

Unapproved Minutes - 27 July 2021

Danville School Board of Directors  
Special Meeting Minutes (prepared 7/28 by Clayton Cargill)  
July 27, 2021

This meeting was held in the Danville School Library and with remote access made available via Zoom teleconferencing.

Link to video recording of the meeting:

[https://ccsu.zoom.us/rec/share/LrZXPOPS1V8sNvDw-1\\_kfG0\\_tT50oNRpC-nBUskEUZpwZSzlqPBI7BniRAvFDaM3.oLJi9zpRTqy2AqD4](https://ccsu.zoom.us/rec/share/LrZXPOPS1V8sNvDw-1_kfG0_tT50oNRpC-nBUskEUZpwZSzlqPBI7BniRAvFDaM3.oLJi9zpRTqy2AqD4)

Passcode: b1\$fz45W

Members Present: Bruce Melendy (Chair), David Towle, Tim Sanborn, Clayton Cargill

Members Absent: Robert Edgar

Administration Present: Mark Tucker, David Schilling, Sarah Welch, Shawn McNamara

Public Present: Kaity White, Rob Balivet, Richard Dean (TruexCullins), Cam Featherstonaugh (TruexCullins), Barry Bernstein (consultant, formerly of the company Messersmith), Matt Colburn of Messersmith, and Bill Karis of Efficiency Vermont

1: Call to Order: Bruce called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm (00:00.10)

No additions to the agenda. Two board members were physically present, Clayton Cargill and Bruce Melendy. Tim Sanborn and David Towle joined via zoom.

2: Approve Minutes: (00:00.57)

MOTION: Clayton moved to approve the meeting minutes from the 6/1 regular school meeting, with the grammatical corrections Robert Edgar had put forth. Those minutes were available to review prior to the meeting on the Danville School Board Website.

Tim Seconded. Vote: Unanimous. Motion Adopted. Minutes Approved

MOTION: Clayton moved to approve the meeting minutes from the 6/16 special meeting with the one amendment. Tim Sanborn seconds. Vote: unanimous. Motion Adopted. Minutes Approved.

3: Administrative Reports

Superintendent Report (00:02.25)

July Report is a summary of the previous year. Quiet summer, with many staff taking well needed vacations. Summer Schools are in session at both Danville School and a High School Session at Cabot (available for Danville students). Twinfield School had a special visitor at their summer program, Bernie Sanders. He noted the news coverage following that.

Waiting on new guidance or an update on guidance from the Vermont AOE regarding the coronavirus and specifically the Delta variant. The specific guidance needed is with regard to masking in schools, if this is necessary, if it pertains only to unvaccinated persons or to whom specifically it will pertain. He notes that the CDC has a statement this day supporting the wearing of masks by both vaccinated and unvaccinated persons indoors. Vermont is not dealing with a COVID surge similar to other states. Mark expects guidance next week, specifically next Tuesday. All administration will be together, working on social and emotional learning at the VPA conference in Stowe next week (week of August 1).

Clayton asks a question regarding mask wearing on busses that was implemented in the middle of the summer program. Mark indicated that the change in policy was a “miss” by the Agency of Education and that busses actually fall not under the category of schools but instead of public conveyance and those regulations call for every person on a public conveyance to be wearing masks, regardless of age or vaccination status. Policy change was implemented entirely without issue.

Mark notes that whatever the guidelines turn out to be, some people will be unhappy, but we will comply.

Principal’s Report (00:07.20)

No written report, as both principals are currently on vacation (though present at this meeting). Dave Schilling spoke quite a bit about the positive end of the year, the prom, graduation, and other end of year activities. He gave praise to Shawn McNamara and his staff for their summer work getting the school ready for the next school year. Sarah Welch concurred with Dave’s words. Indicated that the admin team is meeting next year to look at what the plan for next year looks like.

Bruce Melendy mentioned that the Girls Softball Team won the Division IV state championship and there was some revelry and praise of the girl’s team and their strength throughout. Bruce further made clear his thanks for an anonymous donor who provided a Coach bus for the girls on the day of their championship game, and that it was greatly appreciated.

Student Report (00:09.49)

No Student Report. Dave Schilling indicated that we will be adding one student representative to the board this year, but that we will be returning both Liza Morse and Ava Marshia to the board for another year.

4: Board Business

Architect’s Update:

Both Richard Dean and Cam Featherstonaugh from Truex Cullins spoke about the new design idea. Cam shared the concept design diagram on the Zoom screen for the board. The new design (we do not currently have a digital copy to place here) that had come forth as the best of the available options will place an additional one story NEW elementary school to the west of the existing

building, surrounding a new playground structure. In addition, in place of the old 1957 core of the building (which currently houses PK and K classrooms) will be built a new auditorium structure, in addition to myriad other changes to the shape and design of the existing building.

Discussion immediately centered around the lack of space that was available and that could be properly upgraded or re-implemented safely and effectively. The most effective solution to Truex Cullins in their experience was to build the new addition to meet the square footage needs of the school going forward.

There were originally three options put forth to the administration and review by community member Rob Balivet and this was the one that was chosen to present to the board. The new building is connected to the old building and the two buildings are connected by a major spine, a branching pathway making easy access to all aspects of the building.

The 1957 building was cost prohibitive to renovate and any renovation would be cost prohibitive. That building would be demolished and rebuilt, to include an auditorium and an entry to the building, in addition to the spine.

Cam went on that there were two specific issues driving the space issues. Specialists (OT's, SLPs, interventionists, etc) need space, and then that the elementary school has very undersized classrooms with regard to modern classrooms. Those rooms need more space to make more varied zones to meet 21st century education needs. Those two factors were the two that made up most of the space needed for elementary.

Bruce Melendy asks regarding the new building if the current playground is being eliminated (yes) and a new playground build (also yes) and if the little league ballfields that sits above the playground are also being eliminated. Cam says yes to all three things, but that Truex Cullins was looking to get a landscape engineer and some additional civil engineering better information to relocate those facilities and services, but that there are challenges to the site because of space, and property lines. Bruce indicated that for sports purposes, the current layout is very good to accommodate parents with various aged children, being able to safely use the facility. He would want to keep that sort of format if possible. This was noted.

Dave Schilling noted that previous plans, to simply add floors, was not feasible and was considered in effect to be trying to place good on top of bad. Bruce further noted that he liked the design and the concept and noted the great value of the second gymnasium, which has been needed by this school facility for a long time. Cam noted that this was made clear by nearly every survey participant, the pinch point of the existing gym and the time.

Sarah Welch asked if there was a possibility of adding a secondary eating space in the elementary wing, noting that starting lunches very early wasn't ideal. This wasn't in the current plans. Cam again noted the concern.

Clayton asked to have all the multi use spaces on the current layout identified, and the location of the to-be-moved cafeteria. Cam pointed out the library would not move, but was potentially a public space. The new cafeteria would be sized well for public meetings. In the new facility, there would

be a team gathering space that would be good for elementary gatherings, or multiple classrooms coming together for larger meetings of students, with as many as fifty students being comfortable in the room. He also notes a host of small rooms made for instruction and for services to be delivered, so that the students, when pulled into specials for education reasons, would not spend as much time in transit. Those multi use rooms could be called small instruction flex spaces, or private study rooms, or group instruction space.

Rob Balivet noted a concern with regard to zoning and specifically with regard to parking, thinking there may not be as much of a need for that many. Cam again notes that this plan still needs quite a bit of engineering and coordination and site management to be finished, and that the design we are looking at is full of unknowns, pending the next actions by the board.

More questions about the driveway...where busses go, how they turn around...how the design will actually flow. Bruce interjected questions about the proposed additional Route 2 exit to the west of the school, and safety issues with regard to it. There was some general discussion about whether VTrans would allow that at all, or could it be a right turn only or could it be a traffic light. The Truex civil engineers have already started the conversation with VTrans, according to the men here. That requires a traffic engineer.

Richard Dean interjects to talk about next steps. This is a very early sketch of a scope of work. Cam has made clear that we need to understand the landscapes. Richard says there needs to be structural engineering work done, cost estimation done, and developing enough information to get a real idea of the actual cost of the project. This will require additional funds.

The original scope of work approved by the board in December 2019 was for planning and design of a revamp of existing and a small addition to existing buildings. This has not proven to be viable and is no longer the case. Truex Cullins is proposing additional fees to pay for civil, structural and landscape engineering, as well as topographic estimates and site reorganization planning. This was all unanticipated work in December 2019.

Mark Tucker notes he has received the documents and will present them to the board. Again indicates the drastic changes to the scope of work involved in planning and designing a building that fits the 21st century needs of the community. He notes without criticism that you have the building you have and the issues facing you because very little thought was given to the grand design as individual projects were done in the name of adding onto the school. He notes that without finishing this project, there isn't anything that can be taken to voters upon which to vote.

He shared onscreen a proposal for additional design services. (not yet available). The scope of work (planning work) with specifics...surveys, architectural designs, surveys totals \$66,100. He points out that we have \$130,000 dollars in unrestricted surplus, prior to closing the books on FY21. He notes that Michael Concessi is cautiously optimistic about the FY21 closing. He also notes that the ventilation work was all paid by grants, and that there was nothing budgeted in FY22 for that. He says that barring some bizarre outcome, we are going to have what we need to go to the bond bank and in front of the voters for a bond vote for a 21st century renovation of the school. He notes that if

we do not, our initial \$65,000 expenses are for naught. We will have a finished design to show the people of the town, so they can decide whether to support a bond for this. Mark Tucker recommends that the board vote to approve this expense.

Dave Schilling added two notes. First, that the next thing we would be discussing at length would be the wood chip boiler and the costs associated with its revamp/repair, and second, the existence of the funds in the Mission and Vision fund that might be appropriated toward the Truex Cullins proposal, since this was by its very definition, the mission and visions of the school. Bruce noted that the fund was originally \$50,000 and that only \$10,000 had been allocated as yet, and there was general assent that there was a procedure in place for allocating that money that could be considered by the board. Bruce says that is a conversation for another meeting.

Tim Sanborn and Dave Towle wonder if it is necessary to hear the status of the wood chip plant before deciding on this issue. Mark Tucker says he disagrees and that the planning of the school should take precedence, and that the school has the money available to approve this project.

Richard from Truex Cullins makes clear that the revamped wood chip boiler is actually integral to the planning and thinking of the future of their project. It is part of their plans.

Vote on this pending the discussion on the wood chip plant (skipping new hires for a time).

Wood Chip Plant Review: (00:50.35)

Shawn McNamara gives brief recap of the boiler. Installed in 2007, ran for 1 1/2 - 2 years before complete failure. To repair and modify, we would need to repair and modify the fuel bin sidewall, a traveling auger, a paddle fan, and an incline ash auger with an airlock cyclone (an induction fan). We need to cut the inside concrete inside of the existing bay 56 feet x 6 feet wide x 2 feet deep to accommodate the new auguring system, to replace the defunct paddle system. Also needs some small tuneups on the control panel and some on the actual combustion system, and "that thing will run like a top."

The initial bid received was for \$174,000. Many grants were applied for within Vermont and specifically with Efficiency Vermont, and with the FDA. Right now we can solidly say that we have about \$50,000 worth of grant money. He set up a proposal that went back the past three years for fuel costs (propane/biofuel versus wood chips). Last year 2020, the school used 96000 gallons plus. We can knock that down by 3/4 using wood chips. Barry Bernstein of Calais, a consultant who formerly worked for Messersmith, answered a question that a ton of wood chips is normally 65-70 dollars a ton. Shawn likened a ton of wood chips to a cord of wood and said that it would run the boiler for 8-10 hours, and that kind of production will greatly offset the costs of fuel. And with the airflow systems we have here, there are no real controls to the system. It runs either on or off. He thinks we can stop using the biofuel (heating oil) system except for 3 or 4 month per year.

Barry Bernstein says that at 70 dollars a ton for chips is the equivalent of spending \$1 per gallon on fuel oil. We are currently paying \$2.71 per gallon for biofuel.

He stops to introduce himself and Matt. He is a former representative of Messersmith, for 30 years. His company had been involved in over a hundred installations of chip boilers in Vermont, including 43 schools. He has been involved since 1985, moving Calais over in 1985, off of electricity. Matt Colburn is a project manager at Messersmith, does all service and sales and is a co-owner. He is a resident of Northfield.

Many competing companies doing this have gone out of business and Messersmith has experience taking over and rebuilding abandoned and/or moribund boiler systems.

Matt Colburn gives a similar synopsis. Speaks briefly about the BTUs for gallon in biofuel, and how it's less than heating oil, so there are savings we aren't even considering.

Barry mentions another grant for \$25000 that the school may also qualify for. Speaking now is Bill Karis, who says that Efficiency Vermont has approved about \$40,000 in grants. And that at \$2 per gallon on oil and at \$65 a ton, the school can save \$27,000 per year. At \$2.71, it's potentially \$47,000 savings over fuel oil. Biofuel, which is approximately 85% fuel oil and 15% biodiesel is less efficient than #2 fuel oil.

The Messersmith quote does not include slab work. The slab work quotes are pending. The slab work again is to dig out a 56 foot long, 6 foot wide, 2 foot deep delivery system for the chips. That work could cost as much as \$50,000, and is not considered in the Messersmith quote of \$174,000. That could be eligible for separate grants, but alternately could be covered by the Efficiency Vermont grants.

With these new delivery systems, we can expect higher efficiency, because the new systems has "oxygen trim" and we can expect efficiency closer to 85% (which is far better than the zero percent we have now, notes Mark Tucker) but that is far superior to the 65% we were expecting in the 2007 installation. Mark Tucker notes again that we don't yet have the cement costs, which are pending and couldn't range from 30K-45K, or as much as 50K, which is what Bill Karis was putting in his projections. With absolutely no grant money, Bill Karis says even at \$50K, this project is fully paid back in 5 years. With two grants, it could be as quickly as three years, and that includes a low estimate on fuel costs and a high estimate on the concrete work. There are savings to be had.

Bruce ball-parked the \$174K + \$40K for slab work, and minuses out the two grants of \$40K and of \$25K, looking at a projected figure of \$149,000 that we might have to vote on, if we were considering a vote tonight. It is pointed out that the 50K for the slab work is the higher estimate and that we are looking at potentially \$159,000 for approval for this work.

Mark Tucker points out that we don't currently have the unrestricted funds to cover this and more specifically not this and the Truex Cullins motion that is also up in the air tonight. He does indicate that he sees the benefit of having it fixed and deems it necessary, but that there aren't funds now. He recommends we defer this decision until the FY21 books are closed. Bruce indicates that our next scheduled meeting is Tuesday September 7, and maybe if the books are closed by then, we can

potentially decide at that point, or if we know sooner, we can schedule a special meeting with this item on the agenda.

Barry makes clear that the sooner they find out, the sooner they can start the work and get the project finished by the end of the year. Matt Colburn makes clear that the lead time on equipment is about 14 weeks, but that may actually be reduced. If it's voted and approved and by September, it would likely be done during December. It could be done while the system is running on oil throughout the facility. Matt also notes that the vast majority of the items we need are stock items that do not require fabrication, which is good for lead times. He wonders if it needs to be only started or fully completed to continue to qualify for the Efficiency Vermont grants. So now we learn it has to be fully completed in 2021 to guarantee those funds, or if (as Bill Karis makes clear) the money would need to be reallocated, hopefully at the same level.

Board members generally agree that this is an item best deferred until we get more information and additional funds unencumbered.

Next Item:

New Hires:

New ESSR reading interventionist, half time. Mark Tucker hired Lynn Dunklee, recently retired from a very long career in Danville. That hire was made by Mark Tucker, with his summer hiring authority.

There is also one candidate for a secondary math interventionist where the candidate is picking between two jobs. That should be decided within the week. Dave Schilling notes that there are more jobs available in the state than interventionists.

Circling back to the Truex Cullins proposal (this may move up to that section, I don't know).

Bruce notes that there is a proposal on the table from Truex Cullins for additional work to finish and prepare a site plan for the new building proposal, and the new costs include engineering work, civil, mechanical and landscape, as well as additional costs, so that we can present to the community for a bond vote.

MOTION: Clayton makes the motion to approve the expenditure of \$66,100 for Truex Cullins to complete their work. SECONDED: Tim Sanborn

Clayton amends the motion to include Mark Tucker as the signatory on the paperwork. Tim again seconds.

Vote: Unanimous MOTION: Adopted

Other business:

NONE

Public Input:

Kaity White had questions regarding the architecture proposal, and specific questions about the new building, and why the building was chosen to be an elementary school instead of a new high school

instead. She said she had heard some community concerns about keeping the high school vibrant and how that might fit the community needs better going forward.

Dave Schilling indicated that the proposal actually included a significant revamping of the high school hallway in general and that it would provide upgraded classrooms and spaces for them as well, without having to uproot them from their existing space. He indicated that there was currently no space to add programs and that making the spaces available was part of the design to share the existing space (minus the elementary students) would help to do what Kaity was wondering about. Mark Tucker indicated that the new gymnasium was also an elementary sized gymnasium, and that keeping the high school with the larger gym was preferable. Sarah Welch notes that any renovations of the elementary would have to include massive plumbing renovations that would be cost prohibitive. Rob Balivet also mentions that there being a library only in the high school wing and not one in the elementary wing might be an issue. The needs of the library were briefly discussed for both high school children and elementary children.

Kaity went on about the lack of a distinction between the middle school and the high school in terms of space, and that the high school seems to be “shrinking” in space. It was noted in the new building design that the middle school would move back to the 1937 building, where one of the elementary school wings is currently housed. Dave Schilling notes that the middle school culture is as important as the high school culture, because parents of middle school children need to be able to imagine their children as potential high school students in Danville as well.

Kaity notes that that wing was where the middle school was when she was a middle schooler, not that long ago. Sarah wondered how they housed the elementary school with the middle school where the elementary was.

Future Agenda Items:

Architect Update

Wood Chip Boiler Update

New Hires

Next Scheduled Meeting, September 7, 2021

Adjournment:

Clayton motions to adjourn, Tim seconds, VOTE: Unanimous, Meeting Adjourned at 8.32pm