

**Lancaster Selectboard  
Minutes of Meeting**

Meeting held upstairs in Town Hall

Monday – August 19, 2019

The meeting was called to order by Chairman David Stickney at 6:30 P.M., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Initial Business:**

**Roll Call:**

Selectboard Members:

**Present:** Chairman David Stickney, Leo Enos, and Leon Rideout.

Others Attending:

Planning/Zoning Coordinator Benjamin Gaetjens-Oleson, Mike Berry, Rob Scott, Don Williams, Alan Savage and Rob Christie.

**Appointment(s):**

- WMRHS Principal Mike Berry and CTE Director Rob Scott were present to inform the Selectboard of the School District's plans for proposed renovations to the High School's CTE facilities. Mike Berry introduced the project by giving a brief history of the previous attempts to get voter approval to bond money for the renovations. He explained the past failures helped guide the staff and advisory committee in developing a reasonable project. The main focus is on safety and security. They have consolidated and downsized the number of CTE programs and are proposing to create more modern facilities for the few remaining. The plans also incorporate many recommendations from several building audits.

Rob Scott continued by stating a lot of life safety work, such as sprinklers, that was in the previous failed plans have been completed utilizing budgeted moneys and surplus funds. Don Williams asked how the school was able to get away with not having sprinklers for so long. Mr. Scott stated the building was grandfathered. Alan Savage asked if their installation was required at the time. Mr. Scott stated that until they did any substantial work they did not need to install them but the School Board felt it was important to put them in as soon as they could.

Mr. Scott continued to explain the proposed improvements. He stated there was not to be any substantial additions, only work in the existing building. The main entrance and front office would be relocated to the front corner of the building to create a more secure entry with several layers of access. Due to the popularity of the Culinary/Hospitality program and the events they host at the High School a separate entrance is created for them. Visitors will need to be buzzed into either the dining room or main office. From the main office there will still be another level of security before visitors gain entry into the building. The new entrance and culinary area will see a minor, 6,000 square foot addition. The Welding, Ag Science, JROTC, Cybersecurity and Criminal Justice program areas will all receive a facelift. Existing locker rooms will also see improvements to accommodate the athletic as well as CTE needs.

Mr. Berry added that due to the consolidation and decrease in CTE programs there was a

decrease in staff and ability to add future programs based on the area's needs. This would allow the District to attract students from other districts, thus adding revenue. He continued to explain that with Culinary/Hospitality and admin offices moving to the front corner of the building the Special Education department would move to the admin area. This space would create functional classrooms.

Mr. Scott stated the architect for this project grew up in Concord, VT and understands the issues North Country schools face. Mr. Scott also stated the bathrooms outside the cafeteria are not ADA compliant and are proposed to receive a facelift to create several single bathroom stalls. Rob Christie asked if this would eliminate bathrooms and Mr. Scott stated no, only the bathroom areas would be broken up into single bathrooms with toilet and sinks.

Mr. Williams asked if population projections were considered during the design. Mr. Scott stated they were and it stated the projections show continued decrease in school aged children. Mr. Berry added that he anticipates NH schools will be forced to consider consolidating with other districts as VT has done and he would like to see WMRSD be a receiving district.

Mr. Scott stated that other research conducted shows that property values increase within a few years after school bond issues pass. Mr. Christie stated that this was a benefit to owners wanting to sell homes but to those wishing to remain in their homes. Increased values could mean increased taxes. Mr. Williams stated he no longer has kids in school yet his taxes would increase with this bond. Mr. Christie stated he understood that if extra students attend the school then after 3 years the surplus tuition revenue changes from unexpected to expected revenue after 3 years. Mr. Berry confirmed this and that it would benefit the budget as expected.

Mr. Scott also stated that each of the programs could also generate some revenue as well as show a benefit to the community through work based on their program of studies. Mr. Berry stated the project is recommended unanimously by the School Board which was not the case for the previous attempts. Mr. Williams asked if the athletic fields would see work as part of the project. Mr. Berry stated they were not part of this project and have a group working independently of this one.

Mr. Scott explained the switch from new construction to renovations was due partly for it not being necessary but also the state does not fund any site work, including foundation. The State will fund up to 75% of CTE directed work and with a project estimate of \$12,900,000.00 the State would fund up to \$6,800,000.00. This is less than the 75% because not all the work is CTE related. He also stated they are seeking other funding opportunities that would decrease the local match required. Mr. Williams asked when the project would be complete. Mr. Scott stated that if the vote was successful next year they would begin construction 7/1/21 with completion in about 18 months. Mr. Christie asked if there is a figure of what future maintenance of the new areas would be. Mr. Berry stated that had not been looked at but would seek an answer.

Leon Rideout asked about the transformers in the school that were an issue during the last attempts. Mr. Scott explained that 3 electrical firms looked at the issue and all determined them not to be a hazard as was presented previously. He continued saying that the only concern is if they are oil filled then there is a risk of leakage but these transformers do not have oil. Mr. Savage explained that the transformers should not be even remotely accessible to the student or faculty population and only should be worked

on by licensed individuals which, he stated, the District does not have.

David Stickney recommended that within the next month the High School invite all the Selectboards in the district to tour the school.

- Ben Gaetjens-Oleson presented the Selectboard with the current values of the Trividia properties under consideration for NH RSA 72:76. He stated that once the proposed work was complete the taxes on the property would be based on the pre-construction assessment for 3 years from the date the improvements were completed. This was the system approved at Town Meeting. After the three years the properties would be taxed on the full assessed values. Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson explained that this was an incentive for businesses to improve and grow. Without the potential for the incentive they may not reinvest in their properties and therefore the true assessed values would continuously decrease. This way the assessment would remain stable for 3 years and then increase after that time due to work completed. Mr. Savage and Mr. Christie presented augment that properties were not being properly assessed based on sales of comparable properties. With no further discussion a motion was called to approve the request for tax relief incentive for the Trividia properties proposed.

**A motion was made by Leo Enos and seconded by Leon Rideout to approve the request for Tax Relief under NH RSA 72:76 for the Trividia properties located at Tax Map P03-Lot 002, Tax Map P03-Lot 042 and Tax Map R04-Lot 024. A vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.**

**Old Business:**

- To review and approve the minutes of the July 15, 2019 and August 5, 2019 meetings.

**A motion was made by David Stickney and seconded by Leo Enos to approve the minutes of the July 15, 2019 meeting as written. A vote was taken and the motion carried.**

**A motion was made by Leon Rideout and seconded by Leo Enos to approve the minutes of the August 5, 2019 meeting as written. A vote was taken and the motion carried.**

- Department Head Update: None.
- Sign Various Paperwork: Selectmen signed Fireworks Permits for Stacey Zemla on Winter Street and for Charity Baker for the Lancaster Fairgrounds.

**New Business:** None.

**Information:**

- Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson explained two building permits were issued. Both were renewals of previous ones. One for Donald Paquette of 10 Pine Haven for converting a screen porch into a 4-season room and the other was Daniel Copson for a single family home at 93 Elm Street. A sign permit was also issued to Walgreens for in-kind sign replacement at Rite Aid due to the sale of the company.

Noting that there was nothing further to come before the meeting a motion was called for to adjourn.

**A motion was made by Leo Enos and seconded by Leon Rideout to adjourn. A vote was taken and the meeting adjourned at 7:55 P.M.**

Respectfully,

Benjamin S. Gaetjens-Oleson  
Clerk Pro Tem

Approved:

David Stickney – Chairman

Leo Enos

Leon Rideout