

BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
January 26, 2016
Bedford High School - Large Group Instruction Room

1. Call to Order

At 7:30 p.m., Mr. McAllister called to order the meeting of the Bedford School Committee. Other members present included Ms. Guay, Mr. Pierce, Mr. Hafer and Mr. Brosgol.

2. Comments from Public

None

3. Personnel Report

Mr. Sills asked the School Committee to approve a field trip request for the annual middle school grade 6 trip to Nature's Classroom planned for October 19-21, 2016. Mr. Sills said that this will be the fourth year that this trip has been held and it has proven to be a great team building experience. All students attend. Scholarship money is available to help those in need.

Mr. Pierce made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the field trip for 6th graders to attend Natures Classroom in Freedom, NH on October 19-21, 2016 at a cost of \$275 per student and no cost to the schools.

MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Hafer

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

Mr. Sills announced the following appointments:

Katrina Wright	Special Education Teacher	Middle School
Darin McDonald	Long Term Sub- Reading	Middle School
Msgt Charles Humphrey Jr.	ROTC Instructor	High School

4. Solar Presentation

Tassir Alani, Director of Facilities, and Sun Edison Rep Barrett LaChance presented a Solar Energy Services Proposal for the Town of Bedford to the School Committee.

PowerOptions, an energy aggregator for nonprofits like the Town of Bedford, and Sun Edison presented a tailored Solar Power Purchase Agreement offering. The proposal is for Sun Edison to design, install and maintain a solar energy system on a local host sight in Bedford. The specific proposal is to place solar panels on the roofs of the high school and middle school buildings and possibly to install parking lot canopies with solar panels on top.

Bedford would not incur any costs in constructing this project (other than some structural engineering work up front) but would be obligated to buy the electricity generated from the solar energy system. Bedford will in turn receive credits which will reduce the town's electricity bill.

Mr. LaChance presented a few different solar solutions for Bedford and showed various charts showing the different values to the town depending upon the configuration of the solar panels.

Mr. Alani explained that the steps to move forward on this proposal would be to

1. Enter into a 20 year contract with Sun Edison
2. Get the appropriate permits including input from Eversource
3. Design and engineer the system

4. Construction

Mr. Hafer wanted to know what role the School Committee has in such a large, town-wide project. Mr. Alani said he believed it was important to get School Committee buy-in first since the panels would be placed on School buildings and parking lots. Mr. Alani said that the next step would be to get Selectmen's opinion and then bring it to Town Meeting for a town wide vote.

Mr. Hafer said that in general, the project sounds attractive.

Mr. Pierce said that the Finance Committee needs to be involved upfront too. He believes however, that the community will not support constructing canopies in the parking lots because of aesthetics. Mr. Pierce said that this proposal will generate a lot of interest and varying opinions. Therefore, it is important to introduce the idea to the community as soon as possible and to provide plenty of opportunity to comment.

Mr. Brosgol agrees that the community needs to be part of the process as soon as possible. He asked what would happen to the proposal if this project moved to fall Town Meeting for approval rather than the spring meeting.

Mr. LaChance said that we may lose some of the tax credits which would negatively affect the value of the project.

Ms. Guay noted that a State bill on tax credits with solar energy did not pass. Mr. LaChance said that this would not affect this project.

Mr. McAllister said he thinks that the schools should allow this project to move forward in order get other town committees get involved as soon as possible He would like to know however, what responsibilities the School Committee will have on this project. He asked Mr. Alani to clarify moving forward. He wondered if it would be appropriate for the Energy Task Force to take the lead for the project.

Mr. Pierce said that if this project is to be discussed at Town Meeting in March, then the Schools would have to take the lead to get the community involved.

Mr. Sills said he would work with Mr. Alani to take on this project. However, he feels that the school's priority is the Lane School addition.

5. Homeless Students Update

Ms. Sallee reported that there are eleven families living in the hotel to date and all are expected to be settled in different housing – some permanent and some will continue with temporary housing. She also noted that there is no longer an assigned social worker there but there is a teacher from Lane school acting as a liaison. Bedford Schools still has responsibilities to transport some of the students, depending on their housing status. All families at the hotel should be gone by March 31, 2016. No public announcement has been made regarding the status of the hotel going forward.

As requested, Mr. Sills tried to summarize the hidden costs associated with educating these homeless students. He noted that there are several complicating factors in trying to isolate and determine costs of meeting the needs of these children.

Mr. Sills explained his rationale and reported the following estimates on total hours spent on homeless per average year at:

Central Office	25 days
Davis and Lane Schools	29 days
Grades 6-12	10 days
Special Education hours	19 day
Total	83 days

Mr. Sills also estimated the following additional costs:

Translation Services	\$1,300
Late Bus	\$3,360
Purchase Ipad insurance on family behalf	\$350
Covering testing fees, field trip fees on behalf of family	\$700
One student placed out of district	\$50,530

Mr. Coelho reported that he estimates that the FY'16 homeless transportation costs will be \$140,000. He acknowledged that it has been difficult to get the state to identify which families are ineligible for transportation so he cannot reduce this cost just yet. He estimates that the FY'17 obligation will be approximately \$75,000.

6. FY'17 Budget Request

Mr. Sills reported that the FY'17 budget request is \$37,349,416 which is a 3.52% increase from last year. He noted that we are just over the Finance Committee Guideline by \$6,018. He noted that this number does not include the School Nurses. The number with the nurses is \$37,716,721.

Mr. Sills said he will be adding 3.95 FTE. The additions will be in Special Education, Instructional Coaching, Curriculum Leadership and clerical support. He also reduced FTE by 5.4.

Mr. Sills said that the drivers of this budget are social emotional and special education needs, increasing enrollment in kindergarten and program improvement in in-house special education programs.

Mr. Sills also noted that this year's census data for children eligible for kindergarten in September 2016 is much higher than it has been in the past. All in all, it looks like there are 201 potential kindergarten students. If this ends up happening, there will be a need for another kindergarten class. So Mr. Sills is going to ask the Finance Committee to put in reserve money for a special education teacher (\$60,000) and another modular classroom (\$120,000).

Mr. Sills reviewed all of the additions and program improvements in the budget to ensure School Committee members agreed with everything. There were no objections. He also outlined reductions or desired changes he did **not** move forward with.

Offsets were also reviewed.

Mr. Sills reminded the School Committee of the risks inherent in the budget:

- Higher than expected kindergarten class
- High numbers of move-ins through-out the system
- Moving additional out of district students in-house
- Litigation risks

- Unanticipated retirements

Mr. Hafer suggested finding a way to remove \$6,018 from the budget in order to exactly match Finance Committee guidelines. Mr. McAllister agreed with this idea. Mr. Sills said he would take it from Professional Development.

Mr. Pierce said he did not think it was necessary to meet the number exactly due to the fact that the budget is built on a lot of unknowns such as the amount of state reimbursement for the Circuit Breaker and Chapter 766 assumptions.

Mr. Brosgol said that the budget is good that it meets expectations of the Finance Committee but the numbers could change quickly based on what is coming our way.

Ms. Guay agreed. She also said she was pleased to see a BCBA in the budget since we need this type of professional help to help our students in the Special Ed programs.

Mr. McAllister asked the School Committee if they were ready to vote on a final FY'17 budget number.

Mr. Hafer made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve a FY'17 budget request of \$37,343,398.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Guay

MOTION APPROVED: 4-1-0

Mr. McAllister	Yes
Ms. Guay	Yes
Mr. Brosgol	Yes
Mr. Pierce	No
Mr. Hafer	Yes

7. Space Needs

Mr. Sills reported that the Space Needs Task Force has recommended that Bedford submit another Statement of Interest to the MSBA for adding on to Davis School. They also suggested asking for money to be set aside at Town Meeting for a Davis Feasibility Study, in case this is rejected by the state. This action would allow a March 2017 Town Meeting vote on renovating Davis School.

Mr. Sills said that the Lane School project is moving forward. The RFQ has been posted and there have been 12 firms visiting Lane. The School Committee discussed how this will be added to the Warrant and that the Finance Committee was looking into a number of different financing methods for this project.

8. Superintendent's Report

Mr. Sills reported that Hanscom Airforce Base told him that they may become a temporary placement for children from Central America (unaccompanied minors). It is expected to be a temporary placement and no burden on local municipalities.

Ms. Guay asked Mr. Sills to inquire whether there have been any legal moves to get the town's to educate these children especially if they end up staying there longer than two weeks. Mr. Sills said he would.

Mr. Sills also discussed that teacher evaluations will soon be published (in the aggregate). He explained that Bedford has developed its own rubric and ratings. He said Bedford schools do not believe that high ratings deserve more pay and that this would not be a good practice. Bedford is not using the top rating of “exemplary” as a result.

Mr. Sills said he is proud that Bedford takes the best of mandates and then pushes back on those that do not enhance learning.

Mr. Sills reminded that the Bedford Education Foundation is holding its fundraising event on January 31st. He also said that the schools are partnering with iRobot to help develop technology education for our students.

9. Liaison Reports

Mr. Hafer said that the CPC is making a proposal to create an Athletic Field at the St Michael’s property and to turf Wilson Field. Mr. Hafer suggested getting the DPW to make a presentation to the School Committee.

10. Minutes

Mr. Pierce made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the minutes of the December 15, 2015 School Committee meeting as amended.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Guay

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

11. Future Agenda

- Press box update
- Computer inventory chart

12. Adjournment

Mr. Hafer made the following motion.

MOVED: Motion to adjourn at 10:00 p.m. to Executive Session to discuss Hanscom Airforce retiree students, not to reopen.

MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Brosgol

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. McAllister	Yes
Ms. Guay	Yes
Mr. Brosgol	Yes
Mr. Pierce	Yes
Mr. Hafer	Yes

School Committee Secretary

Date

BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE

January 26, 2016

Exhibits/Document

- Presentation: Solar Energy Services Proposal
- Superintendent's FY17 Budget Request
- Draft of minutes from the December 15, 2015 School Committee meeting