

DANVILLE SCHOOL BOARD: UNAPPROVED MINUTES
BUILDING COMMITTEE MEETING 1/11/2023

**Danville School Board
Building Committee Meeting
Wednesday, January 11, 2023, 6:00pm
Danville Cafeteria & Zoom Teleconference**
[Video Recording Available](#)

School Directors Present: Clayton Cargill, Tim Sanborn, Dave Towle, Molly Gleason

Planned Absence: Melissa Conly

School Administrators Present: Elementary Principal Sarah Welch (via Zoom), Secondary Principal Larry Fliegelman

Public: Eric Hewitt, Mary Beattie, Bruce Melendy, Rob Balivet, Alison Despathy, Lance Horne, Doug Pastula, Krissie Mantius (via Zoom), Rhiannon Esposito

Agenda

- 1. Call meeting to order:** Clayton called the meeting to order at 6:05pm
- 2. Additions/Changes to the Agenda - (Proposed additions or deletions/Possible agreement):** None
- 3. Discussion:**
 - **Committee Composition:** Clayton shared that the board had a discussion on the Building Committee at a meeting recently, specifically regarding voting, gathering community input, and inviting the Building Advisory Group members to join the newly formed committee.

There was discussion on: How to compose the committee to ensure representation from different community members, the size, structure, voting, and process for community input. All meetings are open to the public, and community members (those not part of the committee) will have an opportunity to share comments and questions during the public comment section on each agenda. There was agreement around determining a timeline and prioritizing issues at the school that need to be addressed.

The following community members at the meeting expressed interest in participating and are officially on the committee:

Bruce Melendy, Lance Horne, Doug Pastula, Kaity White, Rhiannon Esposito, Alison Despathy, Rob Balivet, Mary Beattie, Eric Hewitt.

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Administrators and staff on the committee: Secondary Principal Sarah Welch, Secondary Principal Larry Fliegelman, Facilities Director Shawn McNamara

All five school board members will participate on the committee.

MOTION: Tim moved to leave committee nominations open until the next meeting, seconded by Dave T., all in favor.

- **Purpose / Role of the Committee:** Clayton shared that the purpose of the committee is to work toward a solution to address the issues around space and the major systems needing replacement, and get price estimates for the most urgent priorities. Discussion included the following:

Clarification provided on:

- TruexCullins provided a list of priorities, and it was noted that some of this work will trigger code regulations.
- There are no safety concerns at the school at this time.
- Committee members were in agreement on identifying urgent issues and getting price estimates to fix the most pressing issues; no need for a second opinion on the \$32M make good estimate from TruexCullins.

Concerns:

- The longer we wait, the more expensive it will be.
- The make good number doesn't address the space issue.
- Danville doesn't have the tax base to support any of the options, and there needs to be consensus from the community.
- Lack of community control if high school is closed.
- Important to pursue every option and look at finances of all options.
- Look at the money being invested now and down the road.
- Many schools are having these same issues.
- There are some people who choose not to live here because there isn't high school choice.
- The operating budget is increasing taxes.
- Structural issues - another level can't be added to the existing structure due to major foundation issues.
- The air handlers (ERUs) on top of the building need to be replaced and the building can't handle the weight of the more current type.
- The building is complex and more expensive to fix due to the older buildings and renovations completed at different times

What's working well:

- Some people are drawn to Danville because of the school system

Questions:

- Are there exemptions for code regulations?

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- Will the state work with the school to come up with a plan to address code regulations?
- How will an increase in taxes impact people choosing to live here?

Ideas:

- Establish a baseline for the project and determine a ballpark figure
- Survey on school choice for high school
- Modular structures for additional space
- Flexible solutions that can adapt with the school's needs
- Consider all options and the impact on the community
- Make the case to the community
- Look at enrollment data and projections
- Strategic plan/long-term planning
- Identify a point person on the committee to field questions if someone new attends and isn't caught up
- Encourage community members to read minutes and review the website to get up to speed on the committee's work

**Possible purpose statement: The purpose of the Danville School Building Committee is to plan for the future of the school and explore building options that address 1) space needs for learning and 2) major systems that need to be repaired or replaced.*

- **Ongoing Assessments by the AOE of the Danville School Facility**

Facilities Director Shawn McNamara shared that a group from the state visited the school last Monday to assess the systems and generate a list of priorities and what needs to be replaced. Results should be available in a few months.

- **Areas of Greatest Need in the Facility**

Shawn provided a detailed overview of the most pressing needs at the school:

1. Air Handlers: 10 are currently in use, the last of which was installed in 1990, and they are all 13 or more years over life expectancy. When air filtration issues were being addressed due to Covid, New England Air came to the school and found that only cold air was coming in. Heating coils were installed, and they did some ductwork to resolve it. It's critical to have air movement in the school, and the speed and amount of air coming in can't be controlled; some won't close, and it's lower than the suggested air exchange. Parts have to be replaced on a regular basis, and Shawn can't get original parts and has to find parts that are compatible.

Proposal for replacement: All 10 should be replaced with three to tie into ductwork throughout the facility. There was a quote in 2021, and the cost of materials changes every day.

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2. Heating Controls: Need to be put in the entire facility. Propane boilers were put in during Covid, and there's a combination of heat from those and the biomass plant and it all comes through radiant heat. Half of the thermostats in the 1937 building work, some don't. Plumbers have looked at the building, and they won't shut off without draining the entire system. Heat can be adjusted according to use in most homes and buildings, and the school is unable to do that. Controls are part of new systems to remotely monitor heat. The system at the school is either on or off.
3. Electrical: Shawn stated that he is an electrician and has worked in and built schools. The electrical system hasn't been touched since 1967, and the distribution system needs to be inspected once every three years; only one out of five companies was willing to do it, but they couldn't guarantee the power would come back on so it hasn't been tested.
4. The 1990 Addition in the Gym: There are stress cracks from the floor to ceiling in the gym, mostly in the locker rooms. In 2020, he saw a crack the size of a pencil tip and can now see direct light through it. Drains have popped up through the floor. There's no retaining wall on the guardrail side which might be causing the issue.
5. Sprinklers: These need to be covered and the school's sprinklers are not but have been grandfathered. There are approximately 25 heads, all copper pipe, which wasn't used after 1980, and from then on, could only be used in mechanical spaces. Required to be tested and drained every two years. Of the 25 heads, five are solid in place and recharging puts pressure which means they could explode. It is hard to find people to fix these.
6. Lighting: Compact fluorescent bulbs have mercury, and after this month, they won't be available to homeowners due to a new law. In February 2024, fluorescent bulbs won't be available. There are only so many electricians in the state to do this work, and once these regulations are in place, they will be busy. He advised getting ahead of it and doing the work sooner rather than later.
7. Parking Lots: They should be paved, even roads that drain properly; engineering is needed for proper drainage and snow removal.

Discussion on:

- Shawn will participate in the process and help the committee with guidance moving forward for long-term planning.
- Clayton shared that Superintendent Mark Tucker is looking into federal grant funding to potentially address lighting and electrical issues. Shawn added that

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grants are available, and it can be a long process. Mark, Mike C (Finance Director) and Shawn are involved in the grant process.

- Deferred repairs at the school
- Challenges with fluctuation of number of students each year.
- Pressing needs around adequate educational space identified in the facility report still stands true.
- Getting harder to find instructional staff.

Questions:

- Is it worth putting money into the 1937 and 1957 buildings or should it go toward a new facility or addition? Can certain areas be demolished?
- What does usage look like at the school?
- Why is space an issue? Interventionists, special ed, and needing space for more students and staff. How much space is needed?
- What is our goal for population growth at the school?
- Do we need additional staff? Pre-k is full, and three-year-olds were unable to go to preschool this year. Do we need staff in addition to space to serve them?

More ideas:

- Work in phases
- Look at other schools
- Get pricing on specific areas in the make good estimate
- Create a master plan

● **Moderator / Facilitator:**

Presented the idea of a moderator or facilitator to help plan and facilitate meetings. Eric Hewitt facilitated the Building Advisory Group meetings and is willing to continue. Discussion on how a facilitator could also help with strategic planning and long-term planning.

Larry will update the committee email group with the new members.

- **Scheduling of Ongoing Meetings / Next Meeting Date:** Members agreed to hold meetings every few weeks at first as needed and then monthly. The next meeting is on Wednesday, January 25th, at 6pm, in the library.

4. Public Input - None

5. Future Agenda Items

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Structure and planning for next meeting: Discuss building options in small break-out groups, then come back together to discuss. All committee members could look into ideas they don't like to see another perspective. Before the next meeting, write down all ideas that address the issues and come prepared to discuss.

For administrators: Create a list of the top programming needs at the school, similar to what Shawn did for this meeting. Can we get a white board or chart paper? Meet in a classroom?

6. Adjourn:

MOTION: Tim moved to adjourn at 7:41pm, Molly seconded, all in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Molly Gleason, Clerk, January 13, 2023