



East Greenwich School Committee Meeting

Tuesday, April 18, 2023

6:00 pm

Hybrid Meeting: Cole Middle School & Via Zoom

Minutes

Those in attendance

School Committee: Ms. Alyson Powell, Chair; Ms. Nicole Bucka, Vice-Chair; Ms. Clare Cecil-Karb; Mr. Tim Munoz; Dr. Eugene Quinn

Additional Attendees: Dr. Brian G. Ricca, Superintendent; Mr. Michael Podraza, Assistant Superintendent; Mrs. Maggie Baker, Director of Administration; Mr. Neil Marcaccio, Director of Student Services; Mrs. Amy Healey, Confidential Administrative Assistant; Attorney Aubrey Lombardo

Absent: Mr. William Hangan; Mr. Kevin Murphy

I. Call to Order

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Public Comment

IV. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings

A. March 30, 2023 School Committee - Master Plan Community Forum Minutes

On a motion by Dr. Quinn, seconded by Ms. Cecil-Karb, the Committee voted 4-0-1 to approve the minutes of March 30, 2023. Ms. Bucka abstained from the vote

B. April 4, 2023 Executive Session Minutes

On a motion by Ms. Bucka, seconded by Dr. Quinn, the Committee voted 5-0 to approve the Executive Session Minutes of April 4, 2023.

C. April 4, 2023 Regular Session Minutes

On a motion by Ms. Bucka, seconded by Dr. Quinn, the Committee voted 5-0 to approve the Regular Session Minutes of April 4, 2023.

V. Discussion and Possible Action

A. Building Master Plan Option

Ms. Powell reported that the Building Committee met on April 4, 2023 and unanimously supported a recommendation to the School Committee. Mr. Derek Osterman of Colliers gave a presentation on the recommended Building Master Plan Option. Mr. Osterman discussed the process and community engagement that has led to this point in the project.

Key Strategies: Elementary

- Overcrowding
- Early learning success is critical
- Early intervention
- Grade Realignment

Key Strategies: High School

- Meaningful improvements to EGHS
- Student-centered learning environments
- Interdisciplinary learning
- Health & Well-being
- Reorganize key building areas

Strategic Plan Alignment

- Deeper Learning
- Professional Learning Community
- Integrated Social Emotional Well-being
- Equity
- Community Spaces

Criteria/ Parameters for Option Development

- Site Constraints
- Traffic Considerations
- Overall Project / Program Impact
- Cost Value Impact

Elementary School Options

- Planning Option A
 - New Build at Frenchtown Grades 3-5 District-Wide
 - Add/Reno at Hanaford Grades K-2 Neighborhood School
 - Add/Reno at Meadowbrook Grades PK-2 Neighborhood School
 - Eldredge Closed as a School
- Planning Option B
 - New Build at Frenchtown Grades PK-5 Neighborhood School
 - New Build at Hanaford Grades PK-5 Neighborhood School

- Eldredge Closed as a School
- Meadowbrook Closed as a School
- Planning Option C
 - New Build at Frenchtown Grades 1-5 Neighborhood School
 - New Build at Hanaford Grades 1-5 Neighborhood School
 - Reno at Meadowbrook Grades PK-K District-Wide
 - Eldredge Closed as a School

Option Feasibility - a validation exercise of the programming, not a design solution, to be further developed through community engagement

Frenchtown Elementary School Grades 1-5 @ 500 students Option C

- Site Constraints
- Current Considerations
- Proposed Improvements

Hanaford Elementary School Grades 1-5 @ 500 students Option C

- Site Constraints
- Current Considerations
- Proposed Improvements

Meadowbrook Elementary School Grades PK-K @ 200 students Option C

- Site Constraints

What does success look like and what are you most excited about?

Mr. Osterman said that there was a lot of feedback from community members who want to ensure that the Eldredge building is preserved for future use. The Town Council voted to approve a bond referendum request to the State in an amount not to exceed \$180 million. Reimbursement from the State may be as much as 65% of the overall project cost if anticipated action is taken by the State. The building committee recommended Building Master Plan Option C1.

Draft Cost - Updated March 2023

Option C1

● Hanaford	\$57 million	New Build	Grades 1-5
● Frenchtown	\$57 million	New Build	Grades 1-5
● Meadowbrook	\$16 million	Reno	Grades PK-K
● EGHS	\$20 million	Add/Reno	Grades 9-12
Total	\$150 million		

Ms. Powell explained that in order to move to Stage 2, the Committee needs to approve an option that can be moved forward by the team.

Dr. Quinn asked what the reimbursement would be with no legislative adjustments.

Mr. Osterman replied that the baseline reimbursement for East Greenwich is 35%. There are 6 categories of bonuses which could increase the reimbursement by 50% to 52.5% of the total project cost.

Ms. Bucka inquired how construction at Hanaford would impact the neighborhood. Mr. Osterman replied that a discussion has begun with the neighbors and consideration of any impact is being reviewed.

Ms. Bucka asked about the movement of severe and profound students amongst the elementary schools. Ms. Powell replied that the vision for all students is to have them have the same school experience.

Ms. Cecil-Karb expressed her appreciation for the opportunity given to the community to engage in this process. She spoke in favor of all East Greenwich students having the same resources.

Dr. Quinn acknowledged the significant cost of this project, but pointed out that the historic school bonding has represented a larger percentage of assessed property values.

Ms. Cecil-Karb pointed out that the students who are in the elementary school during the construction projects will see the benefits of the improvements at the high school.

Ms. Powell thanked everyone for their work on this project to date.

On a motion by Ms. Bucka, seconded by Mr. Munoz, the Committee voted 5-0 to approve the school building committee's recommendation of Building Master Plan Option C1.

VI. Action Items

A. School Committee Approval of Homeschool Request - Grade 6 SY 22-23
On a motion by Mr. Munoz, seconded by Ms. Cecil-Karb, the Committee voted 5-0 to approve the homeschool request.

B. School Committee Approval of \$100,000 from Fund Balance for the purchase of portable radios
On a motion by Ms. Bucka, seconded by Dr. Quinn, the Committee voted 5-0 to approve the expenditure from fund balance.

VII. Policies

A. Policy 1125: School Committee By-laws - Revision, First Read

Ms. Powell and Ms. Bucka reviewed the proposed changes to the by-laws. Included are changes to the role of the Chair, the responsibilities and operations of sub-committees, the agenda creation process, the role of the liaison to the Town Council and communication protocols. Members are encouraged to review the proposed revisions and submit feedback to either Ms. Bucka or Ms. Powell.

Mr. Munoz spoke in favor of the proposed changes and how it levels out the democracy of the School Committee and empowers all of its members. He encouraged more public participation in sub-committees. Mr. Munoz praised Ms. Powell's approach to treating all members equally and the sharing of information amongst members.

Ms. Cecil-Karb inquired about whether health and wellness can be divided. Attorney Lombardo replied that they have to stay together by statute although sub-topics can be offshoots of the sub-committee.

Ms. Cecil-Karb expressed concern about not knowing whether other members have responded to an email sent from a community member to all the entire Committee.

VIII. Superintendent & Staff Report

A. Financial Report

Mrs. Baker explained how the projections are generated. On the grants section, the acronyms have been spelled out and dates were included.

Ms. Bucka inquired about the IDEA funds and the use of grant monies for personnel.

Dr. Quinn shared a comment by Mr. Michael D'Amico that if you get within a couple hundred thousand dollars within a budget, you have done a good job.

The Committee discussed funds intended to supplement student needs being used for personnel.

Mr. Munoz raised concern about state funding being based on community income levels rather than on student needs. The Committee discussed addressing funding concerns with the legislature.

IX. Subcommittee Reports

A. EG Building Committee

B. Facilities

Ms. Bucka spoke of the custodial needs at Cole and suggested that students be prompted to clean up their messes as a means of being good citizens. Dr. Ricca, having spoken to Interim Principal Centracchio, said that there are expectations of students. He added that

Facilities Director Mr. Wilmarth is looking into making improvements to the building's cleaning.

C. Policy

XI. Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. Munoz, seconded by Dr. Quinn, the Committee voted 5-0 to adjourn the meeting at 7:21 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy J. Healey
School Committee Clerk

Approved 5-2-23