

Board approves Stokes to draft purchase agreement on Snyder property

By Jessica Garcia
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The Carson City School Board on Tuesday gave its approval for Superintendent Richard Stokes to draw up the purchase agreement on the 1600 Snyder Ave., church property in the amount of \$5.67 million.

Tuesday's presentation from Stokes summed up five months of discussions on the former Capital Christian facilities. Opportunities, Stokes has expressed frequently, have been limited elsewhere in the city to purchase vacant land and build a new school from scratch. The 1600 Snyder Ave., campus

is one of the few available properties in the city that would accommodate a larger school population.

The property sits on 10.2 acres of land and features five buildings totaling 41,000 square feet. Stokes and district personnel have said they would make tenant improvements, transforming the site into a school and open the former sanctuary as a community performing arts center. It would be available to the public with its audiovisual equipment, staging areas and seating.

While the advantages have been appealing, the district's 90-day feasibility study — which began Aug. 15 to give the district time

to assess health risks, structural integrity and other environmental considerations — has been winding down. Stokes said as of Tuesday the district had not received its appraisal and environmental study results prior to the school board meeting.

In his report to the board, however, he said the land once was considered part of a landfill and potentially contained hazardous materials. In its due diligence, the district would seek to reach out to a local company that conducts core sampling with the soil to make sure the property has been returned to a healthy condition.

Stokes also elaborated

on a conversation he had with a general contractor and former school board member who had helped to excavate underneath the church's existing sanctuary and shared his efforts to ensure the buildings were established on solid ground. Stokes added that he hoped the environmental study will provide similar results and show there are no uneven shifts in the structures or interior walls.

It was confirmed as of Thursday that the results of the environmental study did come in this week, but staff need more time to figure out what they mean, district spokesman Dan Davis said.

The appraisal will be an

important factor in the district's consideration about purchasing the Snyder property.

"We are still within all the timelines," Stokes said. "It would appear we are moving ahead in a good way."

Trustees asked about the condition of the facility's heating and air condition systems, which are likely to continue working for another five to seven years without a guarantee of mechanical failure, Stokes said. The system wasn't built to run continuously eight to 10 hours day in a school or commercial setting and would need to be brought up to service.

Stokes reviewed the entire process in which the district has pursued the property to date. The board entered into a non-binding letter of intent with the seller in June to purchase the property and provided a

\$50,000 deposit in earnest money toward the \$5.67 million purchase price. Stokes outlined subsequent steps since then, including meeting with a citizens committee in September and touring the property to collect public feedback.

Stokes reminded the board to consider the purchase from a higher assessment.

"We know the community is growing," he said. "We know the school district has limited opportunities for property, and as enrollment grows over time, we need to ask ourselves how prepared is the school district to meet some of those enrollment challenges?"

Trustees gave Stokes approval to move forward on the agreement in a 4-2 vote, with board members Richard Varner and Mike Walker objecting and Lupe Ramirez absent from the meeting.

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