

Board of Education Minutes
September 9, 2014
Joint Meeting

DRAFT

A joint meeting of the Boards of Selectmen, Education and Finance along with the Permanent School Planning and Building Committee and Ad Hoc Building Committee was held on Tuesday, September 9, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. in the Wheeler High School Shaw Media Center. Present for the Board of Selectmen was Mr. Mullane, Mr. Donahue, and Mr. Testa. Present for the Board of Education was Mr. McCord, Mr. Carlson, Mr. Karpinski, Mrs. Wagner, Dr. Robert, Mr. Mathwich, Mrs. Buzzee, Mr. Mendolia, and Superintendent Nero. Present for the Board of Finance was Mr. Spring, Mr. Main, Mr. Pavlovics, Mr. Woodward, and Mr. Ratib. Also representing the Ad Hoc Building Committee were Mr. Mathwich and Mr. Carlson. Mr. Mullane began the meeting at 7:05 p.m. He asked for each Board to identify themselves and thanked everyone for coming. He had comment. Mr. McCord had opening comments. He spoke of some of the agenda items. He had further comment and spoke of the building project process that occurred. Mrs. Wagner read a letter regarding the meeting and what she had hoped would be accomplished. Mr. Spring had comment on the past referendums. He spoke of affordability and had further explanation and comment. He spoke of the financials of the town. He elaborated. Mr. Donahue spoke and commented on the direction of the meeting and getting everyone going in the same direction. He had further comment. He spoke of what seemed to be a disconnect with the voters and hoped to work together. He had further comment. Mr. Mullane had further comment.

Mr. Mullane commented on what he hoped to find out from a survey. He wanted to start this process now because he didn't want it to overlap with the budget. He felt we still needed the public hearings. Mr. Mathwich had comment. He wants to focus on the facilities and not the programs. He elaborated and said we have been taking care of our programs. Mr. Nero had comment. He agreed with Mr. Mathwich. He said he was going to recommend not doing a building project right now and he elaborated. He said if we do it in December or a year from now, we are still going to be in the same predicament. He elaborated. He thought we would be rushing back too fast. He wondered what the affordability is and asked for a number. He had further comment. Mr. Mullane had comment and spoke of altering the project. He spoke about the elementary school. He didn't agree with not doing anything and had further comment. He could relate to the elementary school project. Mr. Nero said the priority is the high school. There was comment. Dr. Robert had comment about Representative Urban. He commented about making Wheeler a magnet school. There was discussion. Mr. McCord had comment. He spoke of the education that our students are receiving and how they are prepared to go forward. He had further comment. Dr. Robert had further comment. Mr. McCord had further comment. Mr. Urgo, citizen, had comment. He spoke of incorrect information being given. He spoke of negative information coming from town hall and had further comment. He spoke in favor of the survey and recommended against a comments section on the survey. He elaborated. He had further comment. He spoke of people moving to town for the schools. He had further comment. A citizen had comment about what he has been hearing the past couple months regarding the project.

He elaborated and had further comment. Mr. Testa commented about it not being fair to speculate on what the townspeople could afford. There was discussion. Mr. Nero had comment about the emergency services project issues and that may be part of the problem with our project. He elaborated. He thought that had to be resolved first. Mr. Mullane had comment on the emergency services building and said it was straightened out. Mr. Testa had comment. Mr. Mullane said we need to concentrate on a way to move forward. There was discussion and comment. Mr. Nero had comment about the economy and revenue in town in December compared to what it was in May. He elaborated. Nita Kincaid had comment about the tone of the meeting and elaborated. Mr. Spring had comment. There was discussion of bringing in an outside facilitator. Mr. Ratib had comment on the three Boards being here and how it was a positive thing having them together. He had further comment. He said this is just the beginning and elaborated. Dr. Robert had further comment. Mr. Testa had comment. There was discussion of finances. Mr. Nero had comment. Joe Gross, citizen, had comment on what he had heard so far. He asked what the Board of Education wanted to do on this building because they are the ones that know what is best. He had further comment. He said each Board should handle what their responsibilities are and he elaborated. Mr. Gross said the people are only going to be educated as to what they want to be educated. He had further comment. He thought the Board of Education needs to tell the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance where we need to go. Mr. McCord had comment. He said we need to move on but we just can't jump in and he elaborated. Mr. Nero will call CAFE about an outside facilitator. There was discussion. Mr. Mullane spoke of a maintenance plan and having that separate from the regular budget. He elaborated. We have to dwell on the positive things of the schools and he hopes we can move forward. He had further comment. Mr. Mullane wanted to try to work on that positive aspect. There was comment. Mr. Karpinski had comment. Mr. Mullane had comment. Mrs. Wagner had further comment. There was further comment. Mr. Mullane had closing comments. He will get back to the Boards about another meeting date.

The meeting ended at 8:40 p.m. Mr. Mullane thanked everyone for coming.

Respectfully submitted,

Roberta T. McCarthy, Secretary to
The Board of Education