auditorium spectators are community members and not students or school staff.

Why consider these improvements now?

A replacement Pool and Auditorium were included in a failed 1992 school referendum and were considered, then removed, from a successful 1999 school referendum. At those times, the community's message was to not ask for so much at one time. They wanted the referendums to be broken down into smaller pieces by asking for a Pool and Auditorium at a later time. The school district considered asking for a replacement Pool and Auditorium in the 2008-2011 timeframe but the economy was in poor shape so they put things on hold.

The passing of all this time has forced us to extend the life of these aging facilities. However, maintenance is becoming difficult and costly. Decisions must be made whether to continue investing in these aging facilities and what the return on those investments will be. Eventually, the current facilities could face abandonment.

Currently we appear to be experiencing a recovering economy yet interest rates and construction costs remain near historic lows. So, the Village Board and School Board feel now is a good time for this referendum.

How will these replacement facilities impact my home and property value?

Community facilities and services help maintain the Village as a desirable location to live. This in turn can help stabilize and increase property values.

Since the referendum's being run through the Village, will Village residents benefit from discounted rates to use the facilities?

Yes, and that is how the current rate/fee structure works. Village of Ashwaubenon residents, regardless of which school district they live in or attend, qualify for resident rates which are less than non-resident rates. For example, a family living in the Village but attending West DePere Schools - either because they live in the West DePere School District or attend West DePere Schools through Open Enrolment - qualifies for resident rates. Furthermore, children in that family can be members of the Village's co-sponsored organizations such as the Ashwaubenon Swim Club.

Why not renovate instead of building new?

Current facilities require major renovations that make remodeling difficult and costly without fully addressing community needs in terms of size and amenities.

What is the construction timeframe if these facilities are approved?

Construction of any of the replacement facilities would be completed in about 2 years which would be April of 2016. This time span includes 8 months of detail design specifications and review, a couple months for the construction bidding process, and approximately 12 months for the actual construction.

How much are the current facilities used?

The Community Center has over 17,000 users per year and 429 room reservations in 2013. These reservations were a combination of meetings by community groups, rentals by Ashwaubenon residents and organizations serving the Ashwaubenon area, and Park, Recreation and Forestry Department programs. There were numerous other requests for use, but the current facility's size and dated condition turned people away.

The current Pool is used 60% of the time by Village programs. That includes over 1,000 registrations for swim lessons annually. Each year more than 300 individual classes offered are offered, resulting in over 4,000 hours of instruction. The other 40% of Pool use is attributed to the School district's competitive swim teams and physical education classes.

The current Auditorium has over 52,000 user visits per year. This is broken down into 32,000 performer, practice and meeting user visits plus 20,000 spectator visits. More than 60% of the spectators (12,000 per year) are non-school community members (i.e. not students or school staff). There are over 200 annual events the auditorium is reserved for. This includes musicals, concerts, plays, exhibitions, dance recitals, guest lectures, award ceremonies and large group meetings.

What will happen with the current facilities?

The existing Community Center will remain in operation while construction of its replacement takes place. This means we won't be without a community center. Once the new facility is complete, the old one will be torn down and its area used as a patio for the new facility.

With the construction of a replacement Pool, the old pool area in Ashwaubenon High School allows us to possibly relocate the District Office within AHS. In addition to proceeds from the sale of the District Office, the School District would save money on utilities, maintenance and other items servicing the current building. Plus, the District Office property would be back on the tax rolls. The timing and sale of the current District Office building will be dependent on favorable market conditions.

The old Auditorium will remain and be used as a lecture hall, meeting room, etc. Because the current Auditorium is used so much, more than any classroom at AHS, eliminating it when a new Auditorium is constructed would transfer the current scheduling conflicts to the new facility. Keeping the current Auditorium relieves those scheduling conflicts.

Why not combine all three facilities into one large shared facility?

We talked to other communities that built single, shared, multi-purpose facilities. Afterwards they soon realized many uses don't mix well such as a major youth swimming event and a theatrical production. So, the fact the facility was able to share common areas such as a lobby, restrooms and concessions was outweighed by the constraints of not being able to use the facility for certain events at the same time.

The size of a combined facility limits the number of possible locations. In addition, parking demands when three events are taking place in a single facility could be an issue.

What is the reason for the optional warm water activity pool?

The Village receives many complaints regarding the cool temperature of the pool for senior water activities, youth swimming lessons and other pool activities where the participants are not doing an intense workout. Competitive swimmers and those doing intense workouts desire the pool water to be cooler so a compromise in temperature is made.

A separate warm water activity pool also increases the availability of pool time for very popular swim lessons, water aerobics and other recreational programming.

How large of a group could the replacement Community Center accommodate and is there room to house the Ashwaubenon Historical Society?

The existing Community Center can accommodate up to 150 people in the main (fireplace) room and 60 people in the back (garage door) room. The proposed design of the new center allows up to 250-300 in the large group multi-purpose room. The auxiliary rooms would be able to accommodate 45-80 patrons each, depending on the activity.

The replacement Community Center is designed so an addition could be made to house the Historical Society.

Why would the replacement Auditorium only have 700 seats when the AHS student body is over 1,000 students?

Best practices for construction of auditoriums or performing arts facilities used in tandem with schools suggest a 1:2 seat to student ratio. This ratio matches recent auditorium projects at other area school districts. 700 seats would accommodate two classes or grade-levels at AHS. The AHS Fieldhouse or Auxiliary Gym are used for events involving the entire student body.

700 seats is also enough for large band and choir concerts which currently have to be broken into separate events/nights or held at outside venues such as the Weidner Center or Meyer Theatre.

How will the operations - utilities, cleaning, maintenance - of the replacement facilities be paid for?

Facility operational costs will be funded through the School District's and Village's annual operational budget as they are now. Some additional costs due to these facilities being larger may be partially offset by maintenance and energy savings since the new facilities will have newer, more efficient equipment. Some of the revenues generated by the replacement facilities could also help offset operational costs.

How can I learn more about the referendum?

Community Information Meetings have been scheduled as follows:

- Monday, March 3rd, 6:00 pm in the Community Center at Klipstine Park, 936 Anderson Drive
- Tuesday, March 11th, 6:00 pm in the AHS Auditorium at 2391 S. Ridge Road
- Wednesday, March 19th, 6:00 pm in the AHS Auditorium at 2391 S. Ridge Road

All the information the Village and School District have distributed throughout the community and presented at Community Information Meetings is posted on the Village's website at www.ashwaubenon.com/projects.