

A Borden-East Washington merger, is at least a possibility.

The Borden community was scheduled to meet to discuss the annexation of Borden schools with East Washington Schools Wednesday, January 31 at 6:30 at the community building in Borden, but that date conflicted with a basketball and a new date has been scheduled for February 7 at 6:30 in the Borden High School GPR Room.

According to Lisa Nale, representatives from East Washington will be there to listen and answer questions.

All Borden community members are welcome to attend.

Nale has worked at both school corporations and lived in both community. She retired as a principal in July and is the Township Trustee for Wood Township in Borden.

She said her interest is that Borden gets placed in a solid position if a split in the West Clark district happens.

Nale said there have been three meetings in Borden with community members since the West Clark Board voted November 9 for Silver Creek to split from West Clark and a number of things have been discussed.

“As one of the surviving schools, Borden is looking at our options after that happens,” Nale said.

She said as it stands, there seems to be three options; one, to remain with West Clark with Henryville; another option would be to remain by themselves or to annex with someone.

“There are lots of rules and regulations who you can annex with and who you can’t,” she said. “East Washington is a corporation that fits within those rules and regulations.”

Nale said there have been discussion with East Washington and it’s her understanding from her conversations with Superintendent Dennis Stockdale and some board members, there is an interest.

“There has been at least one meeting with West Clark’s board and East Washington’s board to discuss that,” Nale said. “I can’t say everybody, but a majority of people who have attended the meetings seem to be interested in asking more questions and exploring that further.”

Nale said she encourages the community to attend and ask questions.

When the state issues a decisions about the future of West Clark, that’s not the time to come up with options. Nale said the time to do that is now.

“We need to do our research now and figure out what’s best for our students and our community,” she said.

Nale’s understanding is that if both boards agree to the annexation, they would make specific stipulations to the annexation and send that to the state.

She said there can be a remonstrance, which is earnest presentation of reasons for opposition or grievance by the public.

“If both sides agree, the state approves it and there is no remonstrance from the public, it’s a done deal,” Nale said. “All options need to be considered and this is one that is very palatable to a lot of people, but there are still some unanswered questions.”

Stockdale wanted to make it clear that there has been limited discussion and his attendance and attendance by board members at the January 31 meeting is really just to answer questions about what East Washington School Corporation does.

“This is in the ‘just now starting discussion stage,’” Stockdale said. “There have been discussions about whether or not it’s a possibility, but there is a whole lot that will have to go into this before a decision can be made.”

As for where Henryville fits into this, Nale said it’s her understanding that in the beginning they were not onboard with being annexed with East Washington and she didn’t want to speak to where that discussion is.

Stockdale did confirm there was a meeting in early December.

“There was a meeting back in early December in Executive session to gather info about what kind of litigation would have to happen,” he said. “After that meeting, we were not interested in incorporating both Henryville and Borden into our district but left the door open for dialogue with Borden if they wanted to investigate further.”

Statement from EWSC:

The following is a Statement from Dennis Stockdale, Superintendent, East Washington School Corporation that was posted on the corporation’s facebook page Monday morning:

“I realize there has been some chatter recently about the possibility of Borden becoming part of East Washington School Corporation.

“As Borden considers all of its options for its educational future, Borden has approached EWSC about the possibility of becoming part of the East Washington district.

“At this time, Borden has asked to receive information about programs currently offered at East Washington. I, the Superintendent of EWSC, have agreed to attend an upcoming Borden community meeting on January 31st to share information about the great things happening at East Washington.

“Before ANY serious discussions would occur, East Washington would have several community based discussions on possible impacts on East Washington’s school and community. Due diligence must be taken to consider possible positive and negative impacts that would occur as a result of any decision. This is a very long process that could take several years. Any speculations of a decision at this time would be and are premature.

“Please feel welcomed to comment on this post with your thoughts and concerns. Please remember, no decision is imminent in the near future.