

**Glenn Brand, Ed.D.**  
Superintendent of Schools



**Alice Brown-LeGrand**  
Director of Student Support Services

**Christine Elliott**  
Assistant Superintendent for  
Curriculum & Staff Development

**Andrea Stern Armstrong**  
Director of Human Resources

**Paul Ruggiero**  
Assistant Superintendent of  
Administration & Finance

**WILMINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
161 Church Street | Wilmington, MA 01887  
Tel: (978) 694-6000 Fax: (978) 694-6005

**Kenneth Lord**  
Director of Technology &  
Digital Learning

*A school and community partnership that provides an inclusive, respectful, and collaborative learning environment  
where all stakeholders are engaged in the development of the whole child.*

## **MSBA Wildwood School Building Committee Meeting**

**December 20, 2022 06:00 PM**

**Virtual via Zoom**

### **Meeting Minutes:**

#### **1. Roll Call**

Superintendent Brand called to order the Wildwood School Building Committee Meeting at 6:01PM.

#### Committee members in attendance:

- Dr. Glenn Brand, School Superintendent, Committee Chairman
- Jeffrey M. Hull, Town Manager
- David A. Ragsdale, School Committee
- Paul Ruggiero, Assistant Superintendent of Administration & Finance
- Marianne Gallezzo, Finance Committee
- Paul J. Melaragni, Permanent Building Committee
- Gregory B. Bendel, Board of Selectmen
- Kate Bissell, School Principal
- Diane M. Allan, Permanent Building Committee
- Bryan T. Perry, Finance Director/Town Accountant
- Melissa D. Plowman, School Committee *Alternate*
- Kristen Walsh, School Principal *Alternate*
- George W. Hooper II, Public Buildings Superintendent
- Kevin A. Caira, Board of Selectmen *Alternate*
- MJ Byrnes, School Committee *Alternate*

#### Absent:

- John C. Holloway, Permanent Building Committee

#### Community members in attendance:

- Jennifer Binelli

## **2. Review of updated costs and any additional information regarding Wildwood Study Option**

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Review of updated costs—Dr. Brand provides overview of the current option (#17) being considered for the interim plan for the WW students to now (continue to) occupy the West Int. and move to the WMS beginning in the fall of 2023. Reviewed that the biggest takeaway from last meeting was considerable discussion about the outdoor play space proposal provided by Dore and Whittier. And tonight’s goal is to review a new revised proposal accounting for a smaller play space (which includes the appropriate “fall zone” which is the required surface beneath the play structure). Reminder of the goal of today’s meeting is to be able to come to a decision and make a proposal to the SC.

Specific costs and details related to the new proposed play space:

- Cost estimate for the structure itself \$40,000
- Cost estimate for the fall zone material, rubberized surface \$10,000-\$15,000
- Totaling: \$50,000-55,000

Other points of clarification re: the play space

Still able to be located just outside the middle school right entrance when looking at the school from the front of the building. It has further been determined that this location would not interfere with the baseball field at the middle school. It is not permanent, meets codes, not fixed to a foundation, which is advantageous since it can be relocated.

Mr. Hooper asks a question about where the cost (\$100,000) is currently listed and if it should be moved under “owners cost” and further asks a question about contingency costs, as well as the installation plan (designer services vs. town DPW), Dr. Brand indicates that Dore and Whittier has indicated that we would not need to go to bid with a designer, that the town could work with the vendor to construct the play space.

Some discussion about revised numbers when moving the play space costs under owners cost and impact on other details of the cost estimate.

Mr. Hull speaks to the financial aspects and clarifies the objective of the meeting tonight is to come to a decision about putting forth this (Middle School) plan to the SC for vote and not necessarily coming to a final number financially per se, and to begin working with Dore and Whittier on final design and getting bids out and moving forward with their services for this project. The hope being that the work would be largely completed by the end of August. Reminds us that Dore and Whittier is trying to be abundantly conservative and shares historical perspective of other town projects that have attempted to pinpoint an estimate that the prices are often in flux and would rather go to town meeting when an estimate is over-estimated vs. under-estimated.

Mr. Cairra asks, about the protocol for having this go to the SC to be making the decision about this approval vs. the town. Mr. Hull explains that this is following the same path as usual with capital projects that are related to the school department. Conversations happen at the SC

level and then Mr. Hull determines what amount goes to the town from Dr. Brand's recommendation.

Ms. Byrnes agrees that it is confusing as to why it will go to SC for vote, and asks if this project will be funded out of the SC budget. She further comments that ensuring student needs are being met with this proposed plan does fall under SC purview.

Mr. Ragsdale, agrees this is an important question but clarifies that SC approval should be part of this process b/c it's not simply a matter of building spaces, but also educational programming (distribution of programs and staff and students), describes it as a weird hybrid in many ways.

Ms. Galezzo, responds that the money (town vs. school) comes out of the same pot.

Ms. Allen asks to clarify the vote here tonight—to make a recommendation to the SC that the Wildwood students be moved to WMS, and the money aspect will be worked out through Mr. Ruggierol and Mr. Hull or does this committee approve a financial amount? Dr. Brand clarifies the vote.

Mr. Hull speaks to the previous question about capital projects and notes Mr. Ragsdale's comment about this decision impacting educational programming, making this circumstance unique to most other building projects. In terms of the dollar amount...the focus should be on the approach, not the final details of the cost necessarily. He suggested that the committee vote to recommend the WMS option be recommended to the SC with the expectation that costs will be in the 1.1 mill range, rather than try to work that out in this meeting tonight.

Mr. Bendel—wants to make two important points, 1. applaud Jamie Magaldi and has full confidence in him and his staff for thinking of ways to have a play space that is more fiscally reasonable, and 2. stresses that he is not impressed with the OPM's (Dore and Whittier) work on this given the various number of cost estimates that have come forth in such a short period of time, especially so close to the meeting time, expresses concern with the timing of the committee receiving information and worries about lack of transparency from the OPM and how this looks to the community, and clarifies that his perspective is not a criticism of the chair (Dr. Brand) of this committee but is a reflection of the OPM of this project.

Mr. Melaragni—fine with the concept of this going to SC but asks what the next step is for SC, and shares concerns about the possibility of SC going in a different direction than this committee after so much discussion and work thus far. Dr. Brand responds re: tomorrow evenings meeting and this coming forth to SC for a vote.

Mr. Hooper—asks if the play structure will be lumped into the cost, or whether it would be separated. Dr. Brand reviews that the plan is to approve the redesign and construction to accommodate the WW students at the MS, and “keep the promise of a play space”

Ms. Gallezzo—who will oversee the project? Mr. Hooper’s dept? Who will oversee the GM? Mr. Hull explains that some of the cost estimate includes cost for Dore and Whittier to provide some of this oversight alongside Mr. Hooper.

Mr. Caira—clarifies that Dore and Whittier contract would be extended? Mr. Hull expresses understanding with the frustration and concern with the changing cost estimates provided by Dore and Whittier, but reminds the committee of other successful projects and this procurement process, and not doing so puts the project at risk for not being done in a timely manner at this point. Mr. Caira shares more concern about the performance of Dore and Whittier and the worry about not having a hard and set number financially yet before this vote this evening. And asks again is the cost of the playground part of the Dore and Whittier project. Mr. Hull clarifies, no it can be removed and let the DPW do this portion of the project.

Ms. Allen- suggests we put into the vote re: plays pace should read “not to exceed” a certain amount. And either exclude this from the recommendation to the SC entirely, or put a clause that it should not exceed (\$100,000).

Mr. Ragsdale—Back to the question of what will SC do in their meeting tomorrow, he shares that, while not speaking on behalf of the committee, he does not anticipate that the SC is going to go “into the weeds of the dollar amounts”, but rather it is his sense of the committee that they will make a decision based on the plans outlined and cost estimates.

Ms. Plowman agrees with Mr. Ragsdale’s comment and that that is her expectation of the SC meeting as well.

Mr. Ruggiero speaks to line items on the cost estimate, designer services costs (would go from roughly \$81,415 to 71,000) by moving the 100,000 out of the construction costs.

### **3. Recommendation of Option**

Ms. Gallezzo moves to accept the proposal to: Move WW students to WMS with the proposed renovations and revisions to the school (and keep some of the students also at the West school) and further recommends that this plan move forward to the SC for a vote with a cap of 1.1 million dollars (the project is not to exceed 1.1 million), according to the quote provided today and that the town manager will get the final dollar amount to present warrant article to the board of selectmen, second by Ms. Allen.

Discussion on motion:

Mr. Hull expresses concern about having that final dollar amount by March. Ms. Gallezzo asks if by town meeting in April, and Mr. Hull expresses that that is the plan.

Mr. Bendel is voting to move forward, but wants to go on record that he is concerned about voting on 1.1 million cost estimate that we just received a few hours ago.

### **Roll call:**

George Hooper—yes

Maryanne Galezzo—yes  
Diane Allen—yes  
Paul Melaragni—Yes  
Greg Bendel—yes  
David Ragsdale—yes  
Paul Ruggerio—Yes  
Kate Bissell-yes  
Bryan Perry-yes  
Glenn Brand—yes

**Vote:** Unanimous

#### **4. Public Comment**

Jennifer Binelli

Thanks the committee for moving forward given the time to completion date, expressed concern about not releasing the full force of the funds until July, given the work that needs to be done. Would like to further encourage the committee to keep thinking about potential delays like shipping times, etc. to ensure time to competition and then asks a question—can you speak tomorrow in SC meeting what next steps will look like? And further asks about possibility of a special town meeting to free up the money sooner than July 1.

Mr. Hull clarifies procedures related to town meeting and expresses preference for regular annual meeting. Ms. Gallezzo reminds the committee and community member that we can't recommend funding or warrant until we have final numbers on cost. Mr. Hooper explains that we need more information from the designer before doing that as well, so we are essentially not prepared to call a special town meeting sooner than the annual town meeting in April.

Dr. Brand shares that in the near future we will be looking to schedule a meeting with our new hired OPM to move forward on the building of the new Wildwood School.

#### **5. Adjourn**

Superintendent Brand called to adjourn the Wildwood School Building Committee Meeting at 7:10pm.

**Motion:** Mr. Melaragni made the above motion; it was seconded by Mr. Hooper.

**Vote:** Unanimous

Respectfully Submitted,

Melissa D. Plowman, School Committee *Alternate*  
(Temporary meeting recorder)