

MEMORANDUM

TO: Unatego Facilities Study Advisory Committee
FROM: Alan Pole and Bill Silky
RE: Meeting Notes-Meeting of December 17, 2015
DATE: December 21, 2015

Attendance:

Committee Members: Jeanne Butler, Heather Coleman, Ron Decker, Ed Frazier, Scott Garno, Kim Gascon, Patti Hoyt, Katie James, Lew Keyser, Ernie Kroll, 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, Brenda McEntee, J McDermott, Stuart Anderson, Steve Thesier, Bill Sands, Ruth Modinger, Dick Downey, Brian Trask, Joann Raso, Gene Schoeck, Bill Cook, and Rodney Renwick

Superintendent: David Richards

Location: Unadilla Elementary School

1. Alan Pole welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained the process for the conduct of the meeting. He also reviewed the future meetings of the advisory committee as follows:

Date	Topic	Location
January 21	Financial implications and tentative conclusions/recommendations from consultants	Junior-Senior High School
March 1	Review of draft final report	Junior-Senior High School

There will be an optional tour of the Junior-Senior High School before the next meeting beginning at 5:45 pm. These optional tours are for committee members and for anyone that will be observing the meeting that will follow. The January 21 business meeting will begin at 6:30 pm.

2. Alan Pole introduced Steve Thesier and Bill Sands from the BCK/IBI Group, the district's architect and engineers. They attended the meeting in order to answer questions regarding the Building Condition Survey and the projected cost for a new elementary school.

3. Alan Pole provided an overview of the following PowerPoint slides:

a. It does not appear possible to close the Unadilla Elementary School given the current space available in the district;

b. Results of the Building Condition Survey showing the following amounts listed for each building:

- ✓ Bus Garage-\$317,000
- ✓ Unadilla Elementary-\$3,325,000
- ✓ Otego Elementary-\$3,971,000
- ✓ Jr. Sr. High School-\$7,315,000

c. Should the district decide to build a new K-5 elementary school on the junior-senior high school campus, the building would be approximately 52,000 square feet and cost approximately \$19,000,000.

4. Bill Silky discussed the research behind school closure and the impact on home values. If an elementary school closes thus increasing the distance from home to school, it has an adverse affect on property values. On the other hand, when the perceived quality of a school improves, it positively impacts home values. Therefore it appears to be unclear what effect closing an elementary school would have on a community. Bill reviewed the histories of assessed values in Altmar-Parish-Williamstown and Sidney, two districts that had elementary school closures, and their assessed or full values had both increased.

5. As requested by the committee, Bill Silky reviewed the appraised value of the school buildings as follows:

- ✓ Otego Elementary-\$9,053,464
- ✓ Unadilla Elementary-\$13,465,274
- ✓ Junior-Senior High School-\$36,679,542
- ✓ Bus Garage-\$641,319

Bill informed the committee that, from the evidence of schools that have sold buildings, it would unrealistic to expect to sell a school for anywhere near its appraised value.

6. Bill Silky reviewed the debt service that the district is facing through the 2025 school year. He indicated that as debt service declines it provides an opportunity to perhaps add the savings to a capital fund to help pay for future school improvements.

7. Bill reviewed the impact on transportation that he had discussed with Brian Trask. It does not appear that there is a significant impact on the cost of transportation whether the district chooses option 1, 2, or 3. However, the amount of wait time that students currently have on the bus would decrease if the district chose either option 2 or 3.

8. Bill Silky reviewed three options for the facilities. He then asked the advisory committee members to break up into groups in order to further review advantages and disadvantages for each option AND to determine if there should be additional options considered. This is a continuing refinement of the work that the committee did at the last meeting. The groups reviewed the advantages and disadvantages of each option but did not come up with any new options. The options that the groups considered are the following:

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

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

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

9. The meeting was opened up to the committee members and to observers for questions and comments. There were a number of comments and questions including the following:

- ✓ The shuttle bus system is bad. There is too much down time on buses for the students.
- ✓ Regardless of how much is done to the elementary schools, they are still old buildings. Option 3 is the best option.
- ✓ There is room on the junior-senior high school campus for a new elementary school.
- ✓ The current shuttle bus system is crazy. There are approximately 90 hours of instructional time per year that is lost for the students.
- ✓ Make the educational impact more important. This study has to be about the kids. The students need more classroom time.

10. The next advisory committee meeting will be held on Thursday, January 21, 2016 at Junior-Senior High School. An optional tour of the school will begin at 5:45 for anyone who is interested. The meeting of the Advisory Committee will begin at 6:30 p.m.

We believe this covers the essence of the discussions at our meeting on December 17. 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 meet at the Junior-Senior High School.....tour will begin at 5:45 and meeting will start at 6:30!!