

NEWS

D86 referendum will be \$130 million

Board rejects raising amount of proposal, finding money for bigger pool at Central

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Despite pleas from audience members and one board member, the Hinsdale High School District 86 referendum in April will not include a larger eight-lane, 40-yard pool at Hinsdale Central.

Following the failure of the \$166 million referendum Nov. 6, the board voted Dec. 17 to put a \$130 million referendum on the April 2 ballot. They knew they would have one more board meeting at which to discuss the proposal before the filing deadline Jan. 14.

The board decided 6-1 Monday to keep the referendum at \$129.9 million and stick with its revised plan to rebuild the six-lane, 25-yard pool in its current location. The last ballot measure had earmarked \$24 million to build a 10-lane, 40-yard pool at Central and \$15 million to build a

six-lane, 40 yard pool at South.

Keith Chval, who cast the dissenting vote, implored his colleagues to reconsider building the bigger Central pool, saying the six-lane pool will be out of date the day it opens.

"No other school is building 6-by-25 pools anywhere," Chval said, citing a list he distributed of 20 other schools that have redone their pools since 2006. "Not a single one has put in a 6-by-25. It makes no sense whatsoever."

The \$11 million cost to rebuild the pool, he argued, will ensure it stays in its current location for the next 60 years.

"We will never be able to enlarge the pool. We will never move it again. This is our only chance to do this right," Chval said.

The other board members were not persuaded.

"Irrespective of just the spend, there is a political reality in our

district that unequal spending on the pools alone is enough to tank a referendum," board member Bo Blackburn said. "I would love to have the best situation for Hinsdale swimmers, but I know I have to have Hinsdale swim in some capacity included.

"I can't sacrifice the other \$100 million of spend on just the pools," he added.

Kevin Camden said while he thinks \$166 million is the right amount, the board has to reduce the cost or face accusations of being tone deaf to the community's desires.

"The board has to make a decision about what can get passed and what can't," Camden said.

He also did not support Chval's suggestion to explore the project list at Central to find a way to fit the larger pool in the \$130 million total.

"We would have to abrogate a number of other things that I consid-

er fundamental educational needs, like classrooms and additional spaces in order to get to the 8-by-40 because we wouldn't do the spend in those areas," Camden said.

Nancy Pollak reiterated her support for the full list of improvements identified in the master facilities plan, which has been whittled down by almost \$100 million, but recognized the need to be more realistic.

"The measure I wanted is the \$225 million referendum and then the \$188 (million) and the \$166 (million) and we're at \$130 (million)," Pollak said. "I agree with (what) my fellow board have said, and it's about compromise and what you can live with and can you live with that."

The board Wednesday scheduled a special meeting for 8 a.m. Saturday to tweak the wording of the question and change the amount to exactly match the list of projects. See Page 6 for details.

Scoring some soccer skills



Eleni Gatzulis of Hinsdale works on a scissor move and Abby Anderson practices her juggling skills during the 5-Star Winter Soccer Camp at Hinsdale

Central Jan. 3. Coach Mike Wiggins offers some pointers to participants of the three-day camp. (photos by Steve Johnston for The Hinsdalean)