

Approved M I N U T E S

Facilities Subcommittee Meeting 5/31/17

In Attendance:

Superintendent: Kathy Body

School Committee: Jennifer Susse, Cindy Starks

Parents: Brendan Sullivan, Josh Smift, Ginna Reeder, Michael Phelan, Kate Leary, Ethan Zimmer,
Heather Calvin-Bottis

The meeting started at 6:08.

Hardy Playground

Several Hardy parents were concerned about playground space for the younger kids while the Hardy addition is being constructed during the 2017/18 school year.

Dr. Bodie explained that the original plan was to wait until the addition was finished to construct a playground for younger kids on the Lake Street side, though she was always planning to enclose that space next year with a fence. Dr. Bodie now thinks that it makes sense to do something earlier. Some possibilities include: i) asking Capital Planning for the money for the playground a year earlier, ii) adding blacktop or woodchips so kids can play there when it is muddy, iii) also adding mobile play equipment that can be used now and in the future.

Dr. Bodie plans to consult with a playground expert to come up with some ideas. She also wanted to let the committee know that Parks and rec is planning a multi-use analysis of all playgrounds, to be completed in the next few years.

Parents asked whether we could use this analysis to help with the Hardy playground. Dr. Bodie answered that it would not be immediately helpful, as the analysis will take a few years to complete.

Dr. Bodie also provided the following General information:

Information on the Hardy Addition

- The Request for Proposals (RFP) for and Owner's Project Manager (OPM) closed last week.
- The RFP for a Designer just went up today (5/31)
- Construction will start in the Fall. (November 1st)
- There will be a parent night at Hardy once an OPM is chosen. Probably when school starts.

- The current plan to add extra cafeteria space is to convert the current music room to a quiet lunch space for children who need that.
- The notice for a new principal will be posted in December/January
- The amount budgeted for a new playground is \$120K

Systems Concerns

Heather Calvin-Bottis told us a story that involved several frustrations she had when she received an automated message one morning telling her that her kindergarten was not at school. She had last seen her kindergartener getting on the Bishop bus that morning. First, the automated message was hard to access, as cannot be translated into text. Thinking her son's reported absence was probably a mistake she nevertheless, in due diligence, tried to access a live person from the message. Although there appeared to be an option to connect to a live person, choosing that option just caused the call to be dropped. She then called the Bishop school several times, only to be transferred--first, back to the automatic system, and, second, to the Stratton secretary. Finally, the Stratton secretary enlisted the help of central administration, who were extremely helpful. A final frustration for Ms. Calvin-Bottis was that she was not able to get a response from her email to the administration asking to be told whether these systematic problems had been fixed.

Ms. Starks asked whether David Good had received a copy of Heather's email, and was told he had. Ms. Susse pointed out that this is the second example of a new technological system that has more problems than the system it replaced. (the first being the new scheduling software). Both Ms. Susse and Ms. Starks asked that David Good be enlisted to review the new communication system, and that Dr. Bodie report back to the School Committee about how we plan to fix the problem—whether by choosing a new system or by adapting this system.

Ms. Susse pointed out that there seemed to be three problems involved: 1) a problem with the technology—the system looked like it had the ability to transfer to a live person, but doesn't; 2) a personnel problem that requires clear messaging from the administration about how to handle parent calls, and 3) a general problem about how parent emails should be handled. She asked that Dr. Bodie present her recommendations for fixing the first two problems at the last School Committee meeting in June.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:12.