

## **MEMORANDUM**

TO: Unatego Facilities Study Advisory Committee  
FROM: Alan Pole and Bill Silky  
RE: Meeting Notes-Meeting of January 21, 2016  
DATE: January 24, 2016

**Attendance:**

Committee Members: Jeanne Butler, Heather Coleman, Scott Garno, Kim Gascon, Patti Hoyt, Katie James, Lew Keyser, Elaine Lowe, Katherine Mazourek, Kelly Poje, Tyler Post (for Terry Brown), Melanie Ruff, Fran Secor, and Kim Trask

Consultants: Alan Pole and Bill Silky

Observers: Ed Horan, Allison Collins, Sandra Banczkowski, Brenda McEntee, Ruth Modinger, Stuart Anderson, Mike Carson, Dick Downey, Christine Brown, and Betty Kiel

Superintendent: David Richards

Location: Unatego Middle/High High School

1. Bill Silky welcomed everyone to the meeting, reviewed the procedures for the conduct of the meeting, and thanked Patti Hoyt for providing a tour of the middle/high school. He also reviewed the future meetings of the advisory committee as follows:

Date	Topic	Location
January 21	Continued exploration of possible options and tentative conclusions/recommendations from consultants	Middle/High School
March 1	Review of draft final report	Middle/High School

2. Bill reviewed a table that showed the percentage of the school taxes paid by the residents of the Town of Otego compared with taxes that are paid by residents of the Town of Unadilla. Otego residents pay approximately 48% of the tax levy while Unadilla residents pay approximately 40% of the levy. This is due, at least in part, to the fact that the full property value in Otego is approximately 15% higher than it is in Unadilla.

3. Alan Pole reviewed the three options that are currently before the committee with respect to the future direction for the study. These three options are as follows:

**Option 1:** Remaining as is (K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12)

**Option 2:** Close Otego Elementary School, make Unadilla K-4, move 5<sup>th</sup> grade to the Middle School

**Option 3:** Close both elementary schools and build a new K-5 elementary school on the Middle/High School campus.

He then followed up with a discussion from the last meeting about whether or not a fourth option should be added for consideration. That fourth option would be as follows:

**Option 4:** Close Unadilla Elementary School, make Otego K-4, move 5<sup>th</sup> grade to the Middle School.

Alan also noted that the staff savings of approximately \$400,000 that would be realized if one of the elementary schools was to close would be the same regardless of which elementary school closed. He also pointed out that the Unadilla building is nearly twice as large in square footage as the Otego building. After a significant amount of discussion, the committee decided to include Option 4 as part of the study.

4. Bill then reviewed the financial implications of the different options. He concluded that, on a \$100,000 house, there would be tax savings of approximately \$75 to \$186 depending on the township in which a person lived if option 2 were to be implemented and salary and benefit savings were phase in over two years. He also examined the impact on a \$100,000 home if option 3 were to be implemented and concluded that there would be tax savings of approximately \$60-\$110 again depending on the township in which a person resided.

5. Bill also reviewed some of the key findings from the study.

6. During the course of the meeting, there were two other options that were offered for consideration. The first of these was offered by a member of the committee and was referred to as option 2b. Option 2b is as follows:

**Option 2b:** Close Otego Elementary School, make Unadilla K-5

After a considerable amount of discussion, the committee agreed that Option 2b should be added to the study.

7. A second new option was offered by a member of the audience and was referred to as Option 4b. Option 4b is as follows:

**Option 4b:** Close Unadilla Elementary School, make Otego K-3, move 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades to the Middle School.

After a considerable amount of discussion, the committee agreed that Option 4b would **not** be added to the study.

8. The meeting was opened up to the audience in order to solicit comments and questions. These comments and questions included the following:

- a. Is there really enough site space at the middle/high school campus for a new K-5 elementary school? (This determination is being finalized by the district's architects and will be discussed further at the next meeting.)
- b. Be sure to leave room in the elementary school(s) for the addition of a pre-K program.
- c. While the finances of this study are very important, the main focus of the recommendations should be on improving the educational program students and this could be best accomplished by building a new elementary school.
- d. No matter how many renovations are made to the two elementary schools, they will still be 90 years old buildings and will continue to need work.
- e. It is very disappointing that, if the elementary school(s) is/are sold, the revenue that will be realized from the sale will be significantly below the current appraised value of the buildings. And, it would be disappointing to take a financial hit selling the Otego building after money has been put into it in recent years.
- f. A question was asked as to how the square footage of each building is determined by the architects. The consultants will attempt to get an answer to this question.

9. The next advisory committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 1, 2016 at the middle/high school. The meeting of the Advisory Committee will begin at 6:30 p.m. There will be no building tour.

We believe this covers the essence of the discussions at our meeting on January 21. If you have questions with these notes, please feel free to contact me. We will also review these notes as the first agenda item at our next meeting on March 1 at 6:30 in the middle/high school.

C: David Richards