

**AUBURN SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
JULY 10, 2017 AT 6:00 P.M.
AUBURN VILLAGE MEDIA CENTER**

These minutes have been approved.

Keith Leclair, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Those in attendance were Board members, Alan Villeneuve, Maureen Murgo, Samantha Belcourt, and Janice Baker; Principal, Lori Collins; Assistant Principal, Michel O'Rourke; Special Education Director, Deena Jensen; Maintenance Director, Scott Dube; Superintendent Dr. Charles P. (Phil) Littlefield; Assistant Superintendent, Marge Polak; and Business Administrator, Karen Lessard.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Keith Leclair led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

PROOF OF POSTING

Dr. Littlefield provided proof of posting.

Keith Leclair stated that the purpose of this meeting was to allow the Board time to discuss if and how they should proceed with a renovation project, and to discuss their thoughts on the recent town management meeting.

Alan Villeneuve stated that at the last Board meeting there was discussion of speaking with the Turner Group about scaling down their proposal. Keith Leclair stated that they came back with a 12-classroom wing, removing the nine portable/modular classrooms, with no gym, no destruction of the oldest wing, no major renovations, and no renovations to safety and security. Maureen Murgo stated that she has heard two common themes. Removal of portables/modulars to allow everyone into one building, and lack of communication about the project. Considerable discussion ensued relative to communication and how to get more people involved.

Maureen Murgo asked if there was flexibility in the 12-classroom plan to allow for expansion of the nurses area, to which Keith stated that there might be a way to reconfigure existing space (nurses, administration, and guidance) with the addition of a wing. Samantha Belcourt asked the cost, and Keith said 6-8 million, though he stressed that this was a "very" approximate guess, based upon a drawing. Alan Villeneuve stated that he would like to move forward in some way. Keith asked for input from Board members from the town management meeting. Dr. Littlefield stated his concern over holding an \$8 million bond for 10 years as compared to a \$24 million for 30 years, saying they would have the same tax impact. He said a 10-year bond for a 12-classroom wing would not address issues necessary for restoring it as a good facility. He suggested the Board consider a 20-year bond and increasing the scope. Keith Leclair stated that the length of the bond was an issue to many. Discussion ensued. Four common things to address were to establish a community-based building committee, increase communication between the town and the school district, to shorten the length of the bond, and to improve communication with the public.

PUBLIC INPUT

Tom Gonyea asked if the Board has support from the Selectmen at the town management meeting. Keith Leclair stated that of the 40 attendees, three of which were Selectmen. Everyone seemed supportive of the project but there were concerns with communication, length of bond, and of the cost. Tom asked if anyone had any creative ways of financing the project. There were none. Janice Baker stated that everyone agreed that something needed to be done, but did not agree as to what should be done. She suggested phases, starting with the 12-classroom wing, then adding on combinations of possibilities to work toward.

Mickey Rolfe suggested classrooms in the gym or the cafeteria. He said communication is not an issue; everyone knows what's going on and that it's been marketed to death. He said that if the project came in around \$12 million, it would pass.

Heather Lockwood asked how tonight's meeting was communicated. Keith Leclair stated that all regular Board meetings are on a set schedule, but occasionally there is a need for additional

meetings. This meeting was put together about ten days ago and was posted in three locations, as is protocol. Ms. Lockwood asked how the Board can debunk myths and rumors regarding the project. Keith stated that the Board has held 3-4 public information nights.

Alan Villeneuve stated that he is glad to see the town governments getting together to discuss the future of the town in general. This is not just about a school project.

Heather Lockwood suggested surveys be sent out. Alan Villeneuve stated that he personally doesn't believe in surveys. He said the Board members are elected to make informed decisions on behalf of the residents. Maureen Murgo said the Board has been discussing this project for many months and held an additional meeting in May to allow for feedback from the public.

With regard to communication, Kristin Lorden suggested the Board consider email blasts, a booth at the Duck Race and having a presence at the election.

Alan Villeneuve stated the word got out. If the Board takes logical steps forward, and addresses the issues, it will pass.

Suggestions of a establishing a School Improvement Committee ensued, to try to get a larger cross-section from the community. Maureen Murgo suggested determining expectations and putting something in the Crier for interested parties to volunteer. Alan Villeneuve suggested a 12-member committee comprised of four town leaders, four residents and four school/SAU administrators.

With regard to moving forward, Keith Leclair asked for each Board member's input.

Samantha Belcourt: Add a wing of classrooms and get rid of portables/modulars.

Janice Baker: Agreed with Samantha, and to identify costs and options for near-term additional needs.

Maureen Murgo: Add classrooms and add options.

Discussion ensued relative to the septic system. Scott Dube stated that the leach field will need to be addressed.

Heather Lockwood asked if the Board considered whom they might lose from town should they decide on a complete renovation, to which Keith said that theory goes both ways. They might lose people if they did a complete renovation. Keith said they need a place to start.

Motion by Maureen Murgo, seconded by Janice Baker, to proceed with the school renovation project on a smaller scale, and the motion carried unanimously.

Keith Leclair stated that he would contact the Turner Group to develop a rough draft along with other items discussed at this meeting.

It was decided that the School Improvement Committee would be an advisory committee, which will report to the Board with its recommendations on phasing options, funding, and the development and implementation of a marketing plan. The number of residents that will be on the committee was increased from four to six. They will meet 1-2 times a month between September and March.

A charge will be drafted and an ad will be in the Village Crier looking for volunteers.

Lori Collins and Scott Dube will work on communication on the sign.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Keith Leclair, seconded by Maureen Murgo, to adjourn the meeting at 7:20 p.m., and the motion carried unanimously.

The next meeting of the Auburn School Board will be August 10, 2017 at 5:00 p.m. at the Auburn Village School Media Center.

Respectfully submitted.

Rebecca SJ McCarthy,
Recording Secretary