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MACCRAY West

## MACCRAY mulls advisory committee to look at building issue anew

By [Tom Cherveney](#) on Jan 28, 2014 at 11:28 a.m.

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**C**LARA CITY -- Just weeks after voters rejected a \$20 million bond proposal to build a central elementary school, MACCRAY School Board members are going back to the drawing board to develop a new approach and hopefully, heal a divided district.

Board members informally expressed support for a proposal by member Tim Smith to appoint an advisory committee to look anew at the district's building issues. Meeting in a work session in Clara City on Monday evening, board members discussed creating an advisory committee that would include appointed members from each of the three communities in the district -- Clara City, Maynard and Raymond -- along with school board



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members. The committee might also work with a new consultant in place of Energy Services Group of Wayzata, the firm that developed the original plans for the district.

The details are still to be worked out. Board members instructed interim Superintendent Loren Hacker to develop a proposal based on these ideas for their next regular meeting. They reiterated their satisfaction with the work performed by Energy Services Group, but said they would be open to working with the Lightowler Johnson and Associates firm of Fargo, N.D., which the communities of Raymond and Maynard had retained to provide an estimate for upgrading the elementary buildings in the communities.

Smith said he favors a unified elementary school, but he told board members the district has to find a way to move forward, stating: "A no vote didn't solve any of our problems."

"I don't want to fight with people," he said during the discussions. "I want to come to a solution that is best for the kids and best for the district."

Board members often made note of the divisions that have emerged in the district, evident by the vote. The voters rejected the \$20 million bond issue Jan. 7 by an overall vote of 1,067 to 733, or 59 percent to 41 percent. Voters in the original Raymond and Maynard districts rejected the measure, while those in Clara City supported it. If the measure had been approved, the elementary schools in Raymond and Maynard would have been closed. More information on the meeting and board members reaction to the vote will be in the print edition of the West Central Tribune.

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