

TOWN OF NEWINGTON

2020 JAN 14 AM 9:37

ANNA REYNOLDS SCHOOL PROJECT BUILDING COMMITTEE


Town Clerk

CORRECTED SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

January 9, 2020, Helen Nelson Room, Town Hall

(Corrections are in BOLD print)

- I. Call to Order – Committee Chairperson Stephen Woods called the meeting to order at 5:35 PM.
- II. Roll Call – Members present: Stephen Woods, Chairperson; Steven Silvia, Cindy Stamm, Carol Duggan and Jeremy Whetzel. Others present: members of the public; Maureen Brummett, Ph.D., Superintendent of Schools; Lou Jachimowicz, Chief Finance and Operating Officer; Jason Smith, Principal; and Jeff Baron, Director of Administrative Services.
- III. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes – Ms. Stamm made a motion that the minutes of the December 12, 2019 meeting be approved as written. A second to the motion was made by Mr. Whetzel. The motion passed by a vote of 5 YES to 0 NO.
- IV. Public Participation – None.
- V. Presentation to Town Council – The Chair was present the previous evening for a walkthrough of Reynolds School by the Town Council. If there is a need for a presentation in the future it will be made to the public. When showing what needs to be done, he would recommend adding the bigger things, the radiant floor heating, etc. To use a health analogy for the building, the heart is good but the arteries are clogged. There may be some abatement, but much of it was done when the fire suppression system went in. The need is to make the building look like what it really is. Because of the fine job done by the custodial staff, the buildings present themselves better than they are. Mr. Whetzel added that logistical items are also big, the lack of security and the condition of carpeting should also be mentioned. Mr. Woods asked that the difference in elevation within the school be highlighted. He felt the presentation the evening before had gone well, that the Town Councilors were interested and paid attention to what was said. He felt that the project would continue to move forward. Mr. Silvia said that he also talked to members of the Town Council at last night's presentation and that they were supportive of addressing the conditions at Reynolds School. They also wanted to see the overall Town building study that will have an overview of all Town facilities. They might also like to bundle facilities. This study might take four or five months. Ms. Stamm felt that this Committee faced huge deadlines moving forward. There was no reason for this building not to be a priority moving forward. She did not want the wait for a facilities study to be a stalling tactic. Mr. Silvia stated that other priorities also needed to be addressed. Anna Reynolds School is his top priority. Any stalling tactics would be on the part of both parties. He asked what the State's requirements were. Mr. Jachimowicz replied that the Ed specs would need to be updated and then motions by the Board of Education would be needed to adopt the Ed specs. Mr.

Silvia asked what resources would be needed to adopt the Ed specs. Mr. Jachimowicz responded that consensus would be needed by the Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools on such topics as enrollment and community programming. There are no details, the Ed specs would be a series of statements. He would build a template for the Committee to look at. The Board of Education will put it together. Mr. Silvia asked about a first draft. Mr. Jachimowicz said that it could be e-mailed afterwards, that the Ed specs need to be refreshed. The Chair noted that the Board of Education establishes the need, the need for renovation, the need for an addition. The Building Committee takes the need and determines if it is feasible within the charge received from the Town Council. If it doesn't fit within that box the Committee will go back to the Board of Education to change it or it will go back to the Town Council to get them to change it. Mr. Silvia asked Dr. Brummett what was needed. Dr. Brummett also stated that the Ed specs needed to be refined. Mr. Jachimowicz added that four things would be needed. The Board needs to pass the Ed specs. Then the ball moves over to the Town Council for them to pass three motions: to authorize the Superintendent to file a grant application; to authorize hiring of an architect to do the preliminary/referendum package; and to establish a building committee to run the operation. These four things need to happen in order for legislative action to occur. Mr. Silvia stated the need to get things in front of the Board of Education, and the need to get them on the Board's agenda. Dr. Brummett responded that they can be posted the following day for discussion at next week's Board of Education meeting. Mr. Woods suggested that the Board may wish to concentrate on the Early Childhood program. Dr. Brummett felt that space within the school, would need to be reconfigured, that the State would not support expansion. Mr. Silvia concluded the discussion by saying that the Board of Education needed to get the requirements nailed down.

- VI. Enrollment - Dr. Brummett stated that two pre-kindergarten classes at Reynolds could add fifty additional students. Open Choice seats could also be added. There were not any Open Choice students currently. This led to a discussion on the history of Open Choice at this school.
- VII. Timing for Owner's Project Manager and/or Construction Manager – Mr. Woods felt that the Committee needed both. He asked for money the previous evening. He felt that if the Committee had \$50,000 it could hire both an Owner's Project Manager and a Construction Manager. This would allow the Building Committee to get a solid budget. Ms. Stamm stated the need to get the Town to own up its responsibility. All departments are part of the entire Town. There should not be any more "them vs. us". Mr. Woods stated that the Committee may have to be creative. These expenses would be eligible for reimbursement by the State. The Town Council is working on it. There is a need to keep the project moving forward. Mr. Silvia spoke about his draft of a timeline. The sequence of events is what needs to occur. Mr. Woods felt that the Committee could make the June 30th date. It would be difficult, they may not make it, but they need to try. Mr. Whetzel asked the Chair what his sense was from the Town Council. Mr. Woods responded that he had a much more positive feeling. Mr. Silvia spoke about what the Committee had to do to hit its targets. Mr. Woods noted that there were members of the Library Committee at the walk through of the school. There are other players out there. Mr. Silvia felt they were just as interested about where they fall in the overall framework. He felt that there was enough energy in the Town to declare Anna Reynolds as the top priority. Mr. Whetzel felt there was a need to compel the governing bodies to take action. Mr. Woods applauded the Council's efforts. He felt it

would take closer to a year to complete the study, set priorities, receive public comments, etc. His goal is to keep this project moving forward. It doesn't take a lot of money. Ms. Stamm asked how long it would take to do something. Mr. Jachimowicz responded that the Town Council has to pass the resolutions that the Board of Education approves. That gets you on the list for next year, for consideration by the bond commission. In order to be funded by the State the Town would need to have the referendum scheduled. Mr. Woods stated that he is hearing that funding for the schools at the State level is being cut back, but there is still a lot of work that is going on. Mr. Jachimowicz stated that there is no concept of cost initially. Mr. Silvia asked, conceptually speaking, what the Committee wanted at Anna Reynolds. Mr. Woods stated that we are looking to Renovate as New, with a few programming changes. The dollars will decide. Mr. Silvia concluded discussion by stating that the Ed specs are within the Board of Education's control.

- VIII. Any Other Business Pertinent to the Committee - the Committee agreed by consensus to hold their next meeting on January 30th at 7:00 PM. By that meeting the Committee may have a better idea if any money is going to be provided for the project.
- IX. Public Participation – None.
- X. Comments by Members - None
- XI. Adjournment – the meeting adjourned at 6:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Baron

Jeff Baron
Director of Administrative Services