

Report of Subcommittee of Buildings and Grounds

30 Common Street, Innovation Room

Meeting Date: January 25, 2017**Attendance:** John Brackett, Mary DeLai, Steve Romanelli**Subcommittee Members:** Liz Yusem, chair, Eileen Hsu Balzer, Kendra Foley**Other Attendees:** Tom Tracy, Vinnie Pichirilli, John Portz, members of the public**Executive Summary:**

The superintendent opened the discussion addressing questions about criteria used to determine accessibility of school facilities to outside rental groups and school related groups. The issues ranged from prioritization, accountability, fee structure, fee collection, scheduling and reservation of space due to lack of policy. The business manager stressed that the goal is to understand the stresses and to create a clear policy because school facilities rentals can be very broad, complex and time consuming to implement otherwise. Following the meeting, research will be done in establishing a set of Facilities Use Regulations. The school department will also be looking to expand its use of an online tool called SchoolDude, used for facilities management, to allow members of the public to view availability, scheduling and reserve space.

The town's response to Capital FY'18-'22 recognized that there would be various additions including Hosmer School to include an additional \$20,000 to locker painting in 2020, an additional 30,000 to Lowell for hallway & stair painting, and \$80,000 at the middle school. The District's School Technology will not be bonded by the town anymore and the FY'19-22 bonding requirement of \$100,000 for computers each year will be submitted as a school appropriation.

For the FY'17 Update there is no money in the circuit breaker to fund the rest of the Phillips renovation of the two preschool classrooms. Money to finish funding the project will come from projects that are completed or cancelled. There was a unanimous vote to reallocate funds from excess FY'17 capital funds to be reallocated to Pre-School construction at Phillips completed summer 2016. There also may be unused funds from an allocation of \$450,000 to the schools for capital projects that may have a balance left which can still be used for projects. The business manager will look into these funds to see how much is left.

At the Middle School, bids were reviewed by the construction manager and the low bid of Homer Contracting at \$1,693,000 will be awarded. The total project will be \$2.2M with a savings of \$1.1M from the budgeted \$3.3M.

In regard to the town wide facilities assessment, it was still being edited and was not discussed.

The Master Plan RFP was prepared by the superintendent and business manager. It was discussed that the draft would be reviewed by various groups of people including somebody from the town. The RFP will officially be posted as a Request For Qualifications and there are already 4-5 qualified companies that the administration has in mind. By early February, the RFQ will be sent out and with a deadline during February vacation. The administration is hoping to have a recommendation by the March school committee meeting and then have a firm ready to go which will also assist in writing the SOI for the MSBA program.

Minutes

I. Call to order 6:30pm

II. Discussion

a. Facilities Usage and Rental:

The superintendent opened the discussion to address questions about the procedural process of having outside groups using WPS facilities. Handouts were passed out of Proposed Rate Structure for Use of Watertown Public School Buildings. The business manager explained that facilities rental had been done by personnel in the business office. Lots of policy concerning facilities rental is not in writing and as in most places, it is not on a public website. From 2011, facilities guidelines and fee structure were done in 3 tiers. These are drafts for internal groups as guidelines developed by business personnel. Extensive analysis of this topic was done in 2012. There was a shift in philosophy in not getting rental from outside the community and the committee wanted to make facilities more available to recreation department and school uses. In the handouts distributed there is an application form and indemnity form and there was also a schedule of rental groups shows mostly same groups rent from year to year. BSSC is the most significant outside group that uses MS gym for about \$36,000 per year—In past years fees totaled \$200K. Next biggest receipt is recreation use of summer school and \$10k during the year. Venezia Dance etc uses the auditorium HS.

The business manager noted that mostly the schools collect \$30K in income. The rental fees are not used to offset the budget. The drama group using hall does not get charged for custodian—more information is needed concerning this. The theater group uses funds from rentals to fund activities. Would there be a significant income missing to the drama productions if revenue is cut from rental to outside groups? Admission is charged for HS productions and that money is also used for productions. Kids are also charged a user fee for drama. A committee member noted that there have been long standing issues of building use and fees. It has been spotty in regard to collection of fees and we need consistency. Enforcement is difficult and everybody wants to be treated fairly.

The business manager understands the sensibilities of the community wanting fairness in accessibility and proposed that if there is a strong set of facilities regulations that are made public, that would help— A policy for facilities is broad so guidelines can be drawn up as Facilities Use Regulations. The business manager also highlighted that an online web based system already used by the facilities department called SchoolDude could help to give the public online accessibility to rentals. Some districts break up the rental of facilities as seasonal rentals and break up scheduling and reserving between main groups to create equity. There are also different schools of thought for community rental. One side views use of facilities for community and school groups and the other side is entrepreneurial.

Discussion followed about the drop in revenue in rental over the years which could be a marketing issue and making facilities available to user groups in community. BSSC rents 4 days a week spring. BSSC starts at 7:45pm in winter. All facilities are booked out until June. Youth sports group can't use the facilities because of booking out. What are the issues? Fees? The business manager explained that fees are not an issue. The main issue is youth groups not getting time because of outside groups. A committee member also noted that they have

heard that there are problems of access—Youth groups not having same kind of access as renters. A committee member noted that some groups are able to block other groups from accessibility by overbooking what they actually need. Discussion also ensued concerning students and if more space becomes available and coaches of teams are able to expand time for practice—Is that in best interest of the students?

A board member from Watertown Youth Basketball attended the meeting. The WYB member informed the committee that Watertown Youth Basketball is composed of Watertown children 4-8th grade. They feel they have a quality of access as an issue. BSSC using the MS gym. WYB is using the lower gymnasium at the MS. Time is also an issue. WYB basketball feels that it seems that an outside group took precedent in access time and quality over WYB. WYB was nervous to complain because aware that revenue was important to the town. Practice is 6-7:30pm next group is 7:30-9pm. The MS is preferred for double court split gym for WYB. A committee member asked if it is possible to use the Hosmer gym for WYB or the Boys and Girls Club gym. The team is for the kids in town and there isn't a team. Hosmer not being used by 4-5th graders. WYB needs a gym about 3 nights week and for games on Saturday and Sunday. One committee member noted that the games seem very late. How are we making it better for the students?

Questions arose about paying fees for custodians and If a custodian has to be pulled off shift, a rental group needs to pay a fee because the custodian will have to be paid overtime. Questions were also asked if capital costs had been factored into the fee structure and for the last couple of years, money has not been in fee structure to make capital improvements made based on outside groups using.

Sports teams might start scheduling differently if they could. Don't rent out HS gymnasium- out of 5 gyms only 2 are rented. Gym 2:30-7:45pm gym is used. Athletic director needs to inform.

The director of facilities noted that Cunniff officially closes at 7pm because they only have 2 custodians. All other schools are open until 11pm.

The superintendent noted that there are grey areas with the current structure. If BSSC is put on a lower priority and we lose \$35,000 that reduces the ability to do plays etc. Has anybody had a meeting with BSSC to understand their need? Can we try to accommodate all of the groups instead of one or the other? Where is committee coming from in terms of philosophy?

The superintendent advised that he and the business manager will look at fee structure, who gets waived and when and will need to come together at a later date to discuss further.

The business manager also noted that hall facilities rentals occurs among 5 buildings and organizing rentals and collecting fees is extremely time consuming with lots of phone calls and moving this task online will help.

The superintendent also noted that using classrooms is an issue too i.e. Project literacy at HS. He expressed that we want to make rooms available to the community but also respect that teachers need to maintain organization in their rooms. The HS principal was helpful in making classrooms available for Project Literacy. A committee member noted that it is also a cultural use of rooms and the way classrooms are used. They noted that they have a friend in Lexington who is a teacher and in their school, teacher's desks are grouped and classrooms are generally open so there is not a conflict with multiple users in a classroom.

A community member noted that if BSSC can book for the whole year, then prioritization is not possible. On August 1, the year gets booked and youth groups don't know their schedule but BSSC knows their schedule. WYB noted that 5 nights a week they end up using the lower gym. A committee member noted that we need the personnel who manages the rentals to come in and report these and other types of stresses to the committee.

It was also noted by a town councilor present that we need the head of parks and recreation to come in and talk about WYS because the recreation department has some policies that they have implemented in the same vein for field use that we might be interested in for rentals. Additionally, the recreation department has had a 10 year relationship with BSSC for 20-30 year olds and the town has encouraged a partnership because it is town people participating.

The superintendent and business manager will go back and find out stresses and do some more research and come back with suggestions.

b. Town's Response to WPS Capital Plan FY18-FY22.

A portion of the town's CIP plan was distributed. The town auditor discussed that the Hosmer School line 170 locker painting changed add additional 20K in 2020. There is an additional \$30K in Lowell. The MS caught 80K. Districtwide school technical has nothing for '18 funding all five years will be a school appropriation. FY'19-22 bonding requirement \$100K for computers are submitted as an appropriation. In FY09-10' 500K was given by the town to the schools to upgrade. The town business manager stated in a FY09-'10 cover letter: Line 235 is for maintenance and repair not for new tech. A town councilor noted that in 2 previous administrations, the superintendent needed \$1M to upgrade computers and there was an agreement with the town to do it over 2 years. It was noted by a community member that the town is not going to bond school computers anymore and it is the our responsibility to fund. A committee member noted that infrastructure is a problem in the schools.

It was agreed by the town councilor that each school needs a massive upgrade and money for that is the question. The town auditor and business manager discussed the double accounting in Line 216 Windows at MS.

In areas where water testing was done, the district is waiting for results from the lab and it involves 6 areas. The facilities manager noted that he had changed faucets at areas identified.

c. FY17 Update

The business manager noted that there is no money in the circuit breaker for funding projects at Phillips School. With advice from the town auditor, we can use money from projects that are completed or cancelled to fund the remainder of construction costs. The Cunniff doors came in under budget, the spandrels at Hosmer will cost in excess of \$20K so that money is available and the proposed renovation to the MS kitchen would be in excess of \$15K budgeted so only new appliances only will be installed.

There was a motion to reallocate funds from excess FY'17 capital funds to be reallocated to Pre-School Construction.

The motion was seconded.

There was a unanimous vote.

The town councilor identified that there might be money leftover from \$450K allocated to the schools by the town. The business manager will look to see what work was done under the previous business manager. There will also be some assistance from the town auditor—the town puts money over to capital project fund. No sweep. Money is already appropriated. The town auditor will look at MUNIS fund numbers to also identify what money is left.

d. Review Town's Facility Assessment

The Town's Facility Assessment was not reviewed since it is still being edited and will be addressed at a later time.

e. Middle School Windows Update

Bids were reviewed by the construction manager with the low bid coming from Homer Contracting. Research was done on Homer and \$1,693,000 will be awarded to them for the job. Total project will be \$2.2M. The savings from \$3.3M is \$1.1M. The town auditor suggested that when the project is over, a rescind order would occur for the excess money at end of project, so don't take out bond unless necessary. The full amount of the loan was already taken out by the town at \$3.3M last year. The project manager feels like we are in our timeline to complete the windows project by the fall.

f. Master Plan RFP Update-

The superintendent has a draft of the Request For Qualifications, RFQ, composed by the business manager and he with outside help. The superintendent will confer with the SC chair about next steps to review the RFQ with a larger group before publicly posting—how many will review including somebody from the town. The RFQ will be sent to 4-5 architecture firms already known by the district by early February along at the time of the public posting. The timeline is set to get responses back by February vacation. The superintendent hopes to have a recommendation by the March school committee meeting and then have a firm ready to go in assisting in writing the SOI for the high school for the MSBA program. It was noted that information from the NEASC report and the Gienapp study will help with the SOI.

III. Adjournment 8pm.