

**Regional School District 13 Board of Education
Building Utilization Study Committee
Minutes of the Special Meeting of Monday, March 16, 2014**

The Building Utilization Study Committee of Regional School District 13 met in special session on Monday, March 16, 2015, in the Board Room at the Regional School District 13 Central Office, 135A Pickett Lane, Durham, Connecticut.

Committee members present: Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Flanagan (arrived at 6:40 p.m.), Mr. Fulton, Mr. Hicks

Board members present: Mrs. Boyle, Dr. Friedrich, Mr. Renninghoff

Administrator present: Superintendent of Schools Kathy Veronesi

Others present: Facilities Manager Jim Crouteau, David Lenihan, CASBO
Legislative Liaison

Chairman Fulton called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m. after it was determined that a quorum was present.

1. Public Comment

Chuck Stengel introduced himself and said he was interested in the topics on the agenda and wanted to be better informed.

2. Approval of Agenda

Mr. Hicks made a motion to approve the agenda. Mrs. Adams seconded the motion.

In favor of the motion: Mrs. Adams, Mr. Fulton, Mr. Hicks

Opposed to the motion: None Motion passed.

3. Approval of the minutes of February 23, 2015

Mrs. Adams made a motion to approve the minutes of February 23, 2015. Mr. Fulton seconded the motion.

In favor of the motion: Mrs. Adams, Mr. Fulton

Opposed to the motion: None

Abstained: Mr. Hicks Motion passed

4. Cost Analysis

Mr. Lenihan distributed an analysis of school buildings and explained the layout of the buildings. He further discussed the cost of items before and after the closure of Korn School. Items are reduced but there are costs associated with operating the building and using it with the town for public use. Mrs. Adams questioned if we need to do the testing that is required of the school now that it may not be used as a school. Mr. Croteau added that it will remain a public building and therefore testing will remain the same. Mr. Fulton remarked that this document is a preliminary assessment of costs involved. Mrs. Flanagan said that we should remember that with a reduction of \$1.6M does not mean that the budget will be reduced by that amount. Dr. Friedrich asked what happens to the building if we do not have a contract with another entity and the building has to be put in mothballs. Mr. Lenihan mentioned that there are costs associated with that scenario but does not have data to reflect those costs.

5. Review of Information from State

Mr. Lenihan has not been successful in contacting the State of Connecticut to obtain certain information. He mentioned that there are 11 years left on the Korn amortization that would need to be repaid to the state. There was discussion about forgiveness of obligations if the building remains open for public use. Mrs. Flanagan mentioned that alternative uses are going to be a big issue.

6. Review legal questions regarding Korn School land deed

Dr. Veronesi distributed a memorandum from Day Pitney, LLP and mentioned that our attorneys have said, "...the District does not have the power with respect to property not currently used, or reasonably expected to be used in the future, for school purposes to act as if it were a commercial landlord". The committee has had little time to review this document and it will take some time to examine the contents of that document. Mr. Lenihan remarked that we are in territory that has not yet been explored. Mrs. Flanagan asked if we might have access to school enrollments from contiguous towns. There may be a possibility of attracting students on a tuition basis.

The committee discussed what possible uses are there for an empty school building that must be used for school purposes including mothballing, selling the building to the Town of Durham or other entity. There was continued discussion regarding the transfer of the property of the Town of Durham keeping in mind the transfer that was made to Middlefield in the 80's. Mr. Hicks mentioned that there are entities that are interested in empty school buildings for educational use.

Dr. Veronesi asked if Brewster could accommodate the students from Korn School. She continued would we still run the building if no one was interested in occupying the building. Mrs. Adams asked if insurance costs are higher if a school is vacant. Mr. Lenihan said he would work on some associated costs. Mrs. Flanagan also mentioned what the transfer costs involved with other schools absorbing the Korn students. Dr. Friedrich mentioned that we need to know how much will it cost us to operate the building while we are making a decision on what to do with the building once it is empty. This should be an outcome from this part of the planning. There was continued lengthy

conversation regarding the use of the building and what to do with the building as it becomes vacant. Mr. Fulton asked if Connecticut Association of Boards of Education had any information regarding the disposition of buildings and consulting firms that might be associated with building closure. Dr. Veronesi will look into this.

7. Review school space availability

This item was accomplished throughout the other items on the agenda.

Agenda for the next meeting should include:

- Cost of transferring students and the various scenarios associated
- Cost of mothballing Korn School
- Information from CABA
- Survey of contiguous towns regarding student enrollment

The next meeting of the Utilization Committee will be Monday, April 20, 2015 at 6:30 p.m. in the Board Room.

8. Adjourn

Mr. Hicks moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:52 p.m. Mrs. Adams seconded the motion.

In favor of the motion: Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Flanagan, Mr. Fulton, Mr. Hicks

Opposed to the motion: None

Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Norm Hicks

Norman Hicks