

Utilization Committee
November 30, 2016
4:00 p.m.
Library at CRHS

Committee members present: Kerrie Flanagan, Norm Hicks, Jeremy Renninghoff, Andrew Taylor, Phil Augur, Victor Friedrich

Ex-officio member present: Bob Moore

Administrators present: Kathryn Veronesi, Ron Melnik

Guest: Dean Petrucelli

1. **Public Comment:** None.
2. **Approval of the agenda:** On a motion by Mr. Hicks and seconded by Mr. Renninghoff the agenda was approved.
3. **Approval of the minutes:** On a motion from Dr. Friedrich and seconded by Mrs. Flanagan the October 19, 2016 minutes were approved. Mr. Hicks and Dr. Taylor abstained.
4. **Silver Petrucelli & Associates Study Update:** The team began work in the summer. Looked at facility conditions during the summer and program considerations during the fall. We are currently in the second phase of the four phase process.
5. Dean Petrucelli reviewed the Facility Conditions Analysis. The team assessed the building needs on a scale of 1-4 with 1 being most immediate. Discussion of identified items.

Some of the items that have been identified need to be addressed before a renovation could happen (at the earliest two years).

Mr. Petrucelli reviewed Part 2 School Program Proposal:

Pre-K-5 Brewster (384 students)

K-5 Memorial (290 students)

6-8 Strong (376 students)

Pre-K-6 Brewster (445 students)

K-6 Memorial (341 students)

7-8 Strong (264 students)

Pre-K-5 (674 students)

6-8 Strong (376 students)

Mr. Petrucelli reviewed the reimbursement rate which is reduced because of the square footage allocation determined by the state for reimbursement. The state is not likely to give a waiver. The reimbursement rate has a trend of decreasing. 54% renovate as new, build as new 43%. Most of the items that have been identified as stand-alone do not have a reimbursement eligibility. Roofs and windows are eligible for reimbursement. The state differentiates between replacement and new; to renovate as new everything in the building must be renovated.

Some of the feedback from various focus groups was reviewed including teachers' perception of the appropriateness of existing square footage. Discussion was held regarding how to adjust space needs to maximize reimbursement.

In all scenarios presented there is a potential reduction in the reimbursement amount. There is a continual opportunity to look at program proposals. A discussion of the allowable square footage being lower for lower grades was discussed. The current year of application of the grant and 8 years forward is used to determine highest potential enrollment for determining the reimbursement ratio. Rates will be locked at the date of application immediately following a successful referendum

Ed specs are a written description of the project(s) which must be filed with an ED049 form that sets the value of the construction. There is a June deadline to submit the application. Dr. Friedrich reminded the committee that the initial desire of the committee was to keep to the May 2017 referendum date and June 2017 ED049 submission date. If we do not submit by June the process will be protracted by a year.

Each year there is escalation which is an increase in prices of goods and service and a potential decrease in reimbursement rate. Silver Petrucelli and Associates is confident that they can meet the original timeline that was proposed in June.

Mr. Moore questioned how the reimbursement rate would change if the Brewster students were moved to Memorial and the Lyman students were moved to Brewster.

Mrs. Flanagan identified the significant drop in enrollment at Strong bears discussion moving forward as the move of 6th grade to Strong is considered.

Dr. Friedrich noted that frequent and early communication with the community is essential.

Silver Petrucelli and Associates would like to begin Phase 3 of the report. Agreement of committee for them to start this phase.

Mr. Moore asked if there were significant savings for having one Pre-3 and one 4-6.

Silver Petrucelli and Associates feels that renovate as new are viable options for Brewster and Memorial while Strong may be more economical to approach differently.

Silver Petrucelli and Associates indicated that they are open to any and all suggestions and requests from the committee. Mrs. Flanagan encouraged the committee to review the document and come prepared to discuss any questions or suggestions.

6. **District Next Steps:** Utilization Committee: January 4, 2017 at 4:00 p.m. in the CRHS Library. The committee should come prepared having read the study.

Dr. Veronesi will contact Mr. Petrucelli regarding timing for talking with administrative team and school staff during the next phase of the study.

Dr. Veronesi will contact Mr. Petrucelli to schedule school visits for renovate as new buildings: morning is best for group. The entire Board will be invited.

7. **Demographic Projections Update:** Milone & MacBroom will have update by mid-December. November enrollment is 56 students higher than projected from last year's study. The highest increases are seen in kindergarten, 4th and 6th grade.

8. **Korn School Progress:** A preliminary discussion was held with the First Selectman and attorney from Durham in order to formally begin steps to have Durham make an offer to the district. Discussion was held regarding the board supporting the appointment of a few Board members working in proxy on this project. This will be discussed at the December 14, 2016 Board of Education meeting.

Mr. Renninghoff expressed a concern on behalf of Middlefield that the town of Durham not acquire the Korn building for a dollar. The town of Middlefield has not indicated an interest in the building but should be able to realize a benefit from Durham acquiring the building.

Next week the town of Durham will have a proposal to share with the representatives from the Board and the administration by next week. If there is significant information to share, a special meeting will be scheduled. The process is complex. The full Board will have to make the final decision on the proposal.

9. **District Communication Plan:** Discussion of what messages should be shared at this time. A no change option does not mean a no cost option. Community information session should be scheduled in the month of January. Consider an article in the Middletown Press and Town Times with an interview with administration and some Board of Education members. Discussion regarding the timing of sharing information from preliminary Part 1 Report. It is important that the Board reviews the plan first and have any modifications to the plan in place before it is shared publically. Mr. Moore and Dr. Veronesi will meet to create a preliminary communication timeline and messages.
10. **Public Comment:** Carl Stoup wants to be sure that meetings are publicized in order to keep the community fully informed.
11. **Adjournment:** A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Hicks and seconded by Mr. Renninghoff. The meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m. The next meeting will be held January 4, 2017.