



Grand Prairie Schools - Release

GPISD Says It Has Addressed Billing Issue Concerning Maintenance and Improvements to Home Rented by Superintendent

Grand Prairie (June 5, 2017) – The Grand Prairie ISD administration announced today it has identified an error in billing for maintenance and improvement items made to a home recently acquired as part of a land acquisition for school expansion. The home is being rented to the GPISD superintendent until the home or property it sits on can be utilized for other school related purposes.

“The home required extensive maintenance including mold remediation which was accomplished along with some additional improvements,” said GPISD Board of Trustees President Terry Brooks. “Our administrative staff determined that the total cost of the work required it be submitted for board approval. Because the work was identified in two different invoices that approval did not take place.

“The administration has met with those responsible and implemented additional training on school policies concerning this issue.”

The residential home was purchased as part of the expansion of the Garner Fine Arts Academy campus. The school’s innovative program has been embraced by students and parents, and the school’s success brings applicants from throughout North Texas.

With a growing demand for enrollment, a long-range facilities committee, made up of dozens of community members, recommended solutions including the acquisition to expand the Garner campus. A new driveway on the land will also help alleviate traffic issues.

The acquisition included a single-family home valued at approximately \$300,000. Since there would be a busy school driveway built on the property adjoining the home, the land was not available without the home. The acquisition including the price of the home and land, a total of \$699,000, was a posted agenda item. The land was acquired without the necessity or cost of eminent domain, and at a \$100,000 discount from the previous asking price.

“Because the district’s need was property to build a new driveway for the school, the decision was made to make improvements to the house and then rent the home to Superintendent Dr. Susan Hull for \$2,000 per month or \$24,000 per year,” said Brooks. “These are funds that will reimburse the district for improvements made to the home and acquisition costs. The rental comes entirely from Dr. Hull’s personal funds.

“Obtaining property to expand one of our most successful schools, helping to alleviate traffic, and generating income for the district from an asset seemed like an innovative and fiscally responsible strategy,” said Brooks. “That is why the acquisition and lease were approved by the school board in a public meeting.

“The alternative to this arrangement would be to pay the costs of securing and maintaining the home without any rental income. The home or property including any improvements will be available to the district should it be needed later for additional campus expansion or other activities.”