



Facilities Committee Meeting Notes

Nov. 21, 2024 – 5:30 p.m. – Lake View Campus, Westport, N.Y.

Facilities Committee Members Present

- Bill Benoit
- Tom Bisselle
- Sheera Broderick
- Tom Broderick
- Darlene Hooper
- Steve Hudson
- Jim Jackson
- Josh Kingzack
- Robyn Lepage
- Shelly Mckinley
- Samuel Sherman
- Micah Stewart
- Olive Stewart

Synopsis

On Nov. 21, 2024, the second meeting of the Boquet Valley Central School District Facilities Committee was held. Committee members met with Facilitator Joe Dragone from Capital Region BOCES to review the outcomes from the first meeting in September, discuss state aid calculations, review the district's updated building condition survey and consider immediate priority repairs. Individuals representing BCA Architects & Engineers and SchoolHouse Construction Services LLC were also on hand to present and answer questions. How the committee plans to move forward was also discussed. The next meeting is scheduled for 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 17, at the Mountain View campus in Elizabethtown.

Agenda

The meeting began at approximately 5:39 p.m.

Introductions

- Capital Region BOCES Facilitator Joe Dragone reintroduced himself and reviewed his role in this process before taking time to introduce the individuals present from the architectural and construction firms the district is working with:
 - Mike Harris, BCA Architects & Engineers
 - Taylor Woolf, BCA Architects & Engineers
 - Paul Lamoy, SchoolHouse Construction Services LLC
 - Eric Robert, SchoolHouse Construction Services LLC

Review from the September Meeting

- The Facilities Committee charge was revisited:
 - The Facilities Committee is tasked with providing input and recommendations to the Board of Education regarding the district's long-term facility needs, long-term capital improvement planning, and other long-term facilities-related matters.

- The Committee will review data, tour buildings, engage the community, and work collaboratively with district leadership, consultants and other stakeholders.
- The [Facilities Committee web page](#) on the Boquet Valley Central School District website contains a wealth of information about the committee's prior work.
- Since the September meeting, an updated Building Condition Survey (BCS) was conducted, helping to determine the scope of minimum improvements and reassessment of renovations and/or new construction costs. A program review was also conducted.
 - Efforts to locate a place for a transportation facility and athletics facilities are ongoing.
- A review of potential options going forward were reviewed, including a new PK-12 school with athletics and transportation facilities onsite. A second option reviewed includes renovations and new construction at Mountain View or Lake View sites with transportation and athletics facilities offsite. A third option reviewed includes extensive renovations at both sites with transportation and athletics facilities offsite. A fourth option reviewed includes limited renovations at both sites based on the updated BCS.
 - Discussion ensued focused around the timing of when discussions about these options would take place. An audience member reiterated the result of the failed February 2024 referendum, encouraging the committee to listen to voters.
- Further review of the options included needs that still require addressing and additional challenges the district may face based on the option it decides to pursue.

Discussion: State Aid Calculations

- For the previously proposed project, the New York State Education Department (NYSED) allocated aid based upon an increased enrollment number of 623 pupils for the elementary level (previously 400+). It has also allocated aid for the secondary level for 526 pupils (previously 410).
- Based on 2022 figures, the total aid allowance for the failed February 2024 project proposal was \$34.3 million.
 - Discussion over whether the potential project figures would change based on today's numbers, including fluctuating enrollment. Superintendent Josh Meyer said this should not change much as enrollment has been relatively stable. It was also confirmed that a transportation facility would not be included in this and neither would off-site athletics facilities.
- Renovating and adding on to either site would generate fewer aidable expenses compared to complete new construction.
 - Discussion focused on fluctuating costs (2022 vs. today), the district's merger aid grace period and whether elements from the previous project

proposal could carry forward. NYSED's project approval processes remain delayed.

- Members discussed exploring new property options for construction, considering availability in recent years. Sensitivity to potential tax burdens on residents was emphasized.
- Some members expressed interest in scaled-down versions of the original project and renovation/addition options.
- An audience member suggested a community survey, but the committee cautioned that it might be premature. More comprehensive communication is necessary to prevent misinformation.
- Conversations included potential property acquisitions near the Mountain View and Lake View campuses.

Discussion: Review of Updated Building Condition Survey (BCS)

- Taylor Woolf, of BCA Architects & Engineers, presented the findings of the updated Building Condition Survey (BCS) with the committee.
 - This updated BCS was completed approximately one year earlier than required to facilitate the current planning process.
 - You may view the findings of the updated BCS in the [Nov. 21 meeting presentation](#).
- Conversation during the presentation arose regarding aidability of the repairs/renovations recommended in the presentation. They are aidable, but ShoolHouse was still in the process of evaluating the costs as this information as fresh at the time of the meeting.
- The construction cost calculations provided by BCA Architects & Engineers includes incidentals, contingencies and inflation.

Discussion: Immediate Priority Repairs

- Taylor Woolf of BCA Architects & Engineers presented immediate needs for the Mountain View and Lake View campuses, totaling \$20,572,223 (\$7,620,500 for Mountain View, \$7,562,200 for Lake View).
 - These immediate needs represent the bare minimum required to keep the campuses operational and meet necessary standards. Additional needs are expected to emerge in the next five years.
 - Abatement would be required in all areas accessed by construction crews, while untouched areas would remain unaddressed.
 - The aid on the immediate needs is not known yet. Aid is still available based on the district's merger status at the present. The aid is only available to what's aidable, not the entire project.
 - The bus garage was excluded from the BCS as it is now used for storage. However, concerns were raised about its future given New York State's upcoming mandate for electric school buses in 2027.

- Testing is included for all suspicious areas, though further testing may be necessary as additional areas are exposed during construction.
- Declining a BCS-recommended repair could jeopardize the district's ability to secure emergency aid from NYSED if the issue later fails.

Next Steps

- Capital Region BOCES Facilitator Joe Dragone outlined the next steps in the process.
 - Start limiting options.
 - Maintaining operating and fully renovation both buildings to like new standards is cost prohibitive.
 - Determine a decision timeline.
 - What to do and when.
- Committee members emphasized the need for community input, noting that options must first be clearly defined with specific costs, aid and local share breakdowns.
- Key questions emerged, including where to relocate the bus garage and athletics facilities if renovations proceed, the associated costs and the logistics of alternative site evaluations for the bus garage or athletic fields.
 - Discussions included whether athletic fields across the road from the Mountain View campus would qualify as contiguous acreage under NYSED rules and whether Elizabethtown fields on Noble Terrace could be suitable.
 - Local athletes have previously assessed field options but failed to reach a consensus.
 - The county property near Lake View was also mentioned. While the county previously resisted using the fairgrounds, parts of the far-reaching land might be an option, albeit with conditions. Separate fields from the school campus pose logistical challenges.
- Cost and aidability were highlighted. Immediate needs are aidable to a percentage. Maximizing merger aid remains critical. While operations aid has funded projects like a new roof, the remainder of the funds placed into district reserves could help support a larger project.
- Staffing was discussed, including recent attritional positions and additions.
- Symbolic challenges of choosing between campuses were noted. The community must focus on uniting under "Boquet Valley" rather than reinforcing a Westport vs. Elizabethtown divide. Generational and emotional connections must be addressed, balancing wants and needs.
- A proposal for new construction included building an elementary school, potentially incorporating athletic fields and a bus garage, while renovating an existing building for secondary education. This might help the district maximize available aid. Considerations include eliminating duplicated services and ensuring sustainability and appropriate sizing.



- Homework for committee members:
 - Brainstorm potential locations for the bus garage and athletic fields if renovating.
 - Explore additional available land parcels.
 - Review ways to reduce project size and scope to lower costs.

The next meeting is on Tuesday, Dec. 17, at 5:30 p.m. at the Mountain View campus in Elizabethtown.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:37 p.m.

For more information, please visit the [Facilities Committee web page](#) on the Boquet Valley Central School District website.