

**Slate Valley Unified Union School District
Innovation Committee Meeting
Wednesday, August 28, 2019
Fair Haven Union High School
ARSU Conference Room
5:30 PM**

Unapproved Minutes

Attending: Julie Finnegan, Angela Charron, Casey O'Meara, Amy Munger, Tim Smith, Rick Wilson, Mark Grossarth, Mike Bache, Jason Rasco, Cheryl Scarzello, **John Hemmelgarn**, Black River Architect, Brooke Olsen-Farrell, Peter Clark, Phil Hall, Josh Burlette, Walter Ripley, Chris Cole

Call to Order: Brooke Olsen-Farrell called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Approval of Agenda: Julie Finnegan made a motion to approve the agenda, this was seconded by Angela Charron.

Approval of Minutes - August 5, 2019: Julie Finnegan made the motion to approve the minutes of August 5, 2019 with the noted corrections listed below, this was seconded by Angela Charron, and there was one abstention. The correction was Josh Burlette's name was spelled incorrectly in two places was listed as Brulette instead of Burlette, (can be found in attending list on cover page and in the second paragraph on page 2. On page 2, on 9th line down, "all buildings within the SU" should be listed as "all buildings within SV."

New Business:

- A. Presentation by Black River Design - Revised Architectural Drawings for HS/MS and Orwell: John presented the latest revisions of the H.S./M.S architectural drawings as well as the latest version of the Orwell Architectural drawings. John explained that the feedback that was received from all participants was taken into account in the latest revisions. John is looking for a recommendation from this committee to the full Board after tonight or we won't have time to put out a spring bond vote. He needs to know exactly which plan they want to move forward so he can develop real numbers. Peter Clark said it is time to hand this off to the full Board. Per Brooke we are at the point where we have to do something as the heating systems at Orwell and FHUHS may not last another winter. John reminded the committee that the drawings colors represent the following. Blue is the Central Office Area; Yellow color is HS, Red is proposed Middle School, and Orange is shared spaces for both HS and MS. John explained that with the additional parking that was requested we lost the softball field from its original spot. He pointed out however where it could be moved to. The plan for the M.S, showed 3 Teaching Pods. The three teaching pods don't all need to be used, but it would not allow for expansion later if they weren't configured into the project now. This architectural draft preserved the baseball, soccer and football fields. The design also includes space for an alternative classroom area for special education in the high school. John then presented a second version of how the addition for the middle school could be configured which extended way out to the right and encroaches on the soccer field. In this scenario The old weight room is the area planned for the Community Hall, and would also utilize the area currently known as the black box area as well. John explained that this second draft would require duplication of areas like a separate kitchen area, second cafeteria if we were not to share the spaces. There could be no integration of services. Discussion ensued about the different plans and the fact that we could only consider the HS revision and not a middle school. Plan 1, allows for integration of faculty and staff and includes all the Educational Specifications that all committee and community members requested.

John, the Architect said that the major difference in the two plans is that one requires the need to build firewalls and these are expensive.

The Orwell plan was presented. Plan 1 for Orwell recommends the addition of a Kitchen, Gym, Lobby, Changing Rooms to the left of existing Middle School community space. The Orwell plan provides for minimal changes to the existing building. The Gym is recommended to be 60 X 90 or roughly 5400 square feet.

- B. Presentation of Cost Estimates for various renovation scenarios. John presented the cost estimates as follows:

For Code and Safety upgrades only to HS (replacing heating systems and fixing only safety issues to bring HS up to code fixing handicapped accessibility issues \$8,000,000.00

Code/Safety and Infrastructure includes all of the above and repairs/replacement of Roofing issues and lighting issues \$16,000,000.00

Code/Safety/Infrastructure and Full Renovation which includes all the Educational Specifications recommended by the Innovation Committees \$28,000,000.00

To have Completely separate Middle School? Code/Safety and Infrastructure and Ed Specifications for HS \$54,000,000.00

To add the MS with Plan 1 including Code/Safety/Infrastructure all HS Renovations and all Ed Specifications for the Middle School \$58,000,000.00

*It should be noted that these figures do not address the needs of Orwell or any of the other schools in the Slate Valley. Cheryl pointed out that we would have to fix many of these other issues regardless.

Adding Orwell into the costs increases by about 2.5 million, total combined HS,MS and Orwell around roughly 60,000,000.00.

John the architect wanted all to realize that these are preliminary figures that are subject to change the longer the process takes. Currently they are based on a square footage construction cost of about \$325.00 per square foot.

Further discussion ensued about if different parts were done and not others there would be additional ways to save money. For example, if only two pods are utilized versus the three pods you could save hiring 6 additional people or an approximate savings of half a million dollars. Structurally it is not a huge savings in the building as if you go with two pods they have to be larger spaces to accommodate up to 25 kids as opposed to 3 pod which would hold about 15/16 students. Your square footage is roughly the same, just laid out differently. Peter Clark said we need to make a decision about whether or not we want to proceed with a SU wide middle school or not. Board members felt like they needed additional information to fully understand the financial implications. For example they wanted to know the cost savings if we rent CVS to Castleton University, there was discussion if we need both Benson and Orwell; are we at a point of discussing the need for all the Elementary Schools, or do we repurpose some of the existing schools. Again it was noted that the work that needs to be done at the HS just to be safe and up to code and fix the infrastructure needs would be \$16,000,000.00, or 18.5 million if we also consider the needs of Orwell and their needed construction. Cheryl will gather the figures that the Board is asking for and send them out to members before the next meeting so that they can make an informed recommendation to the full Board. Additional discussion ensued and had some wondering if we could create more educational opportunities by transporting students from one school within the Supervisory Union to another. It seems this would not be likely as students would spend over an hour a day on a bus. Virtual classrooms were discussed but have not provided great experiences for the elementary level most involved (discussion of Algebra virtual class and the resulting difficulties.) Peter mentioned that we are definitely over extended at elementary level and you can't finesse the discussion or the potentiality of closing a school. Our Articles of Agreement, are problematic. We need a backup plan to be \$28,000,000 H.S. renovation.

- C. Committee clarification of architectural revisions and cost estimates - Q and A (See above)
- D. Analysis/Discussion of Renovation Alternatives including costs and tax implications
Cheryl presented some "Quick and Dirty figures if we were to go with a 58,000,000 bond. Cheryl said that for every 10,000,000.00 bond on a \$100,00 home would increase the tax rate of .05 cents. If you multiply this for 60,000,000.00 on a \$100,000.00 home it is an increase of \$300.00. These figures do not include the savings from not operating CVS, any staff reductions by combining school for a unified middle school, or the rental income for CVS. Cheryl also mentioned that many of our voting taxpayers are income sensitive and would not be paying the amount above.
- E. Finalize recommendations to school board - e.g. proposed scope, costs and benefits. The committee made a recommendation for Peter Clark, Consultant to finish his report and to turn it over to the full Board for consideration.
- F. Review Future Steps for Completing Renovation Proposal for Bond Preparation
It is important for the full Board to understand the schedule if we are to get a vote by the beginning of March. By October 15, 2019 the Board would need to tell John the Architect which plan we are working on. The full estimates need to be ready by November to review with a decision back by December. Board must make a decision by October 14th Board Meeting.

Peter Clark noted that this meeting concluded the work of this committee and we will not need to meet again. All were thanked for the work on this committee. Next steps would go to the Building and Grounds and Finance Committees respectively.

Adjourn: Mike Bache made a motion to adjourn at 8:33 p.m., this was seconded by Julie Finnegan.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bonnie Lenihan