

Mt Greylock Regional School Committee February 25, 2019

Present from school committee: Dan, Joe, Regina, Ali, Al, Steve; Kim

Business office: Abbey

Phase II sub-committee: John (chair), Steve, Al, Dan, Julius, Talia. Art on phone.

Start 3:02

Start with presentation from John about Phase II. Eager to present, lots of good, productive meetings. Will review where we are and recommendation. See attached slides for details. Identified needs and opportunities.

Recommendation: multi-year plan for construction of new fields / renovation of existing. Emphasize: idea of a track (benefit many) brought back to the table. I was on the original committee looking at the use of the Williams gift, looked at a track back then and the numbers were much more expensive, all pleasantly surprised at what it came in as. Committee wants to keep a focus on that.

Benefits: maximize benefit to maximum number of students. Provide accessibility as required by code, proximity to parking / school buildings. Turf field provides resilience, ease of maintenance, all weather use. Maintenance largely sweeping once a week, Williams has been very helpful and would have their expertise. Revenue opportunity. Principal sports: soccer, lacrosse, football. Would help with PE. Roughly 370 students per day participate, over half of the student body, majority in younger grades (not on varsity sports), want to get as many outdoor experiences as possible. Estimates of gains of 1-2 days per week, impact "off the charts" in March-May. Overall 7-10 weeks of outdoor PE. More than just game field.

Site plan (Art): Phase I: Describes construction and when things done. Discusses Title IX requirements (boys and girls have same amenities, what would get for softball). Mentions track, infrastructure already there, challenges on putting it in various places so better to put in existing location. Cost: see attachments. Talked with Williams and portable bleachers are significantly less for cost (also press box). Comes in at \$1,657,700.

Phase II: Parking and driveway access: Comes in at \$612,200. Includes baseball and softball improvements, access.

Phase III: Outfield improvements: drainage. Comes in at \$50,400. Mostly varsity softball.

Alternate: new track and surfacing: 8 lanes straightaway, 6 lane turn: includes some of the throwing apparatus. Comes to \$444,500.

All combine for \$2,764,800.

(John again): Keep onus off of the school committee, this committee will move forward and want to be renamed the Game Fields Committee. Have talked to experts at Williams who will help oversee / provide expertise. Also opportunities for fundraising. Scoreboard, signage. Overall time-table is roughly 30 weeks.

Questions: Concerns: Regina: how much of the gift are we using?

Joe: Answer: gift was \$5million two years ago, b/c of their investment team it is now \$6.2million. When reached out to the college, the investment is fluid with the endowment – can go up or go down if we leave it in.

Steve: can consider asking towns for money to save the gift to keep growing.

Al: concern about preserving the reserve of \$1.5million (and what it's grown to, say about \$1.9million).

Steve: Everything is around \$2.7million, this includes track, much less than the over \$3million we had before.

Regina: money aside, really support idea of track.

John: large number of students will benefit from this. That could be a future fundraising opportunity. Not an unwieldy number.

Regina: long term cost of maintaining?

John: Williams: about \$2000 a year putting in pellets but that's from daily use. Winter Williams plows. Williams expects 12-15 years b/c of their care, and we can borrow from their best practices.

Art: assume about \$10,000/yr, falls on a sliding year, not much first five years other than general care (say every two weeks or 100 hours of use). As field gets older might have to replace high use areas.

Regina: How much to replace turf?

Art: mostly just turf itself, pull and relapace. Can reuse shock pad (lasts two cycles of turf). Roughly \$350,000 / \$400,000 to replace.

Al: looking things up, dollar for dollar see synthetic turf is a better value.

Joe: what is the annual grass field costs? Was \$50,000 to resod (but that was the first time in a long time).

John: Turf is ready immediately.

Joe: no mudpits so more available for PE. For teams as team participation increases see issues with field keeping up to date. Turf takes year long use better.

Brian Gill: primary use would be PE. Nice to have when need. Can host post-season events (rules in hosting semi-final and championship games). Those games must be on turf. Now in running to host. Could generate revenue. For track and field: we have steadily seen a decline in ability to use Williams at all. Limited now for practicing, only small groups at a time. Right now have 0 dates where we can host at Williams due to NESCAC tournaments, not being stingy just don't have the dates, and in our league required to host. Had 98 students last year in track (boys and girls), biggest in numbers. Nordic next with 94 last year. To host a championship meet need 8 lanes, college is 8 all around (so couldn't host an MA championship).

Art: for an 8/8 track: 8 can host sprinting events. IF had 8 still have other components (seating requirements). If not hosting a championship recommend 8 straightaway with 6 turn, just can't run finals.

Regina: when tasked to have ADA compliance?

Joe: April 2022.

[[ Joe edit 4/10/19 ahead of committee review/approval: Regina noted that ADA compliance is a requirement and should be done ahead of exhausting available funds. If we are going to spend money and near our limits, ADA compliance should come as an integral part of that instead of at the end of the process. ]]

Dan: Both Talia and Julius were terrific in giving a sense of the student experience, who is using the fields and how.

Brian: keeping track separate helps with size of fields for sports. Track around it limits width. Soccer benefits from a large field.

Al: got advice at a previous school committee meeting about going in on a lower bid.

Art: maybe save \$100,000 on bidding climate.

Dan: if set a low dollar value not committed to accepting. For Phase I this was important.

Joe: Went to Perkins-Eastman: didn't have time to put together a full proposal, ballpark was \$158,000 to move forward into the design phase, in line with the set of from Phase I. Will take 6-7 weeks to get thru this process. Would put us at late edge of bidding, might see less bidding and might see higher prices as people are already committed. Dan raised a red flag about not knowing (needs to know as architect) that we satisfy ADA compliance by 2022. Cannot run out of funds and not be able to do it.

John: Art has worked closely with committee, has said should be able to make timelines.

Dan: Say want to save \$1.9million, expenses of this plus Phase I are about what we have left based on where the endowment has grown.

Students leave at 3:59 to catch late bus.

John: Can view starting point of the gift is now, when building is ending, so view it as \$1.5million and not \$1.9million. Turf field addresses ADA, field provides most accessible type surface. Also Title IX. There are advantages to doing things in this order.

Steve: vigorously support fundraising and other funding opportunities. Have seen the difficulties of not doing projects fully and then having decades of less services.

Dan: Money was given to the high school for the high school. Was meant to improve the high school. Still view my math of a district office as benefiting the high school X% and elementary schools Y%. Have the elementary school contribution come from somewhere else.

Steve: That would translate to asking the towns.

Dan: would be some percentage as a district expense that should be expensed out to all three schools.

Steve:

Joe: challenging to have us borrow. One reason to have the gift was to do things that the MSBA would not support. This is pretty much the same plan as a year ago, just optimized for cost, multiple public presentations.

Steve: optimizing for cost and use.

John: when a donor makes a gift, they want to see the gift used, want to see it have an impact. This plan is for their gift to have a maximum impact on the students.

Joe: are these priorities if funds unlimited?

Steve: Yes, we didn't include in the building project as MSBA doesn't reimburse, but was always a priority.

Art: Will always look for cost savings as go forward. But not seeing much. A 10% contingency on a project like this is high, usually more like 5%, haven't brought down yet.

Joe: Timeline? When would you need us to look at additional documentation?

Art: Once we get the go we would race to start having meetings discussing materials, choices, .... Get permitting started. Anything over 20000 sq ft needs to go back to permitting, ZBA. We would start moving relatively quickly, in first 2-3 weeks of 6-7 week period.

John: Art has already vetted Doucet already working on site, confident in their ability to do work. That's an advantage.

Art: waiting for some numbers from Geotech, should have in the next 24 hours.

???: Right now for the amount allotted will not get all on these pages, but can see what happens with fundraising.

Dan: have you talked to Williams about moving some money to short term investment if need to access quickly?

Joe: can talk to Williams.

Dan: I would be comfortable authorizing \$1.65million.

John: no idea what number to give for fundraising. There are people who are used to fundraising for athletics here who are eager, and synthetic turf gives them great potential.

Dan: If there is a delay or some period of time where there is a number of weeks where we have to take this for an extra design phase, if the committee could at the same time give the sub-committee the task to reach forward to start fundraising.... Might make the committee more comfortable with financial aspects.

Joe: Perkins-Eastman: next step is not authorizing bid number, but the funds not to exceed the \$158,000 for detailed design, permitting, ....

Steve: move to authorize funds not to exceed \$158,000 for Perkins-Eastman to do as mentioned above and at the same time move forward with reaching out to members of the community for fundraising. Dan seconds, passes unanimously 6-0.

Finish this part of the meeting at 4:26pm.

Part IIa: discussion to participate in school choice.

Regina moves that we be a region of choice Steve seconds, passes unanimously 5 in favor (Dan outside room).

Item III on the Agenda:

Kim: Draft budget, on version 7, Joe and Kim going line by line, talking with Principals, still missing numbers. Certain reports rely on, Rob working with DESE to get numbers need. What we have is what we'll have to go on.

Town of Lanesborough has been reclassified, called above effort. Williamstown is a below effort. Impacts how funding is spread out. Before we throw out even a hardcopy document, with foundation numbers we have want to make sure as accurate as can be. There is now a swing b/w the two towns. We know our priorities. Have a strategic planning group, identified hot spots (social / emotional learning). Settled one of contracts, bus contract up for renewal, costs up. Have some retirements. Trying to make balance work.

Joe: the way state formulas work for town contributions: minimum local contribution were significantly changed from last year to this year. This means Lanesborough has declined by a few hundred thousand dollars, Williamstown increased. No impact on elementary schools. When we regionalized we came up with a formula that elementary schools are funded by towns individually, and high school jointly. Lanesborough's share has decreased and Williamstown has increased. Everything on top of that is split based on student enrollment over the past 5 years.

Al: almost no town pays at, none below, minimum local. Should not expect that this means funding will go down.

Joe: following up with the state to see why they moved two categories (above effort, at effort, below effort). Even if MtG budget stayed the same would swing to another \$150,000 to Williamstown paying from Lanesborough.

Steve: How many other towns moved one category? Two categories?

Joe: impacts apportionment.

Items: line 29 (on far left) new position building and grounds, \$65,000. Line 30 new, curriculum and instruction, \$95,000. Skipping over some higher dollar changes.

Dan: now in year 2 of merging, learning where to move things.

Line 70: Assnt Principal returning for full year, returning from Afghanistan.

Salary changes due to new contracts. FY19 is not reflecting FY19 actual.

Lines 103-105: ESL: positions that fill or not based on student enrollment.

Summer costs will go up a bit, will partner with Richmond shores (boys/girls club programs). Home based tutoring.

Shakespeare has gone up, just added program to LES (already at others).

Looking at online learning, assessments, ....

Technology pretty good with (Chrome books, renewal phase coming up).

Al needs to leave at 4:55pm.

Need detailed and accurate numbers (state, internal) to build budget.

Regina: line 381: longevities....

Kim: Need TMS to work on this, they are.

Upgrades in wifi at LES/WES

Dan: maybe WES endowment can deal with phones there....

Kim: We do get some back. Maybe 60% back.

Ali leaves at 4:57pm

48 Hours: Steve: Berkshire Eagle had an article about the County Education Task Force still pushing for one district. I wanted to reiterate that I have grave concerns with this and with their analysis of the benefits and costs, and I ask for an agenda item on this for the next meeting.

Motion to adjourn by Regina seconded by Steve passes 5-0 at 5:02pm