

The Regional School District 13 Board of Education held a public hearing on Wednesday, March 25, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. in the auditorium at Coginchaug Regional High School. Board members present: Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Buckheit, Mrs. Flanagan, Dr. Friedrich, Mrs. Fronc, Mr. Fulton, Mr. Hicks, and Dr. Onofreo.

Absent: Mrs. Boyle, Mr. Renninghoff

Also present: Dr. Veronesi, Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Melnik, Business Manager

Mrs. Flanagan called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

Mrs. Flanagan led the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Hicks read the Call of the Meeting and the Return of the Call.

Dr. Veronesi welcomed the audience and thanked them for attending. Dr. Veronesi stated the purpose of the meeting was the Brewster Elementary School roof proposal. The proposal includes the roof replacement at \$1,300,000 and the installation of a solar energy panel system costing \$785,000. The roof was installed in 1990 with a 20 year life expectancy. It is now in its 25<sup>th</sup> year and has been experiencing problems over the past five years costing approximately \$7,750 per year.

Mr. Melnik thanked the audience for attending the meeting. He then gave a brief overview of the project. He provided members of the Board and the public with a copy of the slide presentation that was going to take place during the meeting.

Mr. Melnik introduced Tom Hibbard, the project architect from Hibbard & Rosa Architects. Mr. Hibbard reviewed the requirements for reimbursement required by the state building code. Mr. Hibbard also addressed the installation process and the metal roof to be installed over the gym.

Mr. Melnik introduced Erik Bartone and Gary Lane from DBS Energy. Mr. Bartone provided background information regarding his company. He gave an overview of the solar panel system stating that there would be no penetration to the roof base. Mr. Bartone also noted that renewable energy credits would be a considerable amount.

Mr. Melnik introduced Barry Bernabe, Managing Director at Phoenix Advisors, LLC. Mr. Bernabe presented the District's existing debt service and the proposed debt service noting that the District's debt is dropping off. This new debt will not impact the budget.

Donia Viola of Durham stated that the taxpayers are experiencing difficult financial times. She knows that the roof needs to be done but can we wait one more year. She stated she was surprised the District has not been putting money aside for this project. Mrs. Flanagan stated that the Board did not want to go one more year without a new roof as repairs are costing approximately \$8,000 a year on the existing roof.

Mrs. Viola asked if the District went out to bid for the architect. Mr. Melnik said everything went out to bid. She also asked if the solar panel project could wait another year.

Oanh Stephen of Durham stated that if you take 960K divided by 182 days in the school year times 2 school years divided by approximately 250 students at Brewster the cost would be \$10 per day per student split among the number of people paying taxes in Durham and Middlefield. Mrs. Stephan thanked the Board for considering a new roof.

A resident was concerned over the removal of all units and equipment from the roof. Mr. Hibbard stated that the HVAC units would not be removed for the installation. The resident also had a concern about wind affecting the solar panels. Mr. Hibbard stated that they were designed and engineered to meet the necessary requirements.

Rick Parmelee of Durham asked if there were going to be two questions on the referendum, one for approval of the roof and one for the approval of the solar panel installation. Mr. Melnik stated that there will be two separate questions. He also asked if the solar panels could hold the weight of snow and would we be removing snow from the panels. Mr. Melnik stated the panels are engineered to hold snow and the District would not be removing snow from the panels. Mr. Parmelee inquired about renewable energy credit. Dr. Onofreo addressed this matter.

Mrs. Viola spoke again asking for clarification on a date stated during the presentation by the representative from DBS Energy.

Mrs. Flanagan asked the audience if there were any more questions. The meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Maureen Johnson*