

Whitman-Hanson Regional School Committee

Facilities and Capital Projects Sub-committee Meeting
September 10, 2014

Meeting Convened: 5:30 p.m., WHRHS Library

School Committee Members Present: Fred Small, Chair; Dan Cullity; Don Ford; Kevin Lynam;
Robert Hayes

Board of Selectmen Representatives: James McGahan (Hanson), Bruce Young (Hanson)

Administrators Present: Dr. Ruth C. Gilbert-Whitner, Superintendent
Ernest Sandland, Facilities Manager
Craig Finley, Assistant Superintendent of Operations
Ellen Stockdale, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching & Learning
Christine Suckow, Director of Business Services

Others: Hanson Town Administrator, Ron San Angelo, the Hanson Priority Repair Committee,
Greg Hatch, American Environmental Consultants, Inc.

The Facilities and Capital Projects Subcommittee of the Whitman-Hanson Regional School Committee met at 5:30 PM on Wednesday, September 10, in the library at the Whitman-Hanson Regional High School. The minutes from the August 13 meeting were approved. The meeting was opened by School Committee Member, Fred Small, Chair of the Facilities and Capital Improvements Sub-committee. In addition to the members of the Sub-committee, Bruce Young, Vice-Chair, Hanson Board of Selectmen and members of the Hanson Priority Repair Committee were in attendance. A meeting for the Hanson Priority Repair Committee was posted to enable its members to participate in the discussions and to remain in compliance with the Open Meeting Law.

The meeting began with a report of the air quality study that was conducted at the Maquan Elementary School on September 3, 2014. This study was conducted to assess air quality in regard to concerns expressed by staff regarding air circulation. The study assessed CO₂, CO, and mold. Relative humidity and room temperatures were recorded as well. Greg Hatch, Partner, American Environmental Consultants, Inc., was in attendance to review the report and to answer questions. He reported that the readings were at acceptable levels; however, some CO₂ levels were on the high end. Mr. Hatch recommended having a follow-up test during the winter when the heat is on and the windows are closed. Mr. McGahan asked about the history of air quality at Maquan School and whether this was a situation that had not been addressed. Mrs. Stockdale, former principal at the Maquan School, replied that mold issues in the office were rectified with the replacement of portions of the roof in 2009. Following a discussion about the warrant article to fund the purchase and installation of an indoor ventilator, the Sub-committee voted unanimously to recommend that the School Committee vote to table the article at their 7:00 PM meeting.

Following the discussion regarding air quality at Maquan, Assistant Superintendent of District Operations, Craig Finley, gave a report about specific schools and projects. At the Duval School, the new hot water heater has been installed with reports of reliable hot water in the building. At Conley School, the replacement of the freezer is underway. Mr. Finley commended Maureen MacKenzie and the Food Services Department for their flexibility in ensuring that food services went smoothly during this installation. At the Whitman Middle School, new cafeteria tables have been delivered and installed. At the Hanson Middle School, the new floors have been installed in the main hallway and cafeteria. These are no wax floors that require specific care to ensure longevity. At the Maquan School, the cafeteria floor was replaced prior to the opening of school. At Indian Head School, carpet replacement has taken place in the library and main office. The sidewalk has also been repaired. High school projects include a redesign of the library with new furniture expected in mid-September.

Following the facilities' report, the Sub-committee and the Hanson Priority Repair Committee discussed the building issues that will be placed on the warrant for the October 6 Town Meeting. Mr. Young brought up three items: the repair of the Indian Head roof, the replacement of the Indian Head roof, and the repair of the lintels at Indian Head School. The discussion initially focused on funding. Mr. Small brought up the issue of exploring MSBA reimbursement as part of the Accelerated Repair Program. It was also suggested that this could be a debt exclusion, or a non-borrowing item for the repair of the lintels. The Town of Hanson has set September 16 as the date for the finalization of warrant articles.

Because the current warrant article for the roof involves the raising and appropriating, transferring from available funds, and/or borrowing a sum of money for the development of public bid documentation and the rehabilitation or replacement of the existing slate roof on the Indian Head School. The discussion moved to the engineering study and bid document development. Kevin Lynam recommended itemizing the articles and separating the study from the actual project. Fred Small added that he did not believe that there was adequate time to complete a study with informed recommendations before the meeting on October 6. Bob Hayes suggested having two separate articles, one for repair of the roof and one for the replacement. He added that a sum of money, "not to exceed" should be included in each article. Various options were discussed. Craig Finley noted that MGL, Chapter 149, sets forth the legal guidelines for the construction, alteration, maintenance, and repair of public buildings. He also reported that bid documents for the warrant article for the addition of keys, locks, and fire doors at Maquan School would be opened on Monday, September 15.

Following a lengthy discussion, the Sub-Committee voted to recommend two articles to the School Committee: 1) to replace the roof at the Indian Head School at an amount not to exceed \$850,000 and 2) to repair the roof at the Indian Head School at an amount not to exceed \$850,000. Kevin Lynam asked how could community members decide which option was better

if there was no engineering study available to provide guidance to voters. Mark Vess, a citizen of Hanson, replied that it was a roof repair and that all that needs to be done is to go in the attic and take a look at it. Maria McClellan, member of the Hanson Priority Repair Committee added that the costs of the roof repair/replacement had varied from \$200,000 to \$800,000, and she wasn't certain why an engineering study was necessary. Dr. Whitner provided a brief history of the roof and the varying estimates and stated that she believed that was why a thorough study was necessary. She felt that taxpayers needed the best information possible to make informed decisions and that ultimately the key issues are ensuring the safety of the school for students, staff, and community members at a cost to the town that is reliable and well-researched. Questions arose as to the funding source for these articles. Suggestions included a debt exclusion, a one year capital exclusion, or multiple sources of funding.

The repair of the lintels was the last item addressed with the Sub-committee unanimously voting to recommend an article to the School Committee that would include the repair of the lintels at a cost not to exceed \$200,000.

The meeting adjourned at 7:04 PM. The next Sub-committee meeting will be held on October 8 in the high school library at 5:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth C. Gilbert-Whitner, Superintendent