

MINUTES – UNOFFICIAL DRAFT AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE
Not Official Until Approved by Board of Education at
February 1, 2017 Meeting

SHERMAN BOARD OF EDUCATION
SHERMAN, CONNECTICUT 06784
REGULAR MEETING, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 4, 2017
LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER, THE SHERMAN SCHOOL
7:00 PM

A regular meeting of the Sherman Board of Education was called to order by Mr. Hanley at 7:13 PM in the Library Media Center of the Sherman School.

1. PRESENT:

For the Board:	Mrs. Diotte, Mrs. Enright, Mr. Hackett, Mr. Hanley, Mrs. Lenihan and Mrs. Seeger
Absent:	Dr. Alexander
For the Administration:	Dr. Melendez
School Staff:	Ms. Hatch and Mrs. Schipul
SPTO:	Mrs. Johnson
Town Residents:	3 Residents

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

No public comments

3. ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

Mr. Hanley moved and Mrs. Lenihan seconded to switch the order of Agenda 8.2 and 8.3, and the motion passed unanimously, 6-0.

4. CONSENT AGENDA:

Mr. Hanley moved and Mrs. Diotte seconded that the Board approve the consent agenda items 4.1, 4.3, 4.4 and 4.5 (4.2 was intentionally left out so the Board could vote separately), and the motion passed unanimously, 6-0.

4.1	Minutes – Regular Meeting, December 7, 2016	Enclosure 4.1
4.2	Personnel Actions	
4.3	Reports – Monthly Enrollment Report	Enclosure 4.3
4.4	Monthly Budget Report 16-17(Prior to Transfers)	Enclosure 4.4 a - b
4.5	Monthly Budget Report 16-17 (After Transfers)	Enclosure 4.5 a - b

Mr. Hanley moved and Mrs. Diotte seconded to approve personnel action as it relates to the Director of Technology's salary and number of workdays, and the motion passed unanimously, 6-0.

5. APPROVAL OF CURRENT BILLS:

Mr. Hanley moved and Mrs. Diotte seconded that the Board approve the current bills as presented, and the motion passed unanimously. 6-0

5.1 2016-2017 Current Bills

Enclosure 5.1

6. ORAL REPORTS:

6.1 SPTO Update

Mrs. Johnson recapped the December 14, 2016 SPTO meeting. The SPTO has a treasury balance of \$5,182.62. Dr. Melendez attended and provided an Administration report. Mrs. Diotte and Mrs. Lenihan attended and provided a Board of Education report.

Mrs. Johnson reported the Teacher Appreciation Breakfast (December 9th) was a huge success. She gave special thanks to Mrs. Lenihan and Mrs. Bocompani for their dedication to the event.

The New Milford Women's Center provided information concerning new prevention programs.

The SPTO received a \$365.00 request from the 1st grade for the High Tech/High Touch in-house field trip.

6.2 Sub-Committee

Mrs. Kasey Diotte - Budget

Mrs. Diotte reported that Dr. Melendez is working on finalizing the master schedule for the Board. Mr. Hanley added that the Board does not anticipate as many budget workshops this year as in the past. Dr. Melendez will be presenting the budget as a whole to the Board, then they will delve into areas as necessary.

Mrs. Dorinda Lenihan - Negotiations Committee

Dr. Melendez reported that the non certified staff (Local 1303-309 of Council #4 AFSCME, AFL-CIO) have reached a tentative agreement. The non certified staff have not had an opportunity to meet as a group with their council and ratify the agreement. New Business 7.2 has been tabled.

Mrs. Themis Enright – Curriculum Committee

Mrs. Enright reported that the committee members are currently reviewing the guides. The committee will schedule a meeting prior to the next Board of Education meeting.

Mrs. Susan Seeger - Policy

Mrs. Seeger reported that she and Dr. Melendez will be meeting with CABA to discuss the Evaluation process.

Maintenance Committee

Two budget specific Maintenance Meetings have been scheduled for January 9th & 10th.

6.3 Chairman

Mr. Hanley commended both Mr. Trinchillo and Mr. Carlone on the Winter Concert. Mr. Hanley received positive feedback from many parents regarding the concert.

6.4 Superintendent

Dr. Jeff Melendez - Superintendent/Principal

Dr. Melendez provided an update regarding Sherman entering into contract negotiations with the Brookfield School District. He shared that he had an informal conversation with Mr. John Barile, Superintendent, Brookfield Public Schools. At this point in time, Brookfield is not in a position to have Sherman students as tuition students for the upcoming 2017-18 school year. Mr. Barile was clear that it is not a reflection on Sherman students, but a matter of more pressing issues their district is addressing. Dr. Melendez shared Sherman and Brookfield will revisit this request in the future.

7. NEW BUSINESS:

7.1 Vision Adoption

Dr. Melendez shared that the district has spent a number of months going through the process of establishing a vision for the school. The Board's role is to establish the vision of the district and the Superintendent's role is to operationalize it.

Dr. Melendez shared that the workshop process enabled every constituency to have the opportunity to speak to what they believed would make the school the best it could be.

Administration, faculty and staff workshop questions:

What should an ideal school look like?

What should an ideal workplace look like?

Parents and community workshop questions:

What should an ideal school look like?

What skills and disposition should the ideal graduate possess?

Students

If you were the Principal, how would you improve The Sherman School?

What do you love about The Sherman School?

On December 12, 2016 the Board discussed what they envisioned the school would look like in the next decade. The Board reviewed every word (22,076) that was shared during the workshop process. Dr. Melendez commended the Board for passionately deliberating over the vision statement process.

Vision Statement

We enable all Sherman Students to become the best possible version of themselves. We provide an environment where our children develop into empathetic, self-directed, critical thinkers who don't give up when faced with challenges.

Mr. Hanley shared that he attended the community workshops. He feels that the second sentence aligns with the sentiments of many who attended the workshop. The adjectives used are true character traits, as opposed to skills, knowledge, experience, etc. Mr. Hanley feels it is a lofty and ambitious goal for any district to allow each individual child to grow into the best version of themselves. He feels the first sentence should guide anyone, in any capacity, working at the school regardless of the situation. Mr. Hanley is aware of the amount of work that went into the vision development process

Enclosure 4.1a

and the involvement of the community, students and staff. He is hopeful the new Vision Statement will stand the test of time.

The Board and public briefly weighed in and discussed the Vision Statement in a positive manner.

Dr. Melendez feels there is a great deal of inspiration in the statement, and it is not just about academics.

Mr. Hanley moved and Mrs. Diotte seconded to adopt The Sherman School District's vision as "We enable all Sherman Students to become the best possible version of themselves. We provide an environment where our children develop into empathetic, self-directed, critical thinkers who don't give up when faced with challenges", and the motion passed unanimously. 6-0.

Over the break, Dr. Melendez worked with a graphic designer to develop a logo to represent The Sherman School and its aspirations. He shared the images and meanings that represent the proposed four logos.

Shield - Represents the Sherman Knights;safety

Wavy Lines - Represents the lake community

Book - Academics and Knowledge

Acorn - Starts off small, but grows into a mighty oak tree

Torch - Lifelong learning

Koi Fish - Represents perseverance and resilience

Excido Proficio - Fail Forward, learn from mistakes and look to remedy/improve

The Sherman Knight is the school's mascot. This logo is for branding to be used on letterhead and the school's website.

Mr. Hanley shared that the Board will narrow down the logo options, but the students and staff will be deciding which logo is ultimately selected. Dr. Melendez added that students will also be selecting school colors, which could include the current colors of blue and gold.

The Board discussed and selected two logos for the students and staff to choose from.



Dr. Melendez will be writing a narrative to accompany the selected logo on the school's new website.

7.2 Local 1303-319 of Council#4 AFSCME, AFL-CIO Contract Ratification

This agenda item cannot be discussed as the bargaining unit must meet as a group and approve prior to the Board voting (see Agenda 6.2 Negotiations Committee).

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

8.1 Discussion and possible approval of transfer between funds as presented

Mrs. Diotte shared her concern regarding the transfer \$18,000.00 into the electricity account. The transfer puts more funds into the account compared to what was spent last year for electricity. She is concerned that the school is spending \$20,000.00 more now prior to the initial relamping. Mrs. Diotte was under the impression that it was supposed to be a wash with the loan payment. She would like to know if the electricity rate or usage has increased.

Dr. Melendez will research Mrs. Diotte's concerns regarding potential rate increases.

Mr. Hanley moved and Mrs. Diotte seconded to table the discussion and possible approval of transfer between funds as presented, until later in the agenda, and the motion passed unanimously, 6-0.

After the GreenLeaf presentation, the Board discussed the approval of transfer of funds.

Mr. Hanley moved and Mrs. Seeger seconded to approve the transfer of funds as presented, and the motion passed unanimously, 6-0.

8.2 Review and settlement agreement with GreenLeaf and possible action

Dr. Melendez recapped the GreenLeaf issue dating back to August 2015. The recap included the GreenLeaf miscalculations as well as the incorrect bulbs which required a relamping (at no additional expense to The Sherman School).

Mrs. Diotte and Mr. Hanley questioned if the Eversource and Constellation expenses on Enclosure 5.1 reflect the monthly electric bills. Dr. Melendez will investigate.

Regarding the settlement, Dr. Melendez consulted with the school's attorney to inquire if there was a loss suffered by the district and where the liability rests. The attorney informed Dr. Melendez that the district would most likely be unsuccessful in an attempted to pursue a compensation lawsuit for the agreement as it was an estimate; and therefore cannot be held liable. However, a settlement agreement of \$16,586.00 was reached. After consulting with attorneys, Dr. Melendez recommended that the Board agree to the settlement.

Mr. Hanley moved and Mrs. Lenihan seconded to accept the settlement from Greenleaf in the amount of \$16,586.00, and the motion passed unanimously, 6-0.

Mr. Hanley moved and Mrs. Lenihan seconded to apply \$16,586.00 from the Greenleaf settlement to an early prepayment of the loan, and the motion passed unanimously, 6-0.

8.3 Final recommendation of K-Wing Task Force

Mr. Hanley provided a very detailed presentation on the K-Wing Task Force committee. For all details presented, please see the **Enclosure 8.3** at the end of this document.

Fellow Board members and the general public congratulated the work done by the K-Wing Task Force.

Enclosure 4.1a

Mr. Hanley added that he feels that everyone acted very responsibly and gave Mr. Iadarola credit for the tremendous amount of work that he contributed.

9. COMMUNICATION

No communication

10. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Keneally questioned the Board's understanding of the impact of Government's mid-year cut.

Mr. Hanley shared that he did have a brief conversation with Mr. Ostrosky. Initial assessment is that it will not be too crippling for the Town.

Dr. Melendez added that the school's impact is approximately \$40,000.00. He is participating in a Superintendent conference call with the Commissioner on January 8th and is hopeful to receive information regarding the cutbacks.

Mrs. Jeannine Johnson, 27 Smoke Ridge. Mrs. Johnson expressed concern over the resignation of Mrs. Masciarelli. She spoke very highly of her and feels it is a loss for the Special Education department.

11. BOARD OF EDUCATION COMMENTS

Mrs. Lenihan thanked Mr. Hanley for encapsulating all of the K-Wing information. She appreciates all of the work done by Mr. Hanley, Mrs. Diotte and Mrs. Bocompani.

Mr. Hanley shared that the work involved could not have been completed without the work of Mrs. Diotte, Mrs. Bocompani, Mr. Keneally and Mr. Jellen. It was a combination of generosity, curiosity and concern of all those involved.

12. FUTURE MEETINGS AND TOPICS

- 13.1 Regular Meeting, Wednesday, February 1, 2016 at 7:00 PM - LMC
- 13.2 Maintenance Meeting, January 9, 2017 and January 10, 2017 at 6:00 PM
- 13.3 Curriculum Meeting, January 23, 2017 at 4:30 PM
- 13.4 Policy Meeting, January 23, 2017 at 5:00 PM

13. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Hanley moved and Mrs. Lenihan seconded that the Board of Education move into Executive Session at 9:18 PM, and the motion passed unanimously, 6-0.

Mr. Hanley moved and Mrs. Lenihan seconded that the move out of Executive Session at 10:09 PM, and adjourn the Board of Education meeting, and the motion passed unanimously, 6-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Kasey Diotte
Vice Chair, Sherman Board of Education

Prepared by Recording Secretary: Nancy Winkler

Findings and Recommendations

January 2017

K-Wing Advisory Committee

Agenda

- The “K-Wing Advisory Committee” – Composition and Charge
- Recent History & Current Occupancy
 - Fall 2014 Concerns & Investigations
 - Winter 2015 Board of Education Action on Occupancy
- The Work of the Committee and Town Engineer
 - Investigating Documentation – Health Concerns and Remediation Efforts
 - Investigating Current Structure and HVAC
 - Investigating the Major Renovation of 2001
 - Renewed Investigation of Current Physical Structure and HVAC
- Summary of Findings
- Committee Recommendations

Composition and Charge

- The K-Wing Advisory Committee (“Committee”) was created and formed on advisement of the BOE to the BOS in early 2015 – based on a recognition that the School is a Town-Owned asset occupied by the District
- The charge of the Committee is to lead and manage the continued investigation of the health and safety of the K-Wing and make recommendations to both the full BOE and BOS on the issues of remediation, occupancy, and future use
- The Committee is comprised of 3 BOE members, a Selectman, the Town Health Director, and Representative Community Members
- The Committee works closely with the School Administration, the School Facilities Manager, and the Town Engineer
- The Committee has engaged the services of outside Engineering Consultants and Industrial Hygienists
- The Committee has not spent significant funds on its work

Recent History & Current Occupancy

- Fall 2014 Concerns & Investigations
 - Parent and Staff concerns about an “odor” begin anew
 - Maintenance Committee OKs usual investigative steps – primarily air sampling
 - BOE Chair and Vice Chair engage outside consultants, 2 separate Industrial Hygienists, and the Town Health Inspector to provide a new perspective – several independent investigations ensue
 - HVAC balancing and the stand alone “fresh air system” are identified as a potential sources of concern
 - Results and opinions vary and deeper investigation is needed
- Winter 2015 Board of Education Action on Occupancy
 - In a public Special Meeting of the BOE on February 12, 2015, a motion was made to immediately vacate the wing of all students and staff
 - Motion carried 4-2 and the K-Wing was vacated immediately
 - At a later date it was agreed that certain adult staff could occupy the wing after signing a waiver acknowledging the past history of health concerns
 - Shortly after the K-wing was vacated, several BOE members began additional investigation of the exterior structure of the building and all relevant documentation pertaining to the K-Wing

The Work of the Committee - Documentation

Example Documentation of the history of *Health Concerns* (Now Posted on Web)

- Staff
 - Logs of symptoms and absences among Staff
 - Documents of formal concerns from staff and SEA to Administration over several decades
 - Documents of formal concerns from Administration to Town and State Officials
 - OSHA investigation and formal written violations of workplace
 - A Clean Air Committee formed by Staff meets regularly and keeps minutes – communicates with Administration
- Students
 - Teachers keep daily logs of symptoms and absences among students
- Parents
 - Numerous long-time complaints of illnesses and odors
 - Formal correspondence between Parents and Administration

The Work of the Committee - Documentation

Example Documentation on the History of *Remediation Efforts* (Now Posted on Web)

- Air Quality & Mold
 - Numerous BOE minutes and paid invoices for air sampling, major cleaning, and mold removal
 - Numerous BOE minutes and paid invoices for work and construction for bathrooms and roof leaks
 - Numerous air sampling reports from an outside firm along with detailed lab results
- Attic
 - Numerous BOE minutes and paid invoices involving cleaning and remediation of attic space to remove mold and bat droppings and to install ventilation fans
 - Numerous air sampling reports from an outside firm along with detailed lab results
- HVAC - Fresh Air System
 - Town Meeting and BOE minutes, Town/BOE correspondence, and paid invoices for the stand-alone "Kindergarten Fresh Air System"
- 2001 Major Renovation
 - Regular updates included in BOE minutes – no details
 - Letter from Administration and Staff expressing concerns that renovation plans do not go as far as was originally intended
 - (Majority of documentation discussed later in presentation)

The Work of the Committee - Structure

Examples of Initial Activities Investigating Structures and Current HVAC

- Attic & Sprinkler Pump Room
 - Most members of the BOE and the Committee have been up in the attic to do visual inspection on several occasions
 - Obvious concerns include odor, uncapped pipes, water stained timbers, blown insulation, old furniture, animal droppings, building debris, cavities over lockers, ventilation, and questions about the stand-alone HVAC system
 - Pump Room was in less than ideal condition, but not deemed a contributing factor – has been cleaned and painted
- Exterior
 - The Committee hired a local contractor to peel away exterior vinyl siding and perform a core penetration into building
 - Significant rotting and decay of exterior siding is observed
 - The “odor” emanating from the building when exterior is opened is overwhelming
 - Over a dozen distinct layers of building materials are identified between siding and “new” interior walls installed in 2001 renovation
- Current HVAC
 - Smoke tests in attic confirm that ventilated air is being recycled into air handler on roof
 - Interior of vents and duct work appear clean
 - Outside engineering firm documents and inspects all HVAC systems – findings inconclusive and unhelpful
 - Stand-Alone “Fresh Air System” installed in 2010 by current HVAC contractor is undocumented and unpermitted – it appears to pull air out of the K-wing without any “make up” or “supply” air provided
 - Noticeable difference in classroom balancing observed when doors are closed v. opened

The Work of the Committee – Town Engineer

Investigating Longer Term History - Major Renovation of 2001 and Subsequent Activity

- Based on its preliminary work and findings, the Committee decided to engage the Town Engineer – who determines that the 2001 renovation was pivotal
- A “forensic audit” on the renovation is performed using Town records, drawings, plans, photos, communications, etc.
- It is confirmed that the original scope and intent of the project is not what was subsequently budgeted or approved by the Town – Administration and Staff documented their concerns about the reduced scope
- The 2001 Contractor realized very quickly that there would be major problems with the current conditions, the actual needs, the reduced scope, and the agreed timeline and expresses concerns immediately
- Major conflicts between the 2001 Contractor and the Architect arise - with 100s of RFIs issued and eventual legal action between the two parties developing
- At one point during the 2001 construction, the Project Manager for the Contractor becomes concerned with air safety in the wing and work stops
- Photos and documentation confirm that the exterior structural issues were not addressed in scope and floor warranties were rescinded by the Contractor
- Completion of the renovation is eventually “rushed” to grant occupancy for the start of the school year
- Shortly after the renovation is completed, there was a major flooding of the flat roof section over the K-Wing with significant amounts of water penetrating the interior
- Closer examination of air samples taken since the renovation relying on comparisons of inside and outside spore counts fail to recognize that the mold strains found indoors are different than those found outdoors
- *All of the above leads to a detailed, informed plan to guide the most recent investigative work...*

The Work of the Committee - Town Engineer

Renewed Investigation of Current Physical Structure

- Core samples
 - Dozens of interior and exterior wall penetrations - as well as floor penetrations - are performed based on most likely areas for problems
 - An Industrial Hygienist is onsite during all penetrations to conduct air and surface samples
 - Openings are closed and repaired immediately
 - In general, observable findings are less severe than anticipated
- Mold
 - Two distinct types of mold are discovered in several areas
 - The molds discovered are not common to indoors and are distinctly different from mold readings outside
- Exterior Building Materials
 - Asbestos material is found over interior brick surfaces – but it is in good condition and well sealed
 - Brick and mortar are confirmed as compromised and damp
 - Original framing and siding are confirmed as decomposing and porous – further investigation under way on composition of materials that “smell”
- HVAC
 - Negative Pressure is suspected in the K-wing and several ad-hoc tests are done to observe effect on odor
 - Stand Alone System is suspected of contributing to negative pressure
- Attic
 - General Condition is confirmed as less than ideal – insulation, furniture, uncapped pipes, left over building materials
 - Chimney is in better condition than exterior brick
 - Original vent shafts are constructed of same material as exterior composite

Summary of Findings – What We “Know”

- The K-Wing has a long documented history of repeated health concerns, investigations, and attempts at remediation
- The 2001 major expansion and renovation of the School is a central point in the history of the K-Wing – intended or desired work did not reconcile with what was budgeted or feasible at the time
- The entire original exterior structure was not part of the 2001 renovation – “false” walls were erected in the interior of classrooms and problems with the slab floor were covered over
- The original exterior “framed” structure is porous and comprised of over a dozen layers of various decaying materials containing asbestos, lead paint, metal, lumber and various composites – one of which is a “very strong” source of odor and also used in original interior venting structures
- The original exterior “brick and mortar” structure has been compromised and is allowing water to penetrate the interior
- The exterior windows have failed and are a source of water penetration
- The attic space is littered with old insulation, furniture, building materials, paints/solubles, animal droppings, and water stained timbers
- Mold (unique from that found outside the building and is not common to interior spaces) has now been found in several interior spaces behind walls
- The HVAC systems are in all likelihood not properly engineered/balanced relative to structural challenges and may be contributing to the problem by “pulling in” air from interior spaces and/or outside

Committee Recommendations

- Occupancy
 - Occupancy should remain under current restrictions until official approval from Town Health Director for expansion
 - The Committee strongly recommends that the goal of any capital remediation plan aim to have students occupy the space
- Minimum Structural Remediation (assumes interior configuration and use returns to previous use)
 - Remove and replace entire exterior envelope and supporting structure
 - Repair all exterior brick and mortar
 - Remove and replace all exterior windows
 - Perform a complete remediation and cleaning of attic space
 - Remediate all known mold penetrations
 - Remove all porous interior building materials (ceiling tiles, etc.)
 - Re-engineer all HVAC systems
- Preferred Additional Structural Work
 - “Gut” the entire interior structure
 - Address slab and floor concerns uncovered in 2001 renovation
- Future Use
 - Engage professional Educational Space Planning consultant to evaluate entire School space needs
 - Maximize potential of the “K-Wing” to support the educational vision and mission of the District

Next Steps

- Temporarily “stand down” Committee
- BOE and Administration take lead on Committee recommendations – work with Town Engineer
- BOE to bring any proposals or capital requests to Town
- Normal capital project protocols followed

Documents, Photos, and Figures

Appendices