

Southern Berkshire Regional School District
New Marlborough Central School New Marlborough, MA
August 25, 2015
Buildings, Grounds, and Technology Sub-committee Meeting

~~**D R A F T**~~

Sub-committee members: Bonnie Silvers, Maria Rundle, Vito Valentini, Arthur Batacchi, Fran Lartigue

Others present: Bruce Turner, Dave Hastings, Jim Knight (owner of Pelletco), Karen Chamberland, Scott Jenssen, Kenn Bassler, Fred Finkle

Meeting brought to order at 5:39 pm

Ms. Lartigue moved to suspend approval of minutes until they can be located; Ms. Silvers seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Building Walk-Through and Presentation by Pelletco

The committee toured the heating facilities with Jim of Pelletco and Mr. Finkle.

It's hard to determine the life expectancy of the current boiler. There could be small cracks but there's no leaking; the blower was replaced in 2004; circulating pumps just serviced and are ready to go. A pellet boiler would extend its life; it would be over \$40k for new boiler. Pellets will need to tap into chimney, not flue. So we could still use oil boiler and will not lose energy when we turn it on every two weeks to exercise it.

The side room will be reorganized in order to put in boilers. Eight by eight foot space reserved. Pelletco can put in fire-rated wall. The boilers don't generate external heat and are relatively quiet. Pellets are augured into day bed and then individual boilers as a safety precaution to seal flame off from fuel source. Very little ash is generated. Twice a month maintenance provided by Pelletco.

The committee wants an engineer drawing from Pelletco, layout of where everything goes. The building inspector might need more. Pelletco will need landlord waiver from town of New Marlborough.

There are no upfront costs. The requested contract is for a minimum five years with option to renew. The cost goes to amortize the equipment, pay for the fuel and maintenance. They can measure how much heat they deliver to the building so they are always a year behind and use the volume of heat used in the previous year to judge how much we would be charged for the next year. Starting price comes from data of heat use in the building over the last few years. Roughly \$1600/month; level payment each month throughout the year. Mr. Turner has the pro forma contract from Pelletco.

There is a pellet mill in Wilbraham, MA where the pellets will come from. Furthest away would be Jaffrey, NH.

We currently use approximately 8,000 gallons of fuel to heat building for a year. If we went out and bought oil for the year, we would see greater savings than going with a Pelletco contract. If we can lock in lower price with oil (\$2.00/ gallon) then we'll be around \$4000 short by going with Pelletco

for the year. However, what we're paying now with oil is the cost of the fuel plus the cost of maintenance, which is included with Pelletco.

Ms. Rundle suggested that the School Committee have a conversation with the New Marlborough leadership to create transparency and cooperation. Ms. Silvers and Mr. Valentini agreed.

Plenary discussion of Monterey School repairs

Mr. Valentini stated that this committee's focus is spending capital money for short-term and long-term renovations of the Monterey School and not a discussion of the program.

Mr. Bassler objected that the building and program are so entwined that it's hard to proceed with the conversation without knowing how the building will be used in the future.

Mr. Valentini clarified with Mr. Turner that we have funds that we can commit to the Monterey School. He emphasized that we have the opportunity to work now so we should do that.

Ms. Silvers said that if we do \$10,000 in matching funds to do repairs, how do we know any parents would want to have a child in that program? Mr. Valentini redirected her to bring this conversation to a different committee.

Mr. Valentini is looking at it as a contractor who has \$20,000 to apply to a building that needs repairs. It isn't an enormous amount of money, it's a little bit of a gamble, and if the building is decrepit, it needs to be addressed.

The town of Monterey voted to put \$10,000 into the building. The SC voted to match those funds. So we have a pot of \$20,000 to invest in the future of the building, to show good faith and positive attitudes.

Mr. Valentini asked what needs to be done first: areas of deterioration that need to be addressed. Mr. Jenssen replied that the floor in the bathroom is weakened because of the problem caused by the back addition being poorly landscaped and excavation is needed behind the boiler room bump-out and to also get a foundation and drainage on the downhill side. Do the floor joist repair, a new plywood floor, and tile floor.

Monterey select board will bid out the job and organize contractors. The town and the SC need to be in agreement and cooperation on who is doing the work and for how much so there is complete transparency. Mr. Jenssen added that the five towns would do a lot better if the politics were dropped out of it and there was more trust for the BG&T committee to be allowed to do the job and make decisions. The SC has already voted in full committee to release the funds. Monterey will get the specifications and send them out to contractors for bids. It's more affordable to do small, individual, sole-proprietor contractors. At the time of the bid opening we need to make clear that overages need to be managed so we stay at \$20,000. Let's get the school get ready to receive the students and open the doors.

Mr. Valentini shared that it's smarter to make a plan over five years, like we do for Undermountain, and that this is a starting point. Mr. Jenssen said we can look at the report and make a capital plan that looks at what the next projects would be going forward.

Ms. Silvers asked if the Monterey select board members agreed with the results of the most recent report. Mr. Bassler replied that the town of Monterey is committed to the school and getting a

program in that school and are committed as select board members to finding the money to support having a school in Monterey.

The building meets code and will be available for use by the SBRSD for Fall 2016.

Mr. Valentini emphasized that we're moving forward together, it's not like the town of Monterey is doing one thing and the district is doing another. Mr. Jenssen also emphasized that we need to think of ourselves more like a district and less like individual towns.

Discussion of the possibility of establishing lease agreements for the Community Schools

Based on information from Roger Hatch and Christine Lynch at the DESE, it seems that our district should have lease agreements for buildings that are used in towns where the district doesn't own the school. This would include defined responsibilities so deferred maintenance doesn't get us into the same boat we find ourselves in with the Community Schools now.

Mr. Valentini shared that Ms. Lynch knows of no districts that use buildings without lease agreements. Mr. Hastings followed up with the district's attorney on the following questions:

- Do you know of any existing lease agreements between the district and member towns?
- Are there other examples of lease agreements with other school districts that we could look at?
- Do we have to modify the existing regional agreement to accommodate a lease?

According to the regional agreement, the district can't walk away from the school without a vote by four out of the five towns so we have no bargaining power whatsoever. The district also can't move a program into a different building without a vote by four out of the five towns.

Mr. Valentini asked the committee if we should go forward to find a path to pursue lease agreements at this time. The committee decided this was not the right time to pursue this issue. However, members will continue to gather information and thanked Mr. Hastings for following up with the attorney.

Status of Capital Projects completed or planned exclusive of Roof and Boiler project

- Main campus: replaced seven drinking fountains, some with capacity to fill water bottles. \$11,000
- Carpets changed in 6 classrooms, copy room, C6, and elementary coat room.
- Work on Varsity softball field, bleachers moved to center field, roots addressed
- Exit lights changed to LEDs \$1200
- Lower playground roots filled in (using soil dug up from boiler project excavation)
- Big pot holes and rough edges repaired, three storm drains built in the parking lot. \$10,000
- At NMC: painted the gym floor, four bathrooms painted \$5,000
- Lockers will be done during the year or Spring break
- Ordered white boards for NMC

Mr. Valentini asked Mr. Finkle for more specifics and costs for the next BG&T meeting.

NMC will be getting a regular refrigerator with a freezer on top in order to make ice. Mr. Turner said that now that we have a new Food Services Director, he should be involved in that plan. Mr. Valentini said that we will make it an agenda item for the next meeting.

There is \$50,000 in unallocated funds in Capital expenses fund. The \$10,000 to Monterey is not included in that figure. Culinary Arts room needs new counters and is requesting stainless steel. Mr.

Batacchi reminded Mr. Turner to get quality stainless steel if that's the direction they go in. It's an un-budgeted expense.

Status Report on Roof/ Boiler Project including funding stream

Project going well. They are working on the last part of the membrane for the boiler room. Roof is complete. Replaced air conditioning units: two in cafeterias, auditorium, TV studio, two over high school offices. We are up \$300,000; most of it is the replacement of the big air conditioning units. Put new compressors on the walk-in cooler and freezer that were 20+ years old.

We will have \$100,000 note left on the air conditioning bond. We will end up borrowing around \$4 million of our own money for the Roof/ Boiler project.

Roof-load increased so we needed to build superstructure to support pipes.

District Signage

This project will be passed on to Kari Giordano and Stephanie Graham. Ms. Silvers asked about the NMC School getting signs on the outer doors which indicate the primary entrance.

TacPac Capital Needs

We need to get the Artistic director, Travis Daly, involved in the conversation. Mr. Turner will follow up to determine needs. Website director needs to be re-appointed.

Report on status of marshmallow busses

There are two more years of payment left on the truck. The busses will be paid off next year. We averaged 13,000 miles over 18 months. Mr. Valentini asked if once they are paid off, do we want to sell them and buy new or keep them for a few more years. Mr. Turner suggested getting into a rotation schedule, perhaps having three busses on a three year rotation. We have one blue SPED van and a white van that doesn't get used a lot.

Mr. Batacchi asked if the district gets reimbursed for the vans or busses. Mr. Turner said there's no reimbursement or potential reimbursement but there is a system for internal transfers. Ms. Silvers advocated for adding a third marshmallow bus. Mr. Valentini reminded the committee that the busses were originally acquired in February so we should have a plan for February 2016 as to how we are going to address vehicle rotation.

Capital Use for Major Musical Instruments

Courtney English submitted through Mr. Turner a list of instruments and costs. We could encumber our capital budget for a number of years so we could do lease-to-own for these instruments. Mr. Valentini asked for information on lease-to-own options for acquiring major musical instruments.

Ms. Lartigue made a motion to adjourn; Ms. Silvers seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned 7:47 pm.