

1 Joint Facilities Advisory Committee Meeting

2 Tuesday, August 9th, 2022

3 Meeting Minutes- Not Approved

4 Attendees:

5 Administrative Team: Steven Chamberlin- Interim Superintendent, Amy Facey- SAU #39
6 Business Administrator, and Roger Preston- SAU #39 Director of Facilities

7 Committee Members: Brian Coogan-JFAC Chair, Amherst NH, Tom Gauthier- ASB Chair,
8 Victoria Parisi- ASB Member, Dan Veilleux- SCSB Member, Pim Grondstra- SCSB Member,
9 Jeanne Ludt, Amherst NH, John Bowkett, Amherst NH, Steve Valley, Amherst NH, Shannon
10 Gascoyne- Amherst NH, Lisa Eastland- Amherst NH, John D'Angelo- Amherst Board of
11 Selectmen.

12 Meeting Minutes: Danae A. Marotta

13 Public: None

14 I. Call to Order

15 **Chair of the Joint Facilities Advisory Committee, Mr. Brian Coogan, called the meeting to**
16 **order at 5:00PM.**

17 He noted that he would like to keep the meeting on schedule and task. They will discuss updates
18 from the Building and Grounds subcommittees, Amherst, Mont Vernon and Souhegan, board
19 updates if possible, and then lay down the strategic planning and goals for this committee.

20 They will be thinking about what they want to put on the ballot and then the communication
21 strategy to the public. He has heard that people do not know enough about what they are
22 proposing, work that has been previously done and how to bridge the gap between the two. That
23 is definitely something that they need to think about. He inquired if there were any open topics
24 and introduced the new members of the committee.

25 Mr. Coogan asked if there were any questions or comments on the June 02, 2022, Draft Minutes.

26 There were no questions.

27 **Ms. Gascoyne motioned to accept the 06 02 2022 draft minutes as written. Mr. Bowkett**
28 **seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, motion passed.**

29 II. Building and Grounds Updates

30 Ms. Gascoyne noted that the Amherst Building and Grounds subcommittee met in July, and they
31 had a great first meeting. They heard from SAU #39 Buildings and Grounds Director, Mr.
32 Preston regarding the potential grant money for safety and security upgrades. That was probably
33 discussed at the Souhegan meeting as well. They also received an update on the state aid
34 application for the Amherst project.

35 Just as a refresher, the Amherst School Board directed Business Administrator, Ms. Amy Facey
36 to go forward with the state aid application which had a deadline of submission for July 1st. This
37 is just for the elementary school project, not the full project that was on the ballot last year that

38 included the middle school. That was submitted on July 1st and the NHDOE called the SAU to
39 schedule a site visit. That will happen tomorrow.

40 Ms. Gascoyne continued: they spent the rest of the time looking over the Capital Needs
41 Assessments that were created in 2017. Mr. Preston put them all into a master spreadsheet and
42 they discussed supporting Mr. Preston and his team through that. They recognized that AMS will
43 not be doing a renovation and have a meeting scheduled this Thursday for a tour for the entire
44 subcommittee.

45 Ms. Parisi added that the Amherst group did get enrollment information from NESDEC.

46 Mr. Coogan mentioned that it makes sense to discuss. He added that the first grade is 25 kids
47 higher than expected.

48 Interim Superintendent, Mr. Steven Chamberlin, replied that it is about a class size.

49 Mr. Coogan asked if there were other grade levels that have increased that much.

50 Ms. Facey replied that is the largest and they have had to shift staff.

51 Mr. Chamberlin added that he placed the NESDEC information to the JFAC storage folder.

52 Ms. Ludt suggested they could take tours of the facilities.

53 Ms. Parisi added that they can schedule another tour if that time does not work for the
54 participants.

55 Ms. Gascoyne asked for any questions.

56 Ms. Eastland asked about the state building aid tours.

57 Ms. Facey replied that the DOE is conducting the visit in August and at this time there are
58 approximately 6 building projects that are submitted. She does not know how much money is
59 available. They will be doing their ranking at the end of September. She and Mr. Preston have
60 provided them with a lot of information. What they submitted is still in the conceptual stage,
61 there are certain criteria for ranking. The project is not in the final stages. She has copies of the
62 application if they are interested.

63 Mr. Coogan asked for any questions on the Amherst Building and Grounds subcommittee.

64 He asked if there was an update from the Mont Vernon Building and Grounds subcommittee.
65 There were no updates at this time.

66 He inquired about the Souhegan Building and Grounds subcommittee.

67 Ms. Eastland noted that they met and discussed their mission, and how they are going to tackle
68 this job. The takeaways were that they do not need to worry about the day-to-day maintenance
69 plan. Mr. Preston has a good handle on it although a refresher is probably needed. They are
70 doing the tour next Thursday, 08/18 at 3PM, it is on the SAU calendar.

71 In addition, they are looking at the Annex usage report, how the building is currently being used.
72 This is to see if there are options to categorize space rather than keeping it as is with complete
73 and possibly expensive renovations. One of the things, Mr. Black had mentioned was lab lecture
74 space.

75 Mr. Coogan commented that is thinking out of the box. He inquired about the curriculum.

76 Mr. Chamberlin added that with the scheduling of space you want as much flexibility as you can
77 to take advantage of curriculum and teachable moments. It is absolutely worthy of conversation.

78 Ms. Eastland agreed. They are also working with the SAU to determine the overall STEM
79 renovation needs as curriculum changes as it is happening and projected 5-10 years from now.
80 They understand the burden on the taxpayers as well as the impact on the students and staff.

81 Ms. Eastland continued that she is going to be a strong advocate for the Souhegan Buildings and
82 Grounds community. When they look at the U.S. News and World Report, the evaluation of a
83 high school it looks at the number of kids taking the AP exam, their results and how they are
84 doing on their SAT scores. While that knowledge is foundational, the final rubber meets road is
85 what happens at the high school.

86 Ms. Parisi added that they discussed the science labs, and this is something that is not new. She
87 commended them for thinking outside the box. She inquired if they were thinking of lowering
88 the cost of the science labs.

89 Ms. Eastland replied, yes, and they want to maximize their dollars.

90 Mr. Grondstra commented that they do not know about the cost, these are all things to take a
91 look at. He is excited about the possibility of the space. They cannot give any definitive answers
92 now.

93 Mr. Coogan applauded Ms. Eastland for being an advocate for two school boards and two
94 communities, Amherst and Mont Vernon.

95 Ms. Eastland inquired who will make the final decision, the SAU board or the individual boards.

96 Mr. Coogan replied that to his understanding it is the individual boards. We are going to provide
97 those recommendations to the boards and then decide what to do next.

98 Ms. Gascoyne mentioned that they have the subcommittees, make recommendations and take
99 them to the SAU meeting and then the individual boards have further discussion.

100 Mr. Coogan added that their role is to put forth the best recommendation that they can with as
101 much information that they can make decisions upon. He asked if there were any additional
102 questions.

103 Ms. Ludt asked about the timing.

104 Mr. Coogan replied that they do have a timeline. The message from this committee has to be
105 consistent.

106 Ms. Ludt noted that they want enough time to get the items on the ballot and share with the
107 community.

108 Mr. Coogan added that at the end of the day, it is really about what is going to get passed and
109 what are the shortcomings of the compromises that we have to make. We are trying to put
110 together the best proposals as possible.

111 Mr. Gauthier mentioned that the scope and the needs of the project have not changed but need to
112 be refined.

113 Ms. Gascoyne noted that she did receive an email from the Principal of C/W listing the events
114 that are happening and that JFAC was invited.

115 Mr. Chamberlin added that this does not meet the needs of the town in Amherst.

116 Ms. Gascoyne emphasized that they are running out of time.

117 Mr. Chamberlin noted that taking the 5th grade out of the AMS will help with the space. It would
118 be a significant improvement.

119 A question was raised as of what constitutes a final vote or is it a consensus.

120 Mr. Coogan replied it is a vote.

121 Mr. Bowkett suggested that they come up with a timeframe because it is going to be very
122 important, plus the school boards need at least a month to review.

123 Mr. Coogan agreed.

124 Mr. Bowkett noted that they should set priorities.

125 Ms. Parisi agreed and added that way that their district towns set up are very unique. It is a
126 conversation that has been happening.

127 Ms. Gascoyne inquired about the utilization rate of Souhegan.

128 Mr. Veilleux replied that they have 700 students in the building and are at 85% capacity.

129 Ms. Parisi asked if the utilization report had been forecasted out 5 years. She asked if they could
130 put the report on their website.

131 Mr. Coogan added that this conversation will come up with the community. If we do not have a
132 point of view as to answer that question head on it is going to be the monster in the room.

133 Mr. Chamberlin added that he was charged come up with the report and it is there.

134 Mr. Coogan noted that the theme has been consistent, and they really need to craft the story for
135 Souhegan. They are solving this problem for CW and AMS it is different. They have to figure
136 out why they have all this extra space in this facility and no extra space in the other facility.

137 Mr. Bowkett recommended that they talk to the Mont Vernon school board because they do not
138 have representation here.

139 Mr. Grondstra added that they want to make sure that all of the projects dovetail nicely together.

140 SAU #39 Facilities Director, Mr. Roger Preston, added that a lot of the work that has been
141 completed in Mont Vernon is because the taxpayers have put money aside. They have selected
142 the projects and have gone forward. He commended the MVSB.

143 Ms. Ludt commented that she is hoping that no decision will be made about the annex unless
144 they understand what they want in terms of programs and curriculum.

- 145 Ms. Parisi noted that Chairwoman, Ms. Sarah Lawrence, is the representative for the MVSB.
146 Additionally, they are being cognizant of the tax impact to the MV residents.
- 147 Ms. Gascoyne questioned the project that the ASB has decided, to only move forward with the
148 elementary school.
- 149 Mr. Gauthier replied they are still only going with the elementary school project. They have
150 submitted their state aid application that was due July 1st. Extreme circumstances could change
151 the overall project but that is what they are focusing on now. What the project is may differ from
152 what it is now.
- 153 Ms. Parisi noted that they do not have the funding to work with another architect. They do not
154 have the exact details.
- 155 Mr. Coogan asked for board updates.
- 156 Mr. Preston added that they all want to be on the same page and what they have is conceptual.
157 He struggles with saying that they do not have the funding for architects because for him it raises
158 the question of if they did would they be looking at other options. I feel that the option we have
159 is to stand behind what we have and answer all of the questions.
- 160 Ms. Gascoyne commented that is where she was going, and this is not the first iteration.
- 161 Mr. Valley commented that the voters need to know what they are getting for the project,
162 furniture, smartboards, etc.
- 163 Mr. Bowkett responded that the construction managers added that all into the package.
- 164 Mr. Valley noted that the information that is out there needs to be clear to the voters.
- 165 Mr. Coogan mentioned that they have to do a better job articulating what is in the project.
- 166 Mr. Valley added that he believes that part of the reason why it was defeated was the lack of
167 understanding what was included in the project. He inquired if there was a document to spell out
168 what is included.
- 169 Ms. Eastland responded that the JFAC website had a lot of useful information. All they can do is
170 respond to the taxpayer vote and it did not pass so they are back to the drawing board.
- 171 Ms. Ludt noted that it is useful to have prior committee members and the feedback. It is difficult
172 to be criticized for messaging. People don't start paying attention till the very end and then do
173 their homework. What will help us is that we will come forward with a different plan,
174 communication is so important.
- 175 Ms. Gascoyne added that they did everything they could have done, meetings in person and over
176 zoom.
- 177 Mr. Chamberlin mentioned that he is hoping that they can instill a sense of urgency.
- 178 Mr. Coogan remarked that SHS was designed for future growth expansion. CW was built from
179 the 50-60's point of view.
- 180 Mr. Bowkett asked about the next meeting.

- 181 Ms. Gascoyne replied that it is the meeting at AMS for the tour.
- 182 Mr. Coogan added that there is a potential for warrant articles on the ballot in March.
- 183 Mr. Gauthier added that October is a fair estimate but no later than November 1st, December is
184 when they would want to finish their budget items.
- 185 Mr. Coogan commented that they have some leg work to do. This group has try to get out there
186 an look at an education strategy.
- 187 He inquired if there were any other questions or comments.
- 188 Mr. Coogan asked for the next steps that they should come with the notional idea for proposals
189 for the individual boards.
- 190 Ms. Gascoyne mentioned that she would prefer a timeline.
- 191 Mr. Coogan replied by the month end.
- 192 Ms. Eastland noted that this feels like they are going back to the drawing board from scratch.
- 193 Ms. Parisi questioned what is it that you are looking at completely different.
- 194 Ms. Eastland remarked that their meetings should be where everyone can attend, teachers and
195 community members. What she does not know from the school board and the administration is
196 how is the master schedule going to change.
- 197 Mr. Coogan inquired if it was fair to say that SHS was a more modern building and some of the
198 renovations were at a stage where they could be upgraded. It sounds like the highest priority is
199 the Clark Wilkins component. He is trying to think through strategically.
- 200 Ms. Gascoyne noted that there was a meeting a few years ago where they had identified the
201 priorities.
- 202 Mr. Veilleux commented that his motivation is to figure out the space that they have available
203 and to get the portables closed. SHS is a great school, and it was designed for expansion.
- 204 Ms. Parisi added that there is a lot of information in the Google drive folder. There is a million
205 ways to look at the same project.
- 206 Mr. Chamberlin mentioned that he has had experience with NH school funding. What the ASB
207 did was that they did everything to maintain, not cut teachers or programs.
- 208 Mr. Preston added that this committee holds a lot of weight.
- 209 Mr. Coogan finalized the meeting stating that they are going to meet next month and review
210 proposals for potential warrant articles.
- 211 III. Meeting Adjourned
- 212 **Mr. Coogan adjourned the meeting at 7:00PM.**