

Board of Education Regular Meeting
Suffield Middle School Auditorium
and via Zoom
September 20, 2021

Call to Order

Board Chair Mercik Davis called the meeting to order at 6:32p.m. The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Board members Jamie Drzyzga, Debra Dudack, Melissa Finnigan, Brian Fry, Glenn Gazdik, Scott Lingenfelter, Susan Mercik Davis, Maureen Sattan, Michael Sepko; and Superintendent Timothy Van Tasel, Assistant Superintendent Michelle Zawawi, and Business Manager Bill Hoff; and Suffield High School Student Representative Connor Shaw.

Absent: SHS Student Representative Sophia Mormino

Board of Education Workshop: Town of Suffield/Suffield Public Schools Facilities Master Plan

Board Chair Mercik Davis and Superintendent Van Tasel said the intention of the meeting is to allow Tecton Architects to review the work that has been completed in reviewing town facilities generally, and the Suffield Public School facilities, specifically. The scope of any potential options can be incorporated into the final study and presented to the town. Superintendent Van Tasel introduced Jeff Wyszynski and Antonia Ciaverella from Tecton to lead the Suffield Facilities Master Plan presentation.

Mr. Wyszynski reviewed the goals of the study which is to create a plan for the next ten-plus years. To date, Tecton has studied the existing conditions of town buildings, met with leadership to ascertain needs, benchmarked existing space to industry standards, and engaged the community through a survey, video narratives, open house walkthroughs, a presence at Suffield on the Green and various town meetings.

The district schools were reviewed, with attention to the site, architectural exterior, architectural interior, code/accessibility/life safety, and building systems. Buildings have been well maintained, yet no building has received comprehensive, like new, renovations. The majority of building systems are at or near the end of useful life. Future considerations will include balancing infrastructure needs and fiscal responsibility. Enrollment projections appear stable, and a capacity analysis shows excess space over the CT state standard.

Board members expressed concerns with accessibility and safety issues; a desire to use spaces creatively; the need to encourage community support once the scope of the plan is further defined; and possible synergies with the town.

Board Chair Mercik Davis left the meeting at 7:18 p.m. Vice Chair Sepko moderated the remainder of the meeting.

Superintendent Van Tassel clarified that the long-range study is not just about the district schools. Its focus is to create a road map to try to help the town manage its future. Board members asked for energy cost information as the plan moves forward and expressed gratitude that the district has gotten the most out of these building, thanks to the efforts of dedicated staff over many years.

Adjournment

Finnigan moved, Gazdik seconded to adjourn the meeting at 7:37 pm. All members voted in favor.

Minutes are subject to approval at the regular meeting of October 4, 2021.

Respectfully Submitted,

Maureen Sattan
Secretary