

Savage, Minnesota

Three names under consideration for new elementary school

By Maggie Stanwood mstanwood@swpub.com, Jan 29, 2019

Of 103 submitted names, the Prior Lake-Savage Area School Board will consider three for the new elementary school in Savage — Dan Patch, Hamilton Landing and Sand Ridge.

The board discussed the names during a study session Monday and will vote on the name on Feb. 11. Names with historical or geographical significance were given preference.

Dan Patch was a champion racing horse. In 1902, Dan Patch was sold to Marion Savage, the namesake of Savage. Board member Michael Nelson said she liked the idea of “playing up” Dan Patch and his connection to Savage.

Board member Mary Frantz, on the other hand, said the name “Dan Patch” is overused in the area. District Superintendent Teri Staloch said the naming committee had considered that but decided there wasn’t too much named after the horse — just Dan Patch Days and the Dan Patch Stadium.

Before Savage was renamed in 1904, it was called Hamilton in honor of settlers from Hamilton, Ontario, Canada. A Hamilton Landing trading post was built on the Minnesota River, according to a presentation to the school board.

“I really like Hamilton Landing more so than Dan Patch,” Board Chair Lee Shimek said. “I didn’t realize it’s where the first settlers came from. I think it represents a lot of history and a lot more people. I think it’s more representative of the beginnings of the area.”

The board members who attended the study session all fell between Dan Patch or Hamilton Landing elementary during the discussion. Sand Ridge Elementary pertains to the topography and aggregate mined in the area by Prior Lake Aggregates, according to the presentation.

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The elementary school will sit on more than 17 acres of land near the Big Sky Estates in Savage. The district purchased the land from Prior Lake Aggregates for \$60,000 per acre, more than \$1 million total. Prior Lake Aggregates will mine \$6 million worth of sand and gravel material from the site before reclaiming and filling the mining area.

In other business, the board discussed naming the fields at the elementary after former Prior Lake Aggregates owner Bill Pearson, who died in August 2017 in a boating accident in Canada. Pearson and Prior Lake Aggregates had donated literal tons of sand for protective sandbags when Prior Lake flooded in 2014.

“I personally like the idea of recognizing Mr. Pearson in the fields,” Shimek said. “He was very good for us through the whole process.”

Staloch said any of the names will lend a personality to the school, which is set to open in 2020.

“We’re really excited for the ultimate decision,” Staloch said. “It’ll be fun to start thinking about the different components we can use on where it lands.”

The elementary school was included in the \$109.3 million referendum approved by voters in November 2017, which also included the construction of a new Bridges Area Learning Center building and additions to Prior Lake High School and six other schools.

The board approved the design for the building — which will include a learning commons, learning studios, a kitchen and a gymnasium — in December.