



**DOVER SCHOOL
DISTRICT**

DOVER SCHOOL BOARD – MINUTES

Meeting Type:	Special Session #3
Meeting Location:	Media Center, McConnell Center
Meeting Date:	Monday, July 20, 2015
Meeting Time:	7:00 P.M.

- A. A special session of the Dover School Board was called to order by Chair Amanda Russell on Monday, July 20, 2015 at 7:08 P.M. in the Media Center of the McConnell Center.
- B. **ROLL CALL:** Present were Amanda Russell, Betsey Andrews Parker, Kathy Morrison, Doris Grady, Sarah Greenshields and Carole Soule McCammon. Michelle Muffett-Lipinski was excused.

Also present were: Superintendent Elaine Arbour, Business Administrator Karen Taylor, WPS Principal Patrick Boodey, DHS Principal Peter Driscoll, PPS Director Christine Boston, City Planner Chris Parker, HMFH representatives, citizens, staff, city councilors, Fosters.

- C. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Carole Soule McCammon led the Pledge of Allegiance.
- D. **CITIZEN'S FORUM:** No one addressed the Board
- E. **CONSENT AGENDA:**

1. Nominations:

- a. Sheet 1: Nomination and Election of Teachers/Staff

Betsey Andrews Parker moved, Carole Soule McCammon seconded to approve the amended consent agenda as presented. An oral **VOTE PASSED 6/0.**

F. PUBLIC HEARING:

- a. **Feasible Options to Renovate or Replace Dover High School/Career Technical Center**

Senator David Watters, 19 Maple St., spoke in support of the DHS/CTC construction project. He spoke as a citizen, senator and educator. He is appreciative of the open process. A vote in favor will send a message to youth of Dover showing sacrifice for future generations.

William Degrampre, 21 Danielle Lane, spoke against including the current gym in option 3. This should have been option 4. There is no financial sense in spending tax dollars to save gym and no academic sense in keeping 2 gyms. He added that 2 gyms are a "want" and not a "need".

Jane Ann Sherwood, 43 Arch St., spoke against moving too quickly on project. She supports waiting until everything is scrutinized more carefully. She is afraid of higher taxes.

Tom Southworth, 56 Durham Rd., spoke in support of recommendation and congratulated the JBC on their hard work. He stated this will be an investment in the City and will make it more desirable. He added his hope that students, especially from the middle school, become involved in the process.



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Lisa Stacy, 75 Longhill Rd., stated her fear that books and staff will be unaffordable due to the high cost of the project. The building won't provide education. Details have not been given yet. Appreciates work that has been done by the JBC.

Neil Stacy, 75 Longhill Rd., requested that turf and field and extra gym stand on their own. Everything should be individually vetted.

Meg Kerr, 8 Hamilton St, supports recommendation of the JBC.

George Sherwood, 43 Arch St, commented on the unfair burden on taxpayers of Dover. This should be on the ballot in November. The building is not the education.

Kristie Thomas, 9 Ironwood, supports the recommendation of the JBC.

Matt Severson, 38 Horne St., JBC member, stated that all documents and information are online. He noted that a delay will cost more in the long run. He asked that people be informed before making statements.

Roger Mercier, 304 Back Rd, recommends that options for sustainability are investigated. He would like heating, etc. to be able to pay back in years to come and hopes money is put to good use.

Pat Bickford, Nottingham, asked how the cost will affect Barrington and Nottingham. He asked if there would be a tuition increased and the project should be studied more.

G. RESOLUTION:

a. Recommendation for Site and Conceptual Plans for DHS/CTC Building Project

Betsey Andrews Parker moved, Carole Soule McCammon seconded to approve the resolution that would endorse the recommendation for approved site and conceptual plans by the DHS/CTC JBC that was presented to the Dover School Board at a public meeting on July 13, 2015.

Mrs. Grady explained the position of the School Board, stating that the Board represents 4,000 students and the decision must be what's best for the students. It is a very difficult decision for the Board. She would prefer to wait a few weeks so that all materials and documents can be reviewed. Many documents she had just received a few hours before the meeting and did not have a chance to properly study. She stressed that the figures given for tax increase are only the ones related to the building project. There will also be increase in taxes from the general increase of the council and school budget.

Mrs. Grady's concerns include the following:



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- Education changes constantly. Will the building that is constructed now be suitable for years to come?
- What is the plan for education? It's not the building. In the past 19 months since the JBC has been formed, there should have been curriculum work completed for the 21st century.
- There could be a big change in state education as of Saturday with the passage of the Education bill. The bill will help restore local control to the state. Amendments were passed to promote STEM, mental health and substance abuse.

Mrs. Grady asked if there are more than 2 technology rooms on the 3rd floor. A representative from HMFH stated that regular classes would be integrated with CTE classes. There will be more hands-on learning. Technology classes will be adjacent to regular classes. Other technology will be integrated throughout the building.

Mrs. Grady stated the in years to come there may not be much need for the building since many classes will be taught online with many schools being taught together. The HMFH representative confirmed that this would be possible with the new building. The existing building lacks infrastructure and there will be fewer computer labs since students have technology with them all of the time. They are trying to build the most flexible plan possible for changes.

Mrs. Grady asked Dr. Arbour if there is a plan for the future to which Dr. Arbour responded that there is no updated strategic plan, but DHS is beginning the process for NEASC accreditation and this helps to create a strategic plan for the high school. NEASC takes into consideration 7 standards which are all 21st century learning standards.

Mr. Driscoll shared his thoughts and stated that all the standards are created to meet 21st century expectations and are designed to create life learners. He continued to say that the building needs to be flexible and education will look very different in years to come.

Ms. Greenshields asked what the day would look like and is there a space for students to learn social skills.

Mr. Driscoll responded that the school day could look very different with students coming and going at different times. CTE classes will be integrated with other classes.

Mrs. Grady recalled the challenges of open campus which happened in Dover many years ago. Mrs. Grady stated that when Garrison was remodeled, the gym was built with air conditioning for the community. She inquired as to why that gym is not being used more and could be considered a spare gym.



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Ms. Andrews Parker commented that there is always a great need for gym space. There is limited time, especially for girls' sports. She added that there is need for students to fit into one space for presentations or other community events.

Ms. Andrews Parker added that she had thought that the turf was always intended to be part of the renovation. She believes that the turf and grandstand were separate on the CIP. She stated that this has been discussed since John O'Connor was superintendent.

City Planner Chris Parker confirmed that it was a separate project and merged it a few years ago. It is not split 50-50 with the city anymore.

Ms. Russell commented that different ways to create heat, electricity, irrigation, etc. are being investigated and as many as feasible will be implemented. The Geotechnical studies have been completed. She added that the proposed cost of a new high school 10 years ago was \$40 million.

Ms. Russell clarified that the Townsquare shown in drawings is the cafeteria. Several people had asked via email for clarification on its purpose. She added that she believes that cities will need school buildings in the future even though education will be changing,

Mrs. Grady summarized how Dover jumped ahead in the process for state CTC funding. A quick decision needed to be made. She asked Ms. Taylor if the District has received funding for the CTC yet. If so, has any been used yet?

Ms. Taylor responded that only the feasibility study has been paid for at this time. Parts of the study do apply to the CTC so some will be reimbursed by the state for that portion. There have been no payments received from the state, but will be requested soon.

Mrs. Grady asked if the cost of the building being torn down and fields added are included in the cost proposal. It was determined that the costs are included in the proposal.

Mrs. Grady commented that she had heard at an earlier meeting that 2 floors would be preferable to 3 floors due to the soil.

Ms. Greenshields clarified that Ms. Severson had made the comment and it did not have connection to the weight, only on the hassle to the students.

Mrs. Grady summarized high school enrollment and stated that in years past, there has been up to 1700 students. They decided the enrollment needed to be closer to 1500, so they took students from other communities based on seats available and the number is now below 1500. She stated that a legal opinion that the Board received states that the JBC needs to go to the Board for a vote for every change in plans in the building. She is not signing the resolution because she can't approve the site and plans because attorneys have grouped the building with tearing down the preset building and she still feels the present building may be useful for



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another purpose. The investment in the current building has been approximately \$18-\$20 million since 2002.

Ms. Soule McCammon summarized how the process began and stated her strong feelings for this project.

- Visioning-what do we want for students
- The more things change, the more they stay the same-kids need structure, teachers who care, sunlight, stairs, etc. The Building does matter.
- Form should follow function

She stated that she is pleased with the work of the JBC and strongly supports their recommendation. She is confident that Dover will save money by doing this now.

Ms. Greenshields noted that sustainability has been the theme of the project since the beginning. There will be a diverse source of energy. She added that there is a common thread that focuses on the individual. Students learn by being themselves and offered the proper opportunities. She finished her comments by saying that it is time for a new building and teachers will be encouraged to become more creative.

Betsey Andrews Parker moved, Kathy Morrison seconded to call the question noted above.

A roll call **VOTE PASSED 5/1 (Grady opposed)** to the motion noted above to approve the resolution that would endorse the recommendation for approved site and conceptual plans by the DHS/CTC JBC that was presented to the Dover School Board at a public meeting on July 13, 2015.

Mrs. Grady summarized education changes from the past years and commented that in many ways the District is back to some of the original ideas.

The Board unanimously agreed upon a 2-minute recess at 8:25 pm.

H. OLD BUSINESS:

a. Start/Stop Time Discussion and Approval

Betsey Andrews Parker moved, Sarah Greenshields seconded to approve the change in start/stop times as presented in Option 2.

Ms. Andrews Parker thanked everyone who took the online survey and noted many positive and negative comments. She stated that 60% of parents approved of the changes and 40% of staff approved of the changes in start/stop time.

She continued to say that it has been a major topic for the School Board for many years. Some traffic issues are beyond the control of the School Board. Ms. Andrews Parker continued to say



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that she thought that 7 weeks before the start of school seems like a reasonable amount of time and 60% seems like enough to make a change which is why she supports the change.

Ms. Russell stated that she drove the bus routes and met with First Student representatives. She believes the proposal could achieve many goals. She added that many may have not seen the survey. She will vote against the motion although she believes that it is the right choice. Some of the comments made and emails sent showed her enough concerns to delay the decision.

Ms. Russell added that the School Board recognized that delaying the high school start time is supported in research but there are 9 neighboring communities who need to be consulted before a change is made. There are many other students who would be impacted. She recommended looking into this for a long term solution. It does not seem feasible for this year. Staff and families may not be ready at this time.

Ms. Greenshields asked if the bus company had supplied routes for the new proposals. Ms. Taylor responded that they have not amended schedules yet. The middle school routes have been changed by approximately 15 minutes though so that they are arriving at the school a little later. She is not sure how that will work, given the traffic situation. There were also a few minor changes made in the routes. Morning pickup and afternoon drop off schedules were requested from First Student this year.

Ms. Greenshields asked if the bus company has a logistics issue with the Dover schedule. Dr. Arbour stated that transportation is an issue at times because there is only 45 minute difference in time between middle/high school and the elementary schools.

First Student had difficulty in arriving at the elementary schools at dismissal time. The extra 15 minutes would give them more time.

Transportation and supervision of students are both challenges due to transportation issues. Dr. Arbour commented that the District will make the best of whatever schedule is agreed upon.

Ms. Russell commented that Paula Tiberio from First Student has been very receptive to suggestions and some routes will change regardless of a start/stop time change.

Dr. Arbour added that some routes are sparsely used and they may be able to free up a bus if some middle and high school routes are combined.

She added that the YMCA informed the District that rates would not change if hours were changed.

Ms. Morrison noted that there may need to be more discussion for a possible change in FY17.



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Ms. Soule McCammon stated that she likes the idea of tabling this for a year, but would like to see a change in high school start times. It would be easier if there is a change for everyone at once instead of in two separate years.

The Board discussed Ms. Andrews Parkers offer to change her motion to delay the change for a year.

Ms. Soule McCammon stated her concern for having all communities agree on start/stop times.

Ms. Andrews Parker opted to keep her original motion. She reviewed the times for Option 2.

Mrs. Grady stated that a large portion of parents did not complete the survey and reminded that there will be a new Board elected in November.

An oral **VOTE FAILED 1/5 (Russell, Morrison, Grady, Greenshields, Soule McCammon Opposed).**

Dr. Arbour asked for guidance on what the Board would like placed on the next agenda.

Ms. Greenshields stated that there are two issues with the first being addressing the transportation issues for the fall. She would like to see some changes made for this year. The second issue would be the plan for moving forward as far as start/stop times.

Ms. Russell asked to re-establish connection with School Board Chairs and Superintendents. Dr. Arbour stated that she would start the process. Dr. Arbour will also contact the person who had offered their assistance earlier.

Ms. Russell stated her hope for this to be resolved by March of 2016.

Ms. Taylor noted the impact on school busses. The District will be going out to bid for a transportation provider and redefining expectations. The start/stop times could impact a bid.

I. SCHOOL BOARD MATTERS OF INTEREST:

Ms. Russell read a note sent by recent retiree Sheila Madsen thanking the Board and District for the retirement celebration.

Good luck to all the children who are playing sports this summer.

J. ADJOURNMENT:

Sarah Greenshields moved, Doris Grady seconded to adjourn the special session at 8:55 pm. An oral **VOTE PASSED 6/0.**

Respectfully submitted,
Robin LaFleur, Recording Secretary