

**LNSU/LNMUUSD Finance and Capital Committee**  
**Minutes of Meeting**  
**October 18, 2021**

**Committee Members Present:** Mark Stebbins, Lisa Barry, Katie Orost, Laura Miller

**Others Present:** Dylan LaFlam, Brian Pena

**Minute Taker:** Sue Trainor

**Call to Order, Approval of Agenda and Public Comment:** Stebbins called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m. Barry made a motion, seconded by Miller, to approve the agenda. The motion passed unanimously. There was no public comment.

**Consent Agenda Items: Minutes of the September 20, 2021, Meeting of the Finance and Capital Committee.** Without a quorum, these minutes could not be approved.

**Update on ESSER funded Renovation-Expansion of Eden Central School:** LaFlam noted there was a memo that Deb Clark had written and attached to the agenda. In her memo, Clark reminded the Committee that the idea of obtaining a formal enrollment projection had been raised. Clark reached out to Thomas Kavet of Kavet, Rockler & Associates, State Economist and Principal Economic Advisor to the Vermont Legislature. Kavet reported that preliminary data from the 2020 Census showed more people than expected in Vermont, however, the census data was not finalized. Kavet discussed the unexpected gains in population from migration to Vermont due to the pandemic. Kavet did not believe the data was stable or reliable at this time. Clark then researched the permitting that was being done relative to the housing development proposed in Eden, across from the school. It was projected that development would bring in between eight and ten new students over the next several years. Reviewing the last ten years of school data there was a steady increase of four to five students per year. The school was averaging between 140 and 160 students.

The engineering design was projected to be done in mid-November with an update to be provided around Thanksgiving. It appeared that wood trusses, rather than metal, could be done and that would save money.

In response to a question from Miller, LaFlam stated a formal enrollment projection study could be done for \$1,000. He stated the Committee should speak to Clark about this. However, it was the recommendation of Kapler, Rockwell & Associates not to move forward with the study at this time.

The Committee then spoke about the need for more space. It was clear this project was necessary. There wasn't any one-on-one space in the building. They were cramming many programs into one room. If taxpayers questioned the need to expand, they could use the information from the scope of work presented to the AOE and the space use analysis information.

**Update on Air Quality Issues at LNSU Central Office:** LaFlam stated that two months ago IT had needed to get into the IT closet on the second floor of Lamoille North Central Office. The entire room was covered in mold. It was a condensation issue from the air conditioning unit. It was contained to just the closet. There was a remediation plan and work would be done over a weekend at a cost of \$1,200.

LaFlam stated it again pointed out the issue of Central Office and the indoor air quality. They did a wide range of indoor air quality tests again in the building. Just like two years ago, there was a carbon dioxide issue. There was no ventilation and too many people in the building. There weren't adverse health effects, but by mid-afternoon people were tired and drained. He was looking at putting in some type of HVAC system. However, any grandfathered items would have to be updated if renovations occurred. For instance, there was no elevator in the building. That was grandfathered because they hadn't renovated

the building in so long. Putting in an HVAC system would hit the 25% threshold and all items would need to be updated.

Miller asked if there was another location that could be used. LaFlam stated that Belvidere wouldn't work because it didn't have the internet capacity to handle Central Office. GMTCC already housed IT, Early Education, after school programs, and Facilities. GMTCC was looking at adding several programs and that may require that those programs move.

LaFlam stated the Central Office building was safe now as far as the mold was concerned. The mold was dead and dried out. They were at the beginning stage of solving the carbon dioxide air quality issue.

**Update on Air Quality Issues at Belvidere Central School:** LaFlam stated the building was an 8,000 square foot building. Waterville used two classrooms with an entrance from the outside. Most of the building was unused. Much of the storage from LNSU that needed climate controlled long-term storage went to Belvidere. The building had been closed due to COVID for almost 18 months. Custodial services were done but there were two classrooms that were filled with furniture so nothing was generally done in those rooms. Recently, a teacher moved some furniture around and noticed mold on some plastic chairs. Facilities ordered a number of air quality tests. The contractor doing the tests spent 15 minutes in the building and notified LaFlam that there was a major infestation of mold and the building needed to be shut down. Spore contents were 8,000 parts per million whereas outside the parts were 300 parts per million. Everything was contaminated and needed to be thrown away and the ceilings needed to be removed. The cost for remediation would be \$55,000 and it would cost an additional \$10,000 to put the ceilings back. LaFlam said none of the mold was black mold.

LaFlam hadn't spoken with Waterville or the preschool program yet. The Board needed to decide what they wanted to do with the building. It was a large building built in 1996 and was underutilized. LaFlam stated he thought part of the reason this occurred was because the HVAC systems were controlled by carbon dioxide and if the building wasn't used the air would be cycled over and over but it wouldn't bring in new outside air. LaFlam also noted that they had just paid \$60,000 for a new boiler for that building.

Miller asked if ESSER funds or insurance could be used. LaFlam stated he had just received the test results and he would be reaching out to VSBIT. The companies he had talked with about remediation thought that because it was an HVAC issue and not a roof leak it was doubtful it would be covered. If LaFlam could prove there was a water infiltration issue that caused the mold to grow, then insurance would definitely cover part of it. He just wanted the Committee to know about the issue. He hoped to have more information to the Committee within the next three weeks.

Barry said it was unfortunate because the building wasn't that old. LaFlam noted that Belvidere, Eden and Waterville were all built within three years of each other in the mid-90's. Hyde Park put a huge addition on in the 90's. He felt they were in a cycle of not having had to do much to the buildings and now they had to do a lot of work across the district. Stebbins stated it was during that time that the state did a huge push of building local.

**Update on Johnson Boiler and Walk-in Cooler Replacement:** LaFlam informed the Committee that when they turned the oil boiler on they discovered it was leaking. There was a crack in one of the sections of the boiler. It was welded and LaFlam thought it would last through the winter but it would need to be replaced. He was developing the RFP now and he anticipated the cost would be in the \$100,000 range. Johnson had a very healthy Johnson-specific capital reserve that needed to be spent by June 30<sup>th</sup>. LaFlam believed this was a good project to spend the funds on because it should last 25 to 30 years. LaFlam stated this was not the biomass. That was just inspected and it was running great. The biomass did the majority of the heating. That may be the reason a crack had developed in the seam of the boiler, as the boiler turned on so irregularly. LaFlam said this boiler had been installed in 1996.

Belvidere's was just replaced and that had been put in during the same year as Johnson's and was the same brand.

LaFlam then discussed the walk in coolers. Facilities replaced all of the cooler's condensers and when they began using the coolers at the beginning of the school year they noticed there was a great deal of condensation dripping from the walls. After investigating further, they found the insulation between the metal walls had failed. Again, the coolers were installed in the mid-90's and had an anticipated 30-year life span. There was no way to fix what was there. They would need to pull the wall panels out and replace all of the units. LaFlam stated it would be better and less expensive to put two external units on rather than two internal units back in. The reason was that it was best to move them away from the gym, which was on the other side of the wall. External units were a little bit more expensive, but they were cheaper to install.

Miller asked if staff would have to walk outside to get to the coolers. LaFlam stated they would but the staff liked the idea because they would gain so much work/food storage space. LaFlam was waiting for the design details, at which point he would begin developing ideas on what additional costs would be included. He expected to bring more information to the Committee within a month.

There was \$160,000 remaining in the Johnson capital reserve and he expected the two projects to use \$140,000 of those funds. While it was fortunate to have the funds available, the downside was that they had been looking at using those funds to reroof the connector roof as well as an AC project to finish the third floor to keep it from overheating.

**Other Business:** Orost asked whether LaFlam was working on the quote for a track. LaFlam replied that he would have to review it again. The next step would be engineering. The track item was tabled when the engineer said it would cost \$8,000 to do a rough design. He would move forward when the Committee or Board decided to take the item up again.

**Adjourn:** Miller made a motion, seconded by Barry, to adjourn the meeting at 6:42 p.m.