

**SHERMAN BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**SHERMAN, CONNECTICUT 06784**  
**REGULAR MEETING - MAY 5, 2021**  
**MEETING HELD VIA ZOOM**  
**7:00 PM**

A regular meeting of the Sherman Board of Education was called to order by Mrs. Diotte at 7:02 PM on May 5, 2021 via Zoom.

**1. PRESENT:**

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| For the Board:  | Mr. Berlandi, Mrs. Diotte, Mr. Laughlin (7:15 PM), Mrs. Lenihan, Mr. Neunzig, Mrs. Seeger and Mr. Vogt |
| Administration: | Dr. Melendez, Mr. Dudics, Mr. Kalkreuth and Mrs. Snowden   |
| Staff:          | Ms. DePuy, Mr. Lombardozzi and Mrs. Jill Vermilyea   |
| Town Officials: | First Selectman Lowe, Selectman Bob Ostrosky and Treasurer Eric Holub                                  |
| SPTO:           | Mrs. O'Neill   |
| Residents:      | 10 Residents   |
| Students        | 4 Students   |

The Board and attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

**2. CELEBRATIONS:**

**2.1 Recognition of CABE Leadership Award**

Dr. Melendez proudly recognized and congratulated the CABE Leadership Award recipients: Hannah Gassmann and Hayden Myles. He reviewed the award criteria: willingness to take on challenges, capability to meet difficult decisions, concern for others, ability to work with others, willingness to commit to a project and diplomacy.

Mrs. Diotte congratulated both students for the prestigious award.

**2.2 Superintendent's Student of the Year Award**

Dr. Melendez proudly recognized and congratulated the Superintendent's Student of the Year Award to Isabella DiNatale and Ryan Hatcher. This award highlights academic prowess and service to the school and wider community. Dr. Melendez shared the students are both leaders and role models and admires them for their accomplishments.

**2.3 Noel Schaab - USA National Championships Ice Hockey Competition**

Dr. Melendez celebrated Noel Schaab and her hockey team for their participation at the USA National Championships in Denver, Colorado. Noel shared that her team placed second in the competition.

Mrs. Diotte congratulated all of the students.

**2.4 Teacher Appreciation/Paraeducator Appreciation**

Dr. Melendez recognized Educator Appreciation Week and recapped a week of special events to celebrate the teaching staff:

- Snack Cart delivered by the Admin Team
- Daily Raffles
- Cannoli Truck - complements of the SPTO
- Bagels and Coffee - donated by a family member
- Friday lunch

Dr. Melendez noted this year would not be successful without the hard work, dedication and care of the teaching staff. He also expressed his appreciation to the Administration for their leadership.

Mrs. Diotte expressed the Board's appreciation to the teaching staff for all that has been done this year. She also shared that Sherman has been recognized as Impact Educators for all of the work put forth with Blended Learning. Only two districts were recognized in the RESC Alliance for this achievement and Mrs. Diotte expressed her sincere appreciation.

**3. PUBLIC COMMENT:**

First Selectman Don Lowe shared that there is a cell tower proposal for the south end of Sherman near Coote Hill. Selectman Lowe noted lack of cell connectivity is a critical safety concern and requested the Administration, Board of Education, as well as any member of the public consider speaking at the May 25th Town Zoom meeting with Connecticut Siting Council. In order to speak, all individuals must register first at the Connecticut Sighting Council's website under Docket 499 by May 18th.

**4. ADDITIONS TO AGENDA**

**5. CONSENT AGENDA:**

**5.1 Review of Minutes:**

- Minutes - Board Retreat - March 7, 2020
- Minutes - Executive Session, July 21, 2020
- Minutes - Executive Session - November 4, 2020
- Minutes - Maintenance Committee Meeting - November 17, 2020
- Minutes - Maintenance Committee Meeting - November 30, 2020
- Minutes - Maintenance Committee Meeting - January 4, 2021
- Minutes - Special Committee on Capital Planning - January 4, 2021
- Minutes - Maintenance Committee Meeting - January 13, 2021
- Minutes - Special Committee on Capital Planning - January 22, 2021
- Minutes - Maintenance Meeting, February 12, 2021
- Minutes - Special Committee on Capital Planning - February 23, 2021
- Minutes - Maintenance Committee Meeting, March 8, 2021
- Minutes - Special Committee on Capital Planning, March 19, 2021
- Minutes - Special Committee on Capital Planning, March 23, 2021
- Minutes - Special Meeting, March 29, 2021
- Minutes - Executive Session, March 29, 2021
- Minutes - Maintenance Committee Meeting, April 1, 2021

- 5.2 Personnel Actions
- 5.3 Monthly Enrollment Report
- 5.4 Monthly Budget Report 2020-2021 Budget by Function & Summary of Funds
- 5.5 Approval of Region 12 High School Contract
- 5.6 Approval of New Milford High School Contract

Mrs. Diotte moved and Mr. Vogt seconded the approval of the following minutes: Board Retreat - March 7, 2020, Executive Session - July 21, 2020, Minutes - Executive Session - November 4, 2020, Maintenance Committee Meeting - November 17, 2020, Maintenance Committee Meeting - November 30, 2020, Maintenance Committee Meeting - January 4, 2021, Special Committee on Capital Planning - January 4, 2021, Maintenance Committee Meeting - January 13, 2021, Special Committee on Capital Planning - January 22, 2021, Maintenance Meeting - February 12, 2021, Special Committee on Capital Planning - February 23, 2021, Maintenance Committee Meeting - March 8, 2021, Special Committee on Capital Planning - March 19, 2021, Special Committee on Capital Planning - March 23, 2021, Special Meeting - March 29, 2021, Executive Session - March 29, 2021, Maintenance Committee Meeting - April 1, 2021, Special Committee on Capital Planning - April 5, 2021, Executive Session - April 7, 2021, Monthly Board of Education Meeting - April 7, 2021, Maintenance Committee Meeting - April 14, 2021, Enrollment Reports, Budget Reports, Region 12 High School Contract and New Milford High School Contract, and the motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

**6. APPROVAL OF CURRENT BILLS:**

**6.1 2020-2021 Current Bills**

Mrs. Diotte moved and Mrs. Seeger seconded to approve the 2020-2021 current bills and the motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

**7. ORAL REPORTS:**

**7.1 SPTO Update**

Mrs. O'Neill provided the following SPTO recap:

- The Bookfair was held outside and positive feedback was received. Mrs. O'Neill expressed thanks to Mr. Kalkreuth, Mrs. Onofer, Mr. Lombardozzi, Mr. Ribeiro and Chief Barnard for all of their assistance and support.
- The SPTO sponsored a Cannoli Truck for Teacher Appreciation. Mrs. O'Neill expressed her sincere gratitude for everything that has been done during this challenging year.
- An evening 5K Color Fun Run will take place on May 22nd. A separate run will take place for the children on the track.
- A floral arrangement class for parent and child is scheduled for May 6th

**7.2 Sub-Committee**

**7.3 Chair Report**

**7.4 Superintendent Update - Dr. Jeff Melendez**

Budget Update

Ms. DePuy reported that the anticipated surplus has increased to \$190,000.00 in comparison to the previously reported projected budget surplus of \$70,000.00. She

explained the additional surplus is the result of high school tuition savings of approximately \$20,000 for two students graduating early and one student moving out of the district, and a savings of approximately \$25,000 from the high school Special Education line. Ms. DePuy further shared that the largest surplus savings were had in the special education post-secondary and tuition to nonpublic line which David Dudics, Director of Special Education explained.

Mr. Dudics explained that COVID impacted district outplacement and transportation costs which resulted in substantial savings. The pandemic proved difficult to place students in anticipated programs which traditionally start as early as July and took significantly longer to place students in the appropriate programs. Also, many schools ran hybrid models which resulted in transportation savings. Projected costs vs. actual costs resulted in a surplus of \$103,000.00. Another factor for the surplus is the budget is based on the enrolled students, and when unanticipated moves by students into and out of the district occur, the planned budget is adjusted. He noted that some surplus savings were absorbed in the excess cost grants line.

Mrs. Diotte requested a summary report at the end of the school year tracking the surplus for each budget line.

Mr. Laughlin asked clarifying questions on Special Education budgeting and what drives the surplus. Mr. Dudics explained the challenges of transitional years (grade 5 to 6, grade 8 to 9, grade 12 to post-secondary) regarding budgeting early based on what we believe the student needs. As the needs change, the budgeted amount could be more or less and this past year with COVID, those changes were more evident, especially with the unavailable seats in out of district placements. He noted all decisions are based on student needs first.

Mr. Laughlin noted larger districts have the ability to shift and absorb Special Education expenses.

Dr. Melendez added high school tuition is not a budgeting concern for most districts. He also explained that the budget is created with information in a period of time. Due to the timing of PPT meetings, some information is not accessible, and the budget must be developed with anticipated information.

Mr. Berlandi questioned if other Districts are similar to Sherman where surpluses occur year after year.

Dr. Melendez noted that he does not have specific data to share, but noted the school is completely transparent with the Board and returns all surpluses to the Town compared to many districts that spend their surpluses or hold a certain percentage. In the past Sherman has purchased durable items with surplus funds and is completely transparent about the process.

A brief discussion took place regarding holding funds in a reserve. Mrs. Diotte felt this discussion should be held during an upcoming budget development process.

Strategic Plan Update

Dr. Melendez presented the Strategic Plan Action Step slide. Mrs. Snowden shared that significant progress has been made with Second Step (Action Step 12.4). The program will be reviewed and discussions will take place to make the program even better for the upcoming school year.

Health Data

Dr. Melendez presented the Health Date slide, which he noted appears misleading as the primary indicator has decreased, cases in the school have increased resulting in three grade level quarantines. He shared a slide comparing increased cases in correlation with holiday breaks.

Sherman Plans for 2021-2022

Dr. Melendez briefly shared anticipated plans for the upcoming school year. He noted feedback was received from parents, faculty, staff, and students. The focus of the feedback was to capture what was working well and what could be altered. The admin team is optimistic that they will be able to implement:

- Revisions to the master schedule to include safe lunch in cafeteria
- Remapping classrooms spaces and adjacencies for optimal learning and groupings
- Offering pilot co-teaching in K and 4th grades as well as small-group instruction
- Planning to offer intramurals, athletics, XP and Enrichment

Mrs. Snowden touched on plans to review assessment data over the summer in an effort to focus on individual student needs. Plans will also continue to review and improve Second Step Social Emotional Learning and Blended Learning strategies.

Dr. Melendez briefly shared that the school plans to take advantage of what was learned from the Blended Learning process to differentiate and engage students at a higher level. Plans for the new school year will also include smaller group instruction, as well as additional staff to provide enrichment and support.

Mrs. Diotte feels fortunate as a parent that her children attend school every day. She appreciates the forward thinking of the administration to build off of the current success and continue to grow.

**8. PRESENTATION**

**9. NEW BUSINESS**

**9.1 Discussion and Possible Action to Approve Maintenance Committee Recommendations of Various Capital Repairs**

Mr. Laughlin noted that both the Maintenance Committee and Special Committee on Capital Planning have been discussing several capital planning strategies. In recent meetings, the committees have focused on major infrastructure requiring repair or replacement. The committee is being as careful as possible in planning next steps in relation to the broader capital plan and have reached the point to move forward with recommending repairs. Mr. Laughlin reviewed a slide detailing the recommended projects of the Maintenance Committee (see enclosure 9.1).

- 1.1 Demolish Existing Playground and Replace with New Age 5-12 Playground
  - Under Review
  - The committee anticipates presenting plans for the Board's consideration in June which will likely include a new 5-12 playground and a remediated 2-5 playground.
- 1.2 Repair 1991 Roof Areas, Roof Seams, and Other Penetrations
  - RFP released to obtain quotes through a formal bid process for repair based on an 18 to 35 months solution and 36 to 60 month solution.
- 1.3 Replace Interior Doors (Fire Doors & Other Selected Locations)
  - Replacement doors have been ordered with a not to exceed cost of \$18,500. The Sherman Fire Marshall deemed the existing fire doors required replacement and the committee agreed and moved forward with the replacement process.
- 1.4 Refurbished Fire Pump
  - Repair scheduled for early summer with a not to exceed cost of \$2,000.
  - A vendor has been secured to make interim repair to the fire pump during the summer months when the building is not occupied.
- 1.5 Replace EFIS (Selected Locations - Main Entrance and D Wing)
  - RFP Pending
  - EFIS (siding) of the 1990 addition is in need of repair and in certain areas where it has reached the point of failure and will need to be replaced. The committee will follow the same strategy as the roof and release RFP for 18 to 35 months and 36 to 60 months solutions.
- 1.6 Repair and Replace Interior Flooring (Selected Hazard Locations)
  - Quote Pending
  - Mr. Lombardozzi has made multiple repairs to the interior flooring area, but certain sections are beyond repair and could result in tripping hazards if not addressed.
- 1.7 Replace K-Wing Interior Doors (Air Sealed)
  - Recommended purchase with a not to exceed amount of \$3,250
  - The committee recommends replacement of the K-Wing door with special airseal to prevent airflow into the building.
- 1.8 Replace Exterior Hardscape (LMC Entry Sidewalk Hazards)
  - Recommended replacement of sidewalk sections near LMC entranced with a not to exceed amount of \$8,000.
  - Sections of the sidewalk are heaving and repair will likely be limited resulting in future heaving. A local vendor has been secured for actual replacement of certain sections.
- 1.9 HVAC Digital Control Upgrade
  - Status - RFP Pending

- The current HVAC system operates on an antiquated Windows 95 system. Upgrading the system will allow the ability to monitor the system after operating hours and on weekends.

1.10a Install Potable Water Filtration System (Including Water Fountain Replacement)

- RFP Pending

1.10b Install Mechanical Water Filtration System (Closed Loop System)

- Not to Exceed \$5,000
- Direct filtration will prevent hard water from further deterioration of the mechanical system.

Mr. Laughlin noted that he appreciates the work of Dr. Melendez, Mr. Lombardozzi and Ms. DePuy. The list represents a broad set of immediate needs to move forward. He cautioned the actual numbers could be higher than anticipated for the roof and EFIS repairs, and the RFP process will determine how to proceed. He noted the repairs represent an 18 to 60 month timeline to provide an opportunity to discuss larger repairs and replacement.

Mr. Neunzig thanked Dr. Melendez, Mr. Lombardozzi, Ms. DePuy, Mr. Laughlin and Mr. Vogt. He reflected on the countless hours spent on meetings, quotes, walkthroughs, etc. and is appreciative of all the work.

Mrs. Diotte questioned the timeline of the RFPs. Mr. Laughlin confirmed they should be completed by mid month.

Dr. Melendez looked for clarification on funding requests to the Board of Selectmen from the Capital non-occurring fund. Mrs. Diotte confirmed that it must be a “not to exceed” dollar amount based on quotes/estimates.

Mr. Laughlin expressed caution with the larger scope and costs of some of the projects (roof, EFIS) and communication with Town leadership.

Mrs. Diotte recommended communicating with the Town regarding the process, and anticipated timeline and request feedback during the process.

Mrs. Diotte moved and Mr. Berlandi seconded the approval of the Maintenance Committee recommendations as outlined for items 1.2, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8 and 1.9, and the motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

**9.2 Discussion of Saturday, May 1, 2021 budget referendum results and next steps**

Mr. Neunzig reported the school budget resulted in a tie vote, with a recount scheduled for May 6th. The Board has the option to submit the same budget, or an amended budget. Mr. Neunzig referenced the strict timeline of the Board of Selectmen.

Mrs. Diotte reviewed the referendum process. She suggested holding a Special Meeting to discuss if any shifts have taken place since the budget was approved by the Board and welcomed feedback.

The Board briefly discussed. The consensus was that they all support and believe in the proposed budget, but would like to review if any shifts have occurred since they voted in March. Mrs. Diotte requested Dr. Melendez prepare recommendations, if any, for the Board's consideration.

**10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**11. COMMUNICATION**

Mrs. Diotte noted that she received an email from Rowland Hanley expressing concerns with compliance of Policies 7200 and 7211. She shared that the full Board will be discussing these issues with the legal council during an Executive Session following this Board meeting.

**12. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Molly Garcia, 22 Church Road - Mrs. Garcia shared her opinion as to why the school budget was tied. She feels the recent 4-3 vote to use surplus funds for Tecton services is the reason why the budget was not supported.

Kerry Merkel, 14 Locust Lane - Ms. Merkel feels the voter turnout was extremely low and feels it was not advertised effectively from both the Town and school. Ms. Merkel also expressed the importance of supporting a functioning building.

**13. BOARD OF EDUCATION COMMENTS**

Mr. Laughlin suggested during the upcoming Special Meeting, that communication strategies be discussed to inform the public of voting dates and all of the offerings in the proposed budget.

Mrs. Seeger requested the Strategic Plan be included in all future Board agenda packets. She also requested a copy of the Maintenance slide.

**14. FUTURE MEETINGS AND TOPICS**

- 14.1 Board of Education Meeting - June 2, 2021 at 7:00 PM
- 14.2 Special Committee - May 7, 2021 at 6:00 PM
- 14.3 Special Committee on Capital Planning - May 10, 2021 at 7:00 PM
- 14.4 Policy Committee Meeting - May 26 at 11:00 AM
- 14.5 BOE Retreat Sunday - May 23, 2021 at 1:00 PM

**15. ADJOURNMENT**

Mrs. Diotte adjourned the meeting at 8:38 PM and the Board moved into Executive Session at 8:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

James Neunzig  
Vice Chair, Sherman Board of Education

Prepared by Recording Secretary: Nancy Winkler



SHERMAN BOARD OF EDUCATION  
MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE

Enc 9.1

## BACKGROUND

The Administration made a series of initial recommendations for proposed capital projects in early 2021. The Maintenance Committee reviewed those projects, received input from the Special Committee on Capital Planning, and has continued to refine proposed scope, cost, and procurement needs for each. While not ideal to spend funds prior to a more comprehensive plan being fully considered, interim actions must be taken to stabilize failing facility components at this time. All projects are targeted for expeditious resolution with a later summer or early fall completion goal. To that end, the following comprise the Committee's recommendations to proceed:

### RECOMMENDED PROJECTS (*COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION TO PROCEED*) **STATUS**

→ 1.1 Demolish Existing Playground and Replace with New Age 5 -12 Playground **Under Review**

*The Committee concurs that playground replacement is warranted. Options for proceeding are under active review coordinated by the Administration with input from the Special Committee on Capital Planning and the Playground Committee Recommendations will likely include interim repair of the existing 2 - 5 playground and replacement of the 5 -12 playground, along with other safety related remediations such as dumpster relocation, metal edging repair, and fencing in the lower playspace. A modified plan will be ready for the Board of Education to review in early June with a targeted install date in early fall.*

→ 1.2\* Repair 1991 Roof Areas, Roof Seams, and Other Penetrations **RFP Pending**

*The Committee has requested additional quotations following a formal bid process for repair options with useful life spans of 18 - 35 months and 36 - 60 months.*

✓ 1.3\* Replace Interior Doors (Fire Doors & Other Selected Locations) **NTE \$18,500**

*The Committee concurred that replacement of fire doors at locations specified by the Fire Marshal was required and must be immediately addressed. A vendor has been identified, engaged, and replacement doors have been ordered.*

✓ 1.4\* Refurbish Fire Pump **NTE \$2,000**

*The Committee concurred that repair of the fire pump should proceed. The fire pump system remains operable and has tested as such in the past and recent weeks. Refurbishment of degrading components was deemed feasible by the existing system contractor at a lower than anticipated cost. Repairs have been scheduled for early summer when the facility is not occupied. While repairs are preferable, should they not be successful as planned replacement will be required and is recommended by the Committee.*

→ 1.5\* Replace EFIS (Selected Locations - Main Entrance and D Wing) **RFP Pending**

*The Committee has requested additional quotations following a formal bid process for repair options with useful life spans of 18 - 35 months and 36 - 60 months. Replacement may be required given degrading conditions.*

→ 1.6\* Repair and Replace Interior Flooring (Selected Hazard Locations) *Quote Pending*

*The Committee is awaiting quotations for repair of existing hazards. Replacement may be required in some locations that are beyond a state reasonable repair.*

→ 1.7\* Replace K-Wing Interior Doors (Air Sealed) *NTE \$3,250*

*The Committee concurred that replacement of interior wing entry doors was warranted in the K-Wing to prevent airflow between closed and open sections of the building.*

→ 1.8\* Replace Exterior Hardscape (LMC Entry Sidewalk Hazards) *NTE \$8,000*

*The Committee concurred that replacement of sidewalk sections at the LMC entry was warranted and preferable to tripping hazard remediation. Replacement will prevent further disruptions by compacting gravel and ensuring an appropriate interim repair that would not require additional remediation till such a time that broader hardscape replacements were possible.*

→ 1.9\* HVAC Digital Control Upgrade *RFP Pending*

*The Committee concurred that upgrading the current HVAC operating system was required. The current system operates on Windows 95, has had several repair issues, and can only be serviced by one vendor. An open source upgrade will permit future flexibility pending larger HVAC improvements. The upgrade will permit new remote monitoring capability and also ensure that heating and ventilation failures can be immediately addressed if they occur after school hours or on weekends. The essential nature of ensuring proper ventilation to meet COVID related operating and health safety requirements makes this upgrade necessary at this time.*

→ 1.10a Install Potable Water Filtration System (Including Water Fountain Replacement) *TBD*

✓ 1.10b\* Install Mechanical Water Filtration System (Closed Loop System) *NTE \$5,000*

*The Committee concurred that ensuring potable water can be used through the facility is essential. The current restrictions on water fountain use in the new school year have yet to be determined. Restrictions related to hot lunch are also pending further guidance. As such, additional analysis of options related to installation of system components is required and feasible at this time. Steps are being taken to provide appropriate filtration and protection to existing mechanical systems through alternative means in a closed loop system. Additional vendors have been engaged to provide further options for filtration system approaches. Those options will be reviewed once they have been received.*

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE ON 4/30/2021

3 - IN FAVOR

0 - OPPOSED

0 - ABSTAINING

APPROVED BY BOARD OF EDUCATION\* ON 5/5/2021

7 - IN FAVOR

0 - OPPOSED

0 - ABSTAINING

DISCUSSED BY SCCP ON 5/10/2021

NO ACTION REQUIRED