

Peacham School Community Meeting  
Sunday September 9, 2007  
3:00 – 5:00 PM

UNAPPROVED

**Present:** School Board members-Jo Anne Post, Wynne Browne, Jean Dedam; Community Members – Dave Stauffer, Julie Hansen, Marceya Roy, Cathy Browne, Mark Clough, Wendy Morgan, Neal Gombas, Jane Woodhouse, Martha Evangelista, Gib Parish, Julie Hansen, Debra Vogini, Bruce Courtot

Jo Anne opened the meeting at 3:15. She asked each committee to present its report. Those present would then have an opportunity to ask questions or make comments of the reporting committee. Each committee will have time to address these in the next iteration of their reports before they are presented and discussed at the community meeting to be held the end of October or first of November with Winton Goodrich moderating.

### **Committee Reports**

#### **School As Is with Variations** – Cathy Browne reported

Asked questions about format and audience, who would receive the report? Would the individual reports be compiled in one document with the data committee's material that is included in each of the other committee reports, presented in one section? The report will describe current configuration with the options that they have investigated, which ones may be viable and which ones are not. Most of the options that were investigated may have long term benefits but are not short term fixes. She reviewed the cost per student sheet prepared by Jo Anne Post. The sheet reflects changes both in the budget (down) and enrollment numbers (up) since the budget was presented and voted on at town meeting. This has substantially reduced the cost per student.

#### **Collaboration/Merger Committee** – Jane Woodhouse reported

She and Rob Ide are the committee. They looked at Danville and Barnet as they are the closest schools. Monroe had called them and expressed interest in a possible merger with Peacham but were clear that they wanted to keep their children in Monroe so that Peacham would transport to their school. Rob and Jane did not pursue the offer. Barnet has not shown much interest in collaborating as their school population is growing so that space and instructional staff may reach its limits. Fred Kitchell, chair of the Danville school board, has met with Jane and Rob and offered a proposal for collaboration. Although other options remain on the table, his proposal was for Peacham to have Pre-K through K and Danville would have 1-6 for both communities. The committee does not have financial figures yet but plan to work with CCSU to get a comparison with actuals for 2006/2007 if they assumed that the structure proposed by Fred Kitchell had been in place in that year. They will get figures that would include grades 7-12 in the configuration as well as the elementary school and provide a description of the different governance structures that are possible between communities.

### **School Choice – Mark Clough**

The committee has proposed three options: full choice, choice with an independent school in town, retaining kindergarten and a limited number of elementary grades with choice for the remainder. The committee is still working on a budget for comparison purposes. Long discussion ensued about what basis to figure budgets on for all committees, including appropriate number to use for tuitions and numbers of students versus basic costs of operating the school. There was discussion about whether the town would vote on a budget under full choice since it would not be operating a school and would simply pay the tuitions as bills are presented. The response was yes, it would vote on a budget that anticipated the number of tuitions it would be charged and if there were more or less than the anticipated amount, it would include the deficit or surplus in the next year's budget. There was a request for an explanation of the difference between option 1 and option 2 since full choice would give parents the option of sending their students to a local independent school. Discussion followed on the Winhall and Kirby experience including the possibility of having other area schools refuse students if they do not have space or the child does not meet their acceptance criteria. There was also a request for the committee to include a section on social impacts and a section on the pros and cons of the choice option.

### **Expansion Committee – Marceya Roy**

The committee has determined that adding 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade to Peacham Elementary school is feasible with the current space and the addition of one full time teacher and perhaps some additional specials time. There was a lot of discussion about the availability of music, art, physical education and sports opportunities appropriate to that age level. Some options have been explored by the committee. Currently Peacham students are playing on Barnet and Danville sports teams and specials classes at Danville or St. Jay Academy may be possible as well as reinvigorating the volunteer instruction program from community members and parents with special expertise in Peacham. The committee was asked if it planned to survey not just parents of current Peacham Elementary school students but also students who have graduated from Peacham and their parents. The committee will plan to do a survey of those students currently in grades 7-12 who had graduated from Peacham and their parents. The committee also hopes to meet with the parents of current Peacham Elementary students to discuss the expansion concept and to get their ideas and feedback.

### **Data Committee –Wynne Browne**

The committee will update the information provided to the committees and create a simpler format for the report.

### **Wrap-up – Jo Anne**

Each committee has more work to do to respond to questions and comments and to fill in gaps in the reports. The board will discuss dissemination options at its meeting on Monday night. The committees will get the final reports to the board by October 1<sup>st</sup> for discussion at the October 8 meeting. Jo Anne will work with Winton Goodrich to schedule a community meeting for October 28 or November 4.

It was decided that another meeting of the full group was not needed.

Meeting adjourned at 5:30

Respectfully submitted,  
Jean Dedam