

**TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR
BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

Public Hearing Minutes

(purpose of this hearing is to receive comments regarding the Broad Brook Elementary School Permanent Modular Project approved by Referendum held June 27, 2012).

**Wednesday, March 11, 2015 at 6:30 p.m.
East Windsor High School
76 South Main Street, East Windsor, CT. 06088**

Public Hearing to include Board of Education and Building Committee (Permanent)

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEMBERS

Denise Menard – First Selectman

Dale A. Nelson - Selectman

Jason E. Bowsza – Deputy First Selectman

James C. Richards - Selectman

Steve Dearborn - Selectman

These Minutes are not official until approved at a subsequent meeting.

CALL TO ORDER:

First Selectman Menard called the Public Hearing to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Auditorium at the East Windsor High School, 76 South Main Street, East Windsor, CT.

ATTENDANCE:

Board of Selectmen (BOS):

Present: Denise Menard, First Selectman; Jason E. Bowsza, Deputy First Selectman; Steve Dearborn, Selectman; Dale A. Nelson, Selectman
James C. Richards, Selectman

Building Committee:

Present: Elzear Rodrigue, Chairman; Jim Thurz, Vice Chairman; Dick Pippin; Joe Sauerhoefer; Tom Talamini.

Board of Education (BOE):

Present: Chris Mickey, Chairman; Cathy Simonelli, Vice Chairman; Kathy Bilodeau; Nicole DeSousa; Bill Raber.

Guests:

Dr. Theresa Kane, Superintendent of Schools; Kim Lord, Treasurer; Richard LaBrie, Senior Associate with Futures Education, consultant to the East Windsor School System regarding the modular project; and Jim Guilano, Futures Education; Jerilyn Corso, Chairman, Board of Finance; Cindy Herms, Board of Finance, and many residents.

**Board of Selectmen
Minutes – Public Hearing 3/11/2015
Broad Brook Elementary School Permanent Modular Project
Approved by Referendum held June 27, 2012**

First Selectman Menard reported that this Public Hearing was called by the Board of Selectmen because they have a proposal to replace the modular classrooms at the Broad Brook Elementary School. In 2012 a referendum was passed by the voters for funding for fourteen (14) modular classrooms. Tonight's meeting is to address if we want to stay with the fourteen (14) classrooms, which came in significantly over budget, or reduce the number of the modular classrooms by four (4), and divide those four classrooms. First Selectman Menard reported that the Board of Selectmen will be making a decision at their Regular Meeting next Tuesday evening. The Building Committee will make a decision shortly thereafter - to award a contract if this proposal is approved, or do something else.

Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Building Committee and the Board of Education, Treasurer Lord, Dr. Kane, and Richard LaBrie of Futures Education joined First Selectman Menard and Deputy First Selectman Bowsza at the table. Everyone introduced themselves to the audience.

The following individuals offered public comments:

Steve Dearborn, Selectman:

- He is not in favor of the modular project, but he is in favor of building a real building addition with a foundation, steel trusses, and brick and mortar. He knows it might cost more money but he would be willing to pay more money to get something better. He felt it could be easily brought up to code; he felt the school was designed to be added on to
- The parking is horrendous. The modulares could be removed and that area could become parking for another twenty (20) cars.
- He felt we should do the right thing, which would be to build a better school. He reiterated he would be willing to pay more taxes to get a better school
- Regarding the money lost, Selectman Dearborn felt we have already lost that money; let's sever the relationship and start over.
- Selectman Dearborn reported he will vote no for this proposal; he felt we can do better for the kids.
- Selectman Dearborn concluded by suggesting everyone knows where he stands, and the modulares are not a good deal; let's do what they did in Ellington. We should do that here.

Jen Regaglia, 64 Miller Road: Ms. Regaglia identified the schools attended by her children.

- She felt the modulares have served their purpose and are beyond their life span. Ms. Regaglia felt we do need a new school, but the immediate need is the modulares. The kids are over-crowded; the modulares would be a place for them next year.
- We are talking about making East Windsor a better learning environment; she is a resident and wants the best for her kids.

Joanne Pinero, 14 Miller Road: Ms. Pinero reported her daughter is in the first grade.

- She would like to see the modulares go forward but agrees we need a new school.

Board of Selectmen

Minutes – Public Hearing 3/11/2015

Broad Brook Elementary School Permanent Modular Project

Approved by Referendum held June 27, 2012

- We should look to the future and make East Windsor a better place and the modulars for the next year is the right thing to do.

Marianne Misiuk, 4 Joseph Farms Road: Ms. Misiuk identified her children's place in the school system. She reported one of her children is in the Special Needs Education Program; her therapists says there is not enough space in the school. The immediate need is for the modulars; she supports the modular project with the ten (10) classrooms.

Dale Nelson, Selectman: requested that someone explain the timeframe for the modulars. Dr. Kane suggested they would be ready sometime next year, not at the beginning of the school year. Dr. Kane suggested they have a hold on the Mod Space classrooms; if the proposal is approved the modulars would be ready on November 6, 2015, so they would be ready for the majority of the school year.

Joe Unsworth, 9 Matthew Lane:

- Mr. Unsworth reported he is in favor of the modulars, which are not the best solution but they will be ready. He also wants a new school but the modulars were agreed on and approved in 2012.
- Mr. Unsworth felt there is a reluctance to raise taxes, and he questioned the ability to get a new school. He cautioned if the taxpayers hear we are losing over \$200,000.00....
- Mr. Unsworth reiterated he would like a new school but he would also like to speed up the process; three (3) years isn't good.

First Selectman Menard clarified the long process – part of that was because the project came in over-budget, which required it going out to bid again. It was also redesigned to make it more affordable. The Selectmen then approved it going to referendum. She indicated the government process is slow, and that's frustrating, but at the end of the day there is a process that needs to be gone through when an issue is approved at referendum. Mr. LaBrie noted the State had to also approve the reimbursement. Ms. Simonelli, BOE, noted a good deal of time was also spent on the redesign. Mr. Mickey, BOE, questioned the timeline for a new school? Mr. LaBrie estimated it would be three (3) to five (5) years from the time the Town approves the project until it's designed and the project completed.

Kathy Bilodeau, 343 Scantic Road: Mrs. Bilodeau reported she is also a Board of Education member; she has two (2) kids who went to the Broad Brook Elementary School so she is speaking as a mother and a board member.

- She has been there many times. She agrees it's an old building so she could maybe agree to doing something down the road.
- The problem is when the BOE first went into the contract with ModSpace they thought it would be two (2) to three (3) years and then the modulars could be lifted up and be taken away but the BOE didn't anticipate using them for ten years. The present contract has expired and needs to be renewed, but they are beyond their life expectancy. Mrs. Bilodeau suggested we are spending about \$11,000.00 per month for the modulars and that money could go towards the new modulars and we will own them. Every day we

**Board of Selectmen
Minutes – Public Hearing 3/11/2015
Broad Brook Elementary School Permanent Modular Project
Approved by Referendum held June 27, 2012**

delay making a final decision we are giving money away; even this meeting postpones the project. We need a place for these children now.

- We have also spent \$158,000.00 on blueprints; she would hate for the taxpayer to think that money was wasted. Mrs. Bilodeau noted the reimbursement rate is 57.86% from the State; that's like getting one and a half times what we are paying. She suggested we don't know if the rate will be the same, better, or worse six years from now. The State has approved the current changes. Some of the timing issues during the first one and a half years was because of the State process; we now have their approval.
- Mrs. Bilodeau suggested this is not something that must be decided as an either/or decision – the modulars or improvements/addition to the existing building; we can do both.

First Selectman Menard clarified the cost of financing, noting the decision on the timing of the financing, and its cost, is made by the Board of Finance. It could be a payment of \$120,000.00 or \$189,000.00, or \$193,000.00, depending on the option chosen. (See Attachment A) Treasurer Lord suggested the original resolution is worded that the Treasurer and the BOF handle the financing. From the beginning the purview of debt service is on the Town side.

Marie DeSousa: Mrs. DeSousa reported she doesn't have any children in the school system at present but has in the past, and now has a grandson who will become a student.

- Mrs. DeSousa reported she has been vocal since 2012 regarding the modulars; now we want to change to a more permanent structure. The modulars were/are deplorable; we need to go back to decide what we need
- We need to look at the relocation of the Birth to School kids.
- For \$3.7 million you get two (2) additional classrooms. Mrs. DeSousa felt there has been a lot of misinformation presented; she is also concerned with the lack of consistency with the project.
- She agreed the \$250,000.00 is a lot to lose; Mrs. DeSousa suggested we need to step back and look at what's the right thing, and think of the needs of the children. She would suggest to the Building Committee to put out the new bids.

Dr. Kane indicated she spoke with Treasurer Lord on Friday and verified the amount that has been spent. She indicated she won't argue that someone is entitled to their perception, but she felt accurate information has been given out.

Chris Willey, 19 Perri Lane: has kids in the middle school and a wife who is a teacher, so he's torn as to what's best for the kids.

- He would like to focus on that – what's best for the kids; he feels we have an opportunity to do better.
- He suggested he would like to see us develop a long term plan.; he felt we are always waiting for next year. His concern is, that with a 40 to 50 year life span, the modulars will be there for that time, and the school will be there and we haven't done anything. If we have the opportunity to have the permanent classrooms and then can sell them in a few years in lieu of a new school down the road that's a good thing

Board of Selectmen

Minutes – Public Hearing 3/11/2015

Broad Brook Elementary School Permanent Modular Project

Approved by Referendum held June 27, 2012

- Mr. Willey felt we need to invest in the future of the Town; Mr. Willey just wants people to think long term.

Tonya Unsworth, 9 Matthew Lane: Mrs. Unsworth reported she is the head of the PTO, and she also has children in the school system.

- She is in both schools every day, and sees the classroom size. She agrees the modulars are outdated; we need to put the money already spent into six (6) classrooms.
- Mrs. Unsworth agrees we need to figure out what our game plan is. We are getting more students in and she feels sprucing up (the original building) would be nice, but she feels putting the permanent structures in place is the immediate need.

Andy Heath, 15 Steeple Chase Road: Mr. Heath reported he doesn't have any kids going through the system.

- He doesn't think the process was that great or we wouldn't be here tonight. Mr. Heath felt if we need 14 classrooms then we need 14 classrooms now; he isn't in favor of dividing the classrooms.
- He felt if we want to go with 10 modular classrooms and then an addition, and then go for a new school but the town must realize we need to spend money and it will come out of our pocket and we need to improve our standing in the State.

Nicole DeSousa: Ms. DeSousa reported she is a Board of Education member; she is here in support of the modular classrooms. The suggestion to move the FRC children would cost money as you need to replace toilets, etc. The immediate need is replacing the modulars.

Kate....., 28 Folkstone Road: Kate reported she has children in the school system.

- She went on a tour of the school in 2011 or 2012, and saw how the Special Education students were located in what used to be a closet.
- Kate is disappointed that the modulars are really two (2) new classrooms; ; that wasn't clear; she thought we were replacing 10 classrooms.
- she doesn't feel separating the classrooms is a good idea but we need to do something now, and this money has been approved and we should go forward with it and then look forward to what to do – whether it's an addition of land to build.
- Kate noted that during previous discussions/meetings there was discussion of replacing the windows; she requested a clarification. Dr. Kane suggested that, from the BOE's perspective , they were always talking of replacing the windows. That was in the original information sent to the bond council, but the bond council changed wording when the project went to referendum.
- Kate questioned if the new modulars would go where the eight (8) modulars are now? Mr. LaBrie reported the ten (10) would go where the eight (8) modulars are now located.

Mary Hevner, 2 Napoleon Drive: Mrs. Hevner reported she is here as a taxpayer.

**Board of Selectmen
Minutes – Public Hearing 3/11/2015
Broad Brook Elementary School Permanent Modular Project
Approved by Referendum held June 27, 2012**

- Mrs. Hevner suggested that when it comes down to two (2) classrooms are we talking about increasing the classrooms to lower the class sizes; it doesn't sound like it will make that much difference.
- Mrs. Hevner wants people to think on the long term plan.
- Mrs. Hevner is concerned with our ability to attract new teachers who would want to teach in a modular.
- Regarding throwing the \$250,000.00 away, Mrs. Hevner suggested you don't want to spend \$3.3 million on modulares because we are doing something permanent or a new school.

Dr. Kane reported the modulares weren't to reduce the classroom size, they were to replace the learning environment for the kids in the closets and to spread out because of over-crowding. The smaller space – the divided classrooms – was to create smaller areas for instruction. Mr. LaBrie - to address Mr. Dearborn's comments about a permanent foundation, etc. – the original design included foundations, steel trusses, and sprinklers. The permanent modulares have a life of forty (40) years. Dr. Kane suggested the eight (8) modulares were a hodgepodge and were not consistent in size because they came from different (previous) locations; the permanent modulares would be consistent in size.

An unidentified member of the audience: questioned if all the modulares would have sprinklers? Mr. LaBrie indicated the old modulares would not but the new modulares will, and the building inspector must approve them.

Dale Nelson, Selectman: questioned how much additional square footage would be provided by the current modulares and the new? Mr. LaBrie indicated the footprint for the eight (8) current modulares is 8,760 square feet; the footprint for the ten (10) new modulares is 10,472 square feet.

Cathy Simonelli, Vice Chairman, BOE: reported the street appearance – they will have a brick facing and will blend in with the current building.

Fran Neal, Broad Brook: Ms. Neal questioned what happens to the second grade children if the current modulares are being torn down? Dr. Kane indicated they have several options which will be presented to the BOE at the meeting following this Public Hearing. Ms. Neal indicated when you are in the modulares they are cramped and are horrible; she feels we should put in new modulares and look into upgrading the original building. Ms. Neal reported she recalls coming to one of these meetings two (2) or three (3) years ago and we are still talking. Ms. Neal feels the improvements could be made and the addition could happen.

First Selectman Menard questioned if the relocation options could be discussed at this Public Hearing? Dr. Kane felt it would be premature to discuss it here; the first people to hear it should be the BOE. Dr. Kane suggested they have several options they are comfortable with and she felt the BOE will want to hear from the parents.

Christine: reported she has kids in the school system.

**Board of Selectmen
Minutes – Public Hearing 3/11/2015
Broad Brook Elementary School Permanent Modular Project
Approved by Referendum held June 27, 2012**

Christine indicated she doesn't feel the long term planning is transparent. She questioned if there is a process for a future long range plan being discussed; does the BOE have a meeting where they think about future planning? First Selectman Menard reported the general government side has a five (5) year plan which deals with the Capital Improvement Plan. Deputy First Selectman Bowsza reported that in terms of a long term plan the State requires every town to do a POCD – Plan of Conservation and Development - which is a ten year plan the Planning and Zoning Commission is in the process of revising now. He encouraged everyone to attend the ongoing meetings.

Jim Richards, Selectman:

- Regarding the long term plan, twenty-five (25) years ago when we built the sewer plant, which helped with the commercial development side.
- We've been talking about needing a new school but we need the money to build one. Selectman Richards reported he isn't the biggest advocate of the modular project but he sees the need and sees the parallel of going with the modulars and the new school.
- The BOS have been considering a long range plan; The EDC (Economic Development Commission) has been considering how to do it as well but it requires the commitment of the people coming to meetings.
- Selectman Richards reported he attended a meeting yesterday which included discussion of the POCD and development of the Route 5 corridor.
- Selectman Richards reported he isn't 100% on the modulars but he will think about it more as a Selectman because that's his job.

Jerilyn Corso, Chairman, Board of Finance (BOF): Ms. Corso reported there is a plan and it's frustrating; this doesn't happen overnight. Ms. Corso doesn't think the modulars were the greatest solution but she sees it's the immediate need. She suggested people talk to other people and get people out to vote, and listen to what some of the other boards are doing.

Cindy Herms, Board of Finance (BOF): reported she wasn't a big fan when she got here but she's hearing now there is an immediate need to go ahead with the modular project, and she is in favor of this. She also agrees with a school in the future and she agrees very much that the key is having the money and if voting day comes and you're not voting you are making a statement too.

Steve Dearborn, Selectman: returned discussion to the specifics of a building with a foundation, and installation of electrical and plumbing vs. a similar process for the modulars. If it takes two (2) to three (3) months to do the real thing let's do it. We are spending the same money.

Selectman Dearborn also addressed the issue of installation of sprinklers and spending money now for the modulars and having to do it again for the permanent building; he felt we would be wasting money.

Mike Archer:

Board of Selectmen

Minutes – Public Hearing 3/11/2015

Broad Brook Elementary School Permanent Modular Project

Approved by Referendum held June 27, 2012

- questioned how many years to work on a permanent structure? First Selectman Menard reported it hasn't been designed. Mr. Archer questioned the cost. Cathy Simonelli, BOE, reported it's \$3.7 million for ten (10) modulars.
- Mr. Archer questioned the cost for the permanent building; he guessed you would add a zero to the figure suggested by Ms. Simonelli. Mr. Archer suggested these modulars are here because it's a cheaper resolution.
- He indicated he wanted the best education for his kids; he's concerned about what's going on in the building. What the building looks like. Mr. Archer indicated he wanted the best now for his kids and his neighbors kids; kids need a learning environment and he doesn't want to be concerned if the building is structurally sound. Mr. Archer felt we need these buildings now. Who dreams of leasing, whether it's a car or a home or.....

Jim Guilano, President of Futures Education: Mr. Guilano indicated he was asked to clarify the timeline for the permanent building vs. the modulars. Mr. Guilano agreed there does need to be a better understanding of the buildings. There is a permanent modular which has a 50 year life span built on a foundation with steel and metal studs. It isn't the wood construction you have now. To revamp everything you need an architect to do the drawings, which would take months, and then you must have the State review those plans. Everything has been approved now; the Town needs to move this forward. First Selectman Menard noted there would be a referendum and consideration of financing as well. Mr. Guilano reported this (the modulars) is a less expensive fix.

An unidentified member of the audience questioned the timeline for an addition? Mr. Guilano reported if it's a different project the plans take about six (6) months to do the architectural plans, then you need to go through the State review process again because you've changed the proposal and that can take upward of three (3) months, and then there is the local review, and the bid process which could take six (6) weeks. First Selectman Menard reported that you also need to go to the voters. Mr. LaBrie suggested the legislative process takes a year. Mr. Guilano suggested once the project is changed to a permanent building vs. modulars you probably would have to reapply to the State and that process of review and approval takes up to a year. Cathy Simonelli, Vice Chairman, BOE, suggested we are talking up to two (2) years. Chris Mickey, Chairman, BOE, suggested it would include what time is required on the municipal side.

An unidentified member of the audience questioned if the permanent modulars would be resalable? Mr. Guilano suggested they are more permanent so he felt it would be more difficult because they have the 50 year life span. The permanent modulars are assembled off-site and delivered to our location.

Cindy Herms, BOF: Ms. Herms doesn't know if the town would approve a new building so the timeline is totally up in the air, and then there is the State timeline.

An unidentified member of the audience questioned what would happen if the boards decide to hold off; would we lose the money and the bids go out of date? Mr. Mickey, BOE, replied

**Board of Selectmen
Minutes – Public Hearing 3/11/2015
Broad Brook Elementary School Permanent Modular Project
Approved by Referendum held June 27, 2012**

affirmatively. Ms. Lord, Treasurer, reported the Town has a note coming up in June; it would be easier moving forward to extend that note. We are not just looking at \$258,000.00.

Joe Sauerhoefer, Building Committee:

- Mr. Sauerhoefer suggested the Building Committee timeline has changed; it looks like it has been extended. Mr. LaBrie responded affirmatively.
- Mr. Sauerhoefer questioned that someone is making a relocation plan for the students coming back in September? Cathy Simonelli, BOE, replied affirmatively.

Jen (Regaglia? – speaker not identified):

- cited the traffic on Rye Street; we should facilitate a better parking plan.
- Jen also questioned the duration of the lease on the modulares? First Selectman Menard reported the lease runs through 2016; Chris Mickey, BOE, reported the lease has been “upped” consistently. Dr. Kane reported the first lease was a ten (10) year lease. When she came on board it was the end of the lease and she felt the lease agreement was poorly negotiated. Mr. LaBrie reported they renegotiated that lease and the BOE started looking at options. They have “reupped” the lease for one year through next year. If this project goes forward the previous arrangement with ModSpace would be.....
- Jen is concerned with building leaks. Dr. Kane reported they have been looking at the snow loads; the building is structurally safe. ModSpace maintains the modulares and under the lease agreement they would replace whatever is necessary. Dr. Kane reported Roger Baker works with them; the modulares are safe. Jen questioned if they can last three (3) more years; she felt we need to make a decision to do something.

Jim Thurs, Building Committee: reported the removal fee for the modulares was nearly \$300,000.00. Mr. LaBrie clarified it’s now about \$120,000.00

First Selectman Menard summarized the process going forward. She noted the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Education and the Building Committee have been listening to the comments made tonight. The Board of Selectmen will have discussion of the modular as an agenda item at next Tuesday’s Board of Selectmen’s Meeting. If the Board of Selectmen feel the referendum decision is a stale one because it was made three (3) years ago If the decision is to move forward the bids need to be opened by the Building Committee and the bid process will be handled by the Building Committee, and then there is a process for them to follow. Dr. Kane clarified the bids have been opened; Mr. LaBrie indicated they are reviewing them.

Tom Talamini, Building Committee:

- reported the scope of the project has changed; the timeline has changed; if you’re relocating the kids then it’s no longer an issue of every trade having to work overtime to get the project done. Mr. LaBrie suggested the total timeline is pretty much what it was; it’s just moving out eight (8) weeks.
- Mr. Talamini reported he has been in the building business for 30 years; these timelines are pretty tight, and we’re getting to Winter with the timeline. Mr. Talamini felt they should be looking at rescoping the project.

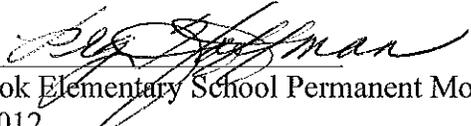
**Board of Selectmen
Minutes – Public Hearing 3/11/2015
Broad Brook Elementary School Permanent Modular Project
Approved by Referendum held June 27, 2012**

Deputy First Selectman Bowsza reported he understands we would be relocating the students within the next school year; he would be interested to know those options before he makes his vote. Dr. Kane suggested she thought tonight’s meeting was “the will of the people” – which is moving forward. Deputy First Selectman Bowsza suggested he had noted several options voiced by the people tonight. Dr. Kane suggested she would bring that to the Board of Education meeting following this meeting.

Nicole DeSousa: reported she is speaking as a parent and a BOE member, she indicated she wants the BOS to be with the BOE on this issue; if they need to know the options out loud let’s discuss them.

Kathy Bilodeau, BOE: felt the relocation of students is a BOE decision.

First Selectman Menard noted there appeared to be no further comments; she declared the Public Hearing adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Peg Hoffman, Substitute Recording Secretary 
Board of Selectmen Public Hearing on Broad Brook Elementary School Permanent Modular
Project Approved by Referendum held June 27, 2012

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN PUBLIC HEARING 3/11/2015
ATTACHMENT A**

BOE Modular project- Financing Information

The total cost of the project, approved at referendum is \$3,770,000.
 The resolution calls for the replacement of eight classrooms with fourteen permanent modular classrooms.
 The Town will be responsible for financing \$1,588,678 of the total cost of the project.
 The State will reimburse the other \$2,181,322- a 57.86 % reimbursement rate.
 The Town is responsible for all debt repayment.
 The Town's portion of debt will be paid from the Debt Service line in the operating budget.
 The Board of Education's budget will decrease by the cost of leasing the modulares.
 The current cost to lease the modulares is \$116,000 per year.
 The Town will work with our financial advisors to determine the most cost-effective plan for repayment.
 The options include a standard, twenty- year bond issuance, taking out a ten-year note with limited disclosure, or ten-year public sale open to the market.
 The cost of each type of financing is listed below:

All amounts are preliminary, and based upon current market information.

**Town of East Windsor Connecticut
\$1,588,000 Bonds, Issue 2015
Cost of Issuance**

<u>Item</u>	<u>Preliminary Estimate</u>		
	<u>20 Yr Bond Sale</u>	<u>10 Yr Bond Sale</u>	<u>10 Yr Direct Loan</u>
Total Cost of Issuance	\$ 56,000	\$ 54,000	\$ 36,000
Total Estimated Interest	\$ 428,954	\$ 150,609	\$ 172,125
Total Estimated Cost	\$ 484,954	\$ 204,609	\$ 208,125
Debt Service FY 16-17	\$ 120,248	\$ 189,364	\$ 193,130
Savings: 10 Yr Public Sale vs 20 Yr Public Sale		\$ 280,345	