

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 17
BOARD OF EDUCATION SPECIAL MEETING
COMMUNITY INFORMATION MEETING
October 26, 2015

A special meeting of the Regional School District No. 17 Board of Education was held on October 26, 2015 in the Haddam-Killingworth High School Auditorium. Board of Education Chair, Sue Twachtman, called the meeting to order at 6:32 PM.

***Members Present:** Kathy Brown, Susan Dean, Joanne Nesti, Joel D'Angelo, Karen Perry, Becky Valenti, Amy Jacques-Purdy, Jeannie Young, Dan Chase, and Sue Twachtman*

***Members Absent:** Michele Amendola*

***Also Present:** Superintendent of Schools, Howard Thiery and Board Clerk, Larissa Johnson*

***Visitors:** Approximately 50*

Call to Order/Opening of Meeting

Board of Education Chair, Sue Twachtman called the meeting to order at 6:32 PM.

Presentation of High School Referendum Project

Board Chair Sue Twachtman introduced the high school referendum project. She explained that the Board is passing out index cards for members of the audience to write down questions, which will be collected, read and answered for about an hour and that they will try to answer as many questions as possible. She explained that all questions will be answered and posted on the RSD 17 website (www.rsd17.org) for reference. She then introduced Board Member Karen Perry. Karen Perry presented the "Haddam Killingworth High School Infrastructure Plan" and outlined the rationale behind the project. She said that high school was built in 1976 and has never had a renovation. She presented the project rationale and explained that several parts of the building need updating as the school is used twelve hours per day for school, community activities and Parks and Recreation. Over the past few years, the Board has consulted with several agencies and had studies and reports completed. These studies and reports, along with community input have led the Board towards the infrastructure plan being presented.

The presentation also included a section, "What areas need to be fixed or replaced?" She outlined that the roof needs to be replaced as it is 40 years old and has outlived its expected lifespan of 30 years. There have been some leaks that have been addressed as they have occurred, but a new roof will avoid water damage and mold growth, which will help the high school building last longer. The furnace systems also need to be replaced, as they are also 40 years old and have outlived their life expectancy of 35 years. Every year, several tubes burn out and need to be replaced and it is expected that the numbers of repairs needed will increase. A new furnace system will be more efficient, and have the ability to switch between natural gas and oil, depending upon cost and availability. The new system design will also decrease the chances of the furnace system going offline. She also said that electricity has been a major budget driver over the past few years, thus the Board is proposing that a photovoltaic solar system be installed on the roof of the high school to help decrease electricity costs. The Board is also proposing that the high school front entrance and auditorium be renovated to become ADA compliant. Currently, people coming in the front entrance of the school cannot access the main office due to a step entering the building and two flights of stairs leading up to the main office. They are also proposing the seats and stage be upgraded in the auditorium as the seats are deteriorating and replacement parts are no longer available. The Board is also proposing that a new artificial turf field be installed in place of the existing grass football field. The current grass field can

only be used an average of thirteen times per year by the high school football program and four times per year by community youth football. A new artificial turf field will allow for field use to increase to 200 times per year, and to be used at night by football athletes, boys and girls soccer, boys and girls lacrosse and girls field hockey. Additionally, more community groups and organizations will be able to use the field, including Relay for Life.

The estimated cost of the project is approximately \$11.7 million, with a net cost over 20 years of \$5.2 million after grant reimbursements and utility energy credits. The average cost per household would be approximately \$3.79 per month. He then broke down the costs by project: the energy systems upgrade would cost approximately \$3,287,008, the roof replacement would cost approximately \$3,952,463, the furnace system would cost approximately \$1,426,909, the new athletic field upgrades would cost approximately \$1,720,800, the renovated front entrance would cost approximately \$1,002,831, and the auditorium upgrades would cost approximately \$355,989. He also presented a chart of projected debt service impact on the budget, which is currently a little over \$2,000,000. It would increase to approximately \$2,600,000 million for the completion of the project, however once the bonds from the middle school construction project begin retiring, the annual debt service impact will drop to approximately \$1,600,000 million after about five year, and will continue dropping to about \$550,000 after nine years until it is paid off in the twentieth year.

Board Treasurer Joel D'Angelo then took questions from the audience which were submitted. The Board addressed several questions relating to the roof and furnace replacement projects, bonding process, athletic field, and the scope of the projects. Board Chair Sue Twachtman, Joel D'Angelo, Karen Perry, Superintendent Howard Thiery, and representatives from CREC, Paul Drummey, Brian Greene and Doug Rogers answered questions on behalf of the Board.

The questions posed as the meeting as well as answers from the Board of Education will be posted on the RSD 17 website (www.rsd17.org).

Adjournment

Board Chair Twachtman called for the meeting to adjourn at 7:32 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Larissa B. Johnson
Board Clerk

Approval: Becky Valenti Date: Nov 3 2015
Becky Valenti, Secretary