

Central Berkshire Regional School District  
School Building Project Committee Meeting  
Wednesday January 4, 2017

A regular meeting of the Central Berkshire Regional School District School Building Needs Committee, held at Wahconah Regional High School in Dalton, MA, on Wednesday January 4, 2017 was called to order by Co-Chair Tom Callahan at 4:40

Co-Chair Callahan opened the meeting

ROLL CALL

Present: Shawn Armacost (Co-Chair), Tom Callahan (Co-Chair), Robert Archambault (Student Rep), Anna Duquette (Student Rep), John Bartels, Gary Campbell Jr., Mike Case, Wayne Cronnell, Liz Daniels, Mike Daniels, Jason Dion, Andrew Garcia, Mike Hagmaier, John McComish, Jan Paxton, Aaron Robb, Chuck Sturtevant, Shawn Therrien, Melinda Walton, Assistant Superintendent Melissa Falkowski, Superintendent Laurie Casna

Absent: Todd Emerson, Kerry Mason, Roberta McCulloch Dews, Bill Mullholland

Also Present: Recording Secretary and Members of the Audience

2. Validation of Agenda

Co-Chair Callahan validated the agenda as required by the open meeting law.

3. Response from Audience

Audience member Tony Pagliarulo commended the committee for putting meeting minutes online. He asked about the statement of interest from the first meeting and he wasn't able to locate them online. Superintendent Casna will look into that and make sure they are posted. Tony also asked about Cummington and where the district currently stands with the town of Cummington. Co-Chair Armacost responded that the town of Cummington separating from the district is stalled right now. Tony asked if Cummington exits the district how would that impact the building project going ahead. Co-Chair Armacost stated that if they exit during the building project that the burden would become that of the 6 remaining towns. Discussion continues about renovation versus rebuilding. Co-Chair Armacost reminds everyone that this particular vote is for the feasibility study only which will look at all options including renovating as well as rebuilding a new school. Tony lastly recommended that the committee look at Dalton's master plan. He stated that the master plan shows Dalton has not recovered from the depression yet and he suggests the committee reads the report before making any decisions. Co-Chair Armacost thanked Tony Pagliarulo for his views.

4. Approval of minutes from December 1, 2016 meeting

MOVED BY MEMBER STURTEVANT SECONDED BY MEMBER CASE

*To approve the minutes of the School Building Committee minutes of December 1, 2016 as printed.*

Ayes: 19 members

Nays: None.

Abstentions: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

Members Mike Daniels and Gary Campbell Jr. arrived at this time.

Superintendent Casna suggested breaking into groups. The committee broke into two working session groups at 4:50pm, and reconvened at 5:54pm.

5. Working Session: Scope of Feasibility, Proposed Budget, Informational Outreach; with report back on recommendation to full school committee

**A. Scope of Feasibility**

The group that had previously been working on the proposed budget combined with this group for this session. Superintendent Casna summarized the scope of the feasibility study. This group discussed interest in studying both renovating the building as well as a new build. Members also discussed grade configuration. The costs of the study seem to be based on population as well as grade configurations. Most members were leaning toward how much more it would cost to study 7-12 before deciding on studying that configuration. The consensus was if there was little to no cost to study 7-12<sup>th</sup> it would be worth looking into. If there is a significant cost it would probably not be worth studying that particular configuration. The committee needs to get the financial cost information from the MSBA. Co-Chair Armacost asked what would happen if we decided on 7-12 and a future administration decides not to use the building for that grade configuration purpose, then what would happen. Superintendent Casna replied that we need these questions answered before making a decision. This group will need another working session after they get some answers from the MSBA. She concluded that there is a strong preference for a 9-12 but also an interest in 7-12 because that is what most districts in the county currently have as a grade configuration.

**B. Proposed Budget for the Feasibility Study**

(Combined with Scope of Feasibility for this meeting.)

**C. Informational Outreach**

High School Principal Aaron Robb stated that this group is focusing on getting project out to public and informing them of the scope of the project and that the vote is going to be to go forward with the feasibility study. They have visited with all of the CBRSD PTO's (St. Agnes is schedule for Jan 12). The questions that the public have been asking are what the building is going to look like and what it's going to cost to complete. This committee has been focusing on helping the public understand that right now we are only deciding on having a vote to do a study.

The next tour is this Saturday, January 7. This group believes they are getting the information out to the public as planned. They are also getting a sense of questions that will be asked. They discussed future tours and worked backwards from when the feasibility study votes are going to be taken. They decided on having tours once a month. If the number of people coming to tours begins to grow they can schedule additional tours. In February they will alternate from the day tour and have a weeknight tour and in March go back to a day tour to give the public options. They are planning on involving students in the February tour. Member Case asked what the age group of the people taking the tours has been and Aaron Robb responded that it has been parents of school age children. The Facebook sight is growing in followers and it us currently up over 100 followers.

John Bartels asked this group about a getting panel discussion on Dalton TV. The group would like to have this panel on television sometime in early March. The panel would consist of several individuals with a moderator.

This group identified people in terms of roles or by name of who should be on this panel. Some of the people they would like to see on the panel are:

- John Bartels as the moderator
- One or both of the Co-Chairs of this committee
- Melissa Falkowski to discuss finances
- Aaron Robb to explain the way the building currently impacts learning
- Jason Dion to give the structural story of the building
- A Wahconah student to bring their perspective
- A parent to bring their perspective

6. Approval of Voting Method for School Building Feasibility Study

MOVED BY MEMBER CASNA SECONDED BY MEMBER CASE

*That the Wahconah Building Committee, contingent upon an affirmative vote by the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee to approve funding of the Wahconah Buildings project feasibility study, does hereby approve plans to hold town elections in each of the district's seven towns before May 1, 2017 for the purpose of approving capital funds of said project and vote in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 71 §16(n) for a "popular" vote.*

Ayes: 21 members

Nays: None.

Abstentions: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

This vote will be presented to the school committee at their meeting next week.

The next meeting will be mid- January 4:30-6:30 at Wahconah.

7. Adjourn

*Adjournment 6:25 PM*