Long Range Planning Task Force

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, October 21, 2026

1. Call to Order

Shawn called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m.

2. Opening Discussion and Committee Goals

The committee began with an open discussion regarding the feasibility of the proposed timelines and the importance of prioritizing the district's needs.

- **Joe Calsetta** questioned whether the proposed timeline was feasible and suggested that the committee consider focusing on one priority at a time.
- **Greg G.** shared that he had communicated to the Board of Education (BOE) that completing the proposed work within the anticipated timeline might not be feasible. He emphasized that the committee should work collaboratively to determine the best course of action without rushing the process, while remaining mindful of budget considerations.
- The committee discussed the importance of improving operational efficiency.
- **Shawn** explained that the committee would review five scenarios, with the goal of identifying which scenario or scenarios warranted further consideration.
- **Jeff** expressed confidence in the committee's ability to review the available information and gather additional data as needed.
- **Courtney** noted that several committee members also work in the district's schools and have been actively reviewing the scenarios over the previous two weeks.

Shawn explained that the administrators had initially met to brainstorm potential scenarios. These ideas were then shared with district administrators who were not serving on the task force, followed by teachers serving on the committee.

Megan had completed a tour of the district's facilities with Greg W. Additional tours may be arranged as needed.

The committee agreed to review all five scenarios before discussing how the scenarios and supporting documents would be evaluated moving forward. A vote would be held at the conclusion of the meeting to determine the next steps in the review process.

3. Review of Proposed Scenarios

Shawn reviewed the five proposed scenarios, as outlined in the accompanying attachment. Following the presentation, the committee discussed the potential benefits, challenges, costs, and educational implications of each option.

Daryl emphasized the importance of bringing Garaby, Tami Z., and Kissel before the Board of Education to discuss the educational needs of the communities served by the district.

Scenario 1

Vote:

- Yes: 18
- No: 2

Discussion:

- Courtney emphasized that budget discussions can sometimes overshadow students' educational needs and stressed that decisions must consider more than financial implications.
- Daryl noted that potential cost savings could create opportunities to hire additional teachers and expand student services.
- Joe expressed concern that years of mismanagement had contributed to the town's current need for significant capital improvements.

Scenario 2

Vote:

- Yes: 0
- No: 19
- Abstained: 1

Discussion:

- Laura asked about the proposed educational structure for sixth grade.
- Shawn stated that the committee would remain open to discussion as the planning process progressed.
- Jo-Anne noted that teachers are willing to make the necessary adjustments to support a successful transition.
- Matt raised the possibility that an additional gymnasium might be needed.

- Jeff noted that scheduling at the high school could present challenges.
- James suggested increasing student access to the pool at the high school possibly as part of gym class.
- Greg W. indicated that two separate structures would be needed for PMA and Pre-K.
- Daryl noted that WLMS requires a new roof. Greg W. agreed and also raised concerns regarding foundation issues.
- Greg G. asked how students in grades 7–8 and 9–12 would be separated.
- Courtney suggested that complete separation might not be necessary and that opportunities for role-modeling could benefit students.
- Greg W. proposed separating instructional classes as a possible alternative.

Scenario 3

Vote:

- Yes: 4
- No: 16

Discussion:

- Laura asked whether the available central office space would be sufficient for Pine Meadow if some central office functions were relocated.
- Jeff F. responded that the existing space would not be adequate.
- Courtney suggested further examining the transitions and potential restructuring of Pine Meadow. A more integrated approach.

Scenario 4

Vote:

- Yes: 19
- No: 1

The committee recorded the vote in favor of continuing consideration of this scenario.

Scenario 5

Vote:

- Yes: 20
- No: 0

Discussion:

- Greg W. described Scenario 5 as the most cost-effective option under consideration. He expressed confidence that current district staff could complete a significant portion of the necessary work internally, potentially reducing costs.
- Shawn raised the possibility of reducing transportation costs through adjustments to busing.
- Solmarie asked how the ABA program would function under the proposed scenario.

4. Scenarios Selected for Further Study

Based on the committee's discussion and votes, Scenarios 1, 4, and 5 were identified for further study.

Shawn agreed to investigate whether Scenario 1 was a feasible option.

The committee also discussed whether additional Hartford Open Choice seats might be available. The current number of seats was reported as 87.

Shawn asked whether there were any additional options the committee should explore.

Daryl proposed an additional concept for consideration: constructing a new high school on the Thrall property.

5. Subcommittee Assignments

The committee discussed forming subcommittees to conduct further review of the selected scenarios.

Subcommittee 5

- Emily
- Matt Brown
- Jo-Anne
- Courtney
- Joe
- Jeff F.
- Greg W.
- Larry
- Jeff B.

Subcommittee 4

- Megan
- Laura
- Jeff F.
- Solmarie
- Greg W.
- Larry
- Maureen
- Jeff B.

The subcommittees will meet on November 4 to continue their work.

6. Next Steps and Committee Communication

- Shawn requested that committee members submit any questions or requests for clarification by October 28.
- The committee will break into subcommittees to further examine the three selected scenarios.
- The task force will explore holding a public information session to share its work with the community before presenting its findings to the Board of Education. The date and time are to be determined.
- Shawn will investigate the feasibility of Scenario 1.

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:02 p.m.