

FACILITIES REPORT

This year the Facilities Committee has been busy with discussions and preliminary planning related to a proposed solar photovoltaic system designed to meet the school's electrical energy needs for the next 30-40 years using renewable energy. Two Public Forums were held to inform the community of this proposed system.

The proposed system would be initially financed through a solar power purchase agreement (PPA) whereby the District would enter into a long term contract with a renewable solar energy builder developer who would arrange financing, build, maintain and own the system for the duration of the contract. The District would have the option to purchase the system for fair market value (FMV) after a minimum number of years. The monies budgeted to purchase electricity could then instead be used to pay down a bond. At that point in time, the FMV of the system is estimated to be around 40-60% of the original cost to build. Excess energy produced by the system would be sent back to the electrical grid and our electric utility would credit the District.

A comprehensive renewable energy grant application to the NH Public Utilities Commission - Sustainable Energy Division – was submitted in September and if awarded would reduce the upfront cost of the system. The grant requirements stipulated a minimum electricity demand and the school energy usage was borderline and would not qualify. A suggestion was made to partner with the Meriden Village Water District in order to qualify for the grant. The MVWD was approached and agreed to co-apply. We expect to hear the results in early March. If the District supports this plan, the administration and School Board would be able to begin the process of working with the renewable solar energy builder developer to work through contractual, legal and other issues that may arise.

The cost of electrical energy in New England is the highest in the continental United States and we believe it will continue to move higher. We are excited by this proposed project and recommend to the School Board and District to move forward with this plan. In the long term, the financial and environmental benefits will impact present and future members of the community in positive ways. Financially, it will provide the District long term budgeting price stability. Environmentally, it will further reduce our reliance on fossil fuels and reduce greenhouse gas emissions which we believe is very worthwhile.

The Committee reviewed replacement telephone system installation bids in the spring and made a recommendation to the School Board. A new system was installed over the summer and so far the system is working very well.

We have reviewed administration proposed interior building alterations and believe some of these changes make good sense from a facilities standpoint. We are also recommending the continued removal of classroom carpeting and replacing it with epoxy terrazzo floors similar to the main entry and lobby. This type of floor is expected to last nearly fifty years with greatly reduced yearly cleaning costs compared to carpet and will not allow mold spores to thrive. Between moisture migrating up through the concrete slab and food being spilled from above, the carpet is very difficult to keep clean and dry enough to prevent the formation of mold spores. We have been experiencing ongoing

issues with mold in the carpeting for some years now and believe it is prudent long term to move forward replacing carpeting throughout the building.

The underground 10,000 gallon oil tank has been officially and properly abandoned as of last summer. We have talked about getting rid of that tank for years and it is really good to know it is no longer in service.

Committee members include: Allan Ferguson, Brian Garfield (School Board), Mike Higgins, Bill Knight, Chris Pixley, Greg Vogt (Ex-officio and School Superintendent)

Respectfully Submitted,

Mike Higgins