

GROTON BOARD OF EDUCATION  
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES  
OCTOBER 15, 2018 @ 6:00 P.M.  
PROJECT OCEANOLOGY, ROOM 243

**Members Present:** Chairman Kim Shepardson Watson, Katrina Fitzgerald, Gretchen Newsome, Rosemary Robertson, Rita Volkmann, Jay Weitlauf, Lee White, Vice Chairman Andrea Ackerman (arrived at 6:30 p.m.)

**Members Absent:** Jane Giulini

**Also Present:** Michael Graner, John Burt, Jack Butkus, Susan Austin

Chairman Shepardson Watson called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m.

1. Update re: Design Plans for the Consolidated Middle School – Jack Butkus, representative of the Arcadis Project Management firm, showed the architectural renderings of the proposed floor plans and design features of the building.
2. Merritt Property – John Burt explained that the final decision regarding the property is expected shortly. The final step will be the Attorney General’s approval of the conservation easement at the Kolnaski property.
3. Referendum re: Construction of the New Elementary Schools – John Burt explained that the 2016 explanatory text for the conversion of the existing middle schools included the language to “renovate like new” those facilities. The Department of Administrative Services approved the construction of new elementary schools because the architects documented that building new would be more cost effective for the town. The bond counsel reviewed the original language of the 2016 explanatory text and determined that if new schools are to be constructed, a second referendum must be held. The referendum is scheduled for December 11, assuming that the Town Council and RTM adopt the revised referendum ordinance.
4. Elementary Enrollment Requirements – Mike Graner explained that when each of the new elementary schools is opened, the district will be required to have 604 students enrolled at each school in order to receive the full reimbursement. He then explained that when Claude Chester and S. B. Butler schools are closed, approximately 641 students will be eligible to enroll in one of the two elementary schools. The district would then have to reassign 567 students to one of the two elementary schools to meet the enrollment requirement. The Board discussed the possibility of closing another elementary school as well as considering the implementation of a universal PreK program for all children in the community.
5. Naming of the Middle School Facility – The Board reviewed policy P 7551 (Naming of Facility) in relation to the new middle school. Several suggestions were made to Mike Graner to identify committee members per category in accordance with the policy. He will contact the identified members and will report to the Board.

6. Elementary School Magnet Themes – Mike Graner explained that each of the two new elementary schools will be operated as an intradistrict magnet school. Recommendations for the themes for each of those schools will be developed by the committee that began work on the themes last year.
7. Kim Watson mentioned the editorial that appeared in *The Day* newspaper on Sunday regarding the importance for educational leaders to demonstrate civility in all their dealings.

**MOTION:** Ackerman, Weitlauf; to adjourn at 8:15 p.m.

**MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**