

BOARD OF SELECTMEN and BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL JOINT MEETING

6:00 P.M.

November 08, 2023

Main Meeting Room - Oxford Town Hall

A Special Joint Meeting between the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Education was held in the Main Meeting Room at Oxford Town Hall on November 08, 2023; the meeting was called to order by First Selectman Temple at 6:00 p.m., and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Attendance:

Board of Selectmen: First Selectman George Temple, Selectman Arnold Jensen, Selectman David McKane, Administrative Assistant Kristyn Rosa, Finance Director Jim Hliva.

The Board of Education meeting was called to at 6:00 p.m. by Chairperson Stephanie Miller.

Board of Education:

Chairperson Stephanie Miller, Victor Tomporowski, Shelley Lacey-Castelot, Mike Koosa, Debbie Sherman, Steve Kozek, Nicole Levine McGrath, Vincent Cataudella

Board Members absent: Joseph Matuovich

Central Office Staff Present: Dr. Robert Miller and Mike Dagostino

The Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance held a Joint Meeting to discuss the following purpose:

1. To consider and discuss the acceptance of Oxford Middle School.

Discussion:

First Selectman George Temple explained that the purpose of this meeting was to discuss the acceptance of Oxford Middle School and the importance of doing so.

First Selectman Temple called on Mr. Robert Slie, chairman of the Oxford Middle School Building Committee. Mr. Slie explained that the Board of Education had not accepted the closeout of the Middle School because they had concerns about outstanding issues that needed to be rectified. Mr. Slie explained that accepting the closeout has nothing to do with the Board of Education's ability to deal with any issues. He said these are two separate issues.

Mr. Slie explained that the Board of Education's acceptance of the building would allow the State to pay the Town the balance of the reimbursable money they are owed.

Regarding the issues to rectify within the building, Facilities Manager Mike Dagostino, Mr Slie, and O&G are working hard to resolve them. Some issues involve human error, faulty installation, and faulty equipment.

One of the significant issues was that the warranty information/paperwork had gone missing. So, the people trying to work on the issues didn't have the proper paperwork. Mr. Slie was able to help and get the paperwork from O&G. Now the warranty paperwork is in the right place.

Mr. Dagostino has created a list of projects with resolution dates and the responsible party. Mr. Slie has no reason to think these projects will not be resolved.

Mr. Slie reminded everyone that when the Town of Oxford applied for a grant for the reimbursement of the Oxford Middle School, they couldn't because the people responsible for the Oxford High School close-out never did it. Everyone had to scramble around to get the High School closed out to be able to apply for the grant. An outstanding issue arose with the high school windows even after the school was finally closed out, and O&G didn't hesitate to rectify the issue at no cost to the Town. Mr. Slie has faith that O&G will stand by their work. There is now a method to the madness; a plan is in place, and people are responsible for resolving the issues.

Mr. Slie spoke on behalf of the Oxford Middle School committee. The committee recommends that the Board of Education close out the project, and this work will still be done.

First Selectman Temple thanked Mr. Slie. He commented that the delay in not closing out the High School almost cost the town approximately \$2.5 million dollars. Mr. James Hliva confirmed it was \$2.6 million. First Selectman Temple stated that the delay was strictly a result of sloppy bookkeeping and the Board of Education's filing. He also commented that the current members of the Board of Education were not responsible for the delay. However, when you can't find the warranty documents given to you two years ago, that is the responsibility of the Board. We cannot go forward like that. These documents are essential. We have to keep track of them and use them when issues arise. They must be kept on record for future reference.

First Selectman Temple also commented that he and Mrs. Shelly Castellot, a board member, discussed earlier that day that they both have concerns about ADA accessibility to the Middle School. Mr. Temple said we have paid for the building to be ADA-compliant and expect it to be compliant. First Selectman Temple asked Mr. Dagastino to add Ms. Castellot's concerns to the list of items to be addressed.

Chairperson Miller wanted to clarify what had previously been said about the loss of the warranty documents. She said this was the first she had heard of this. Mr. Slie explained that when the commissioning company goes through it and provides warranty documents, instructions, training, etc. there are many different ways the information was provided. Unfortunately, they went missing. First Selectman Temple stated that it doesn't matter how they went missing; it matters that it happened and cannot happen again.

Chairperson Miller also wanted to clarify where the money will come from to fix the issues. Board Member Deb Sherman asked how many items on Mr. Dagostino's list are covered under warranty. Mr. Slie explained that it still remains to be determined. Depending on the issue, some of the responsibility lies on the contractors and some on the architect. They are all under study to determine what is covered and what is not. Generally speaking, O&G will use all of its powers to repair these things at no cost to the district and pressure people to get them done.

Mr. Slie said that he feels confident that O&G's reputation is very important to them, and they have always done the Town of Oxford right, so he feels they will do everything to get issues resolved. First Selectman Temple agreed and reiterated that O&G took care of the flashing on the windows at the High School years after the warranty expired, and they still fixed it without charging the town.

Selectman David McKane looked over the repair list and stated that he was puzzled because it seemed like most of this work could be done in a matter of days, and it's been two years. Mr. Slie said that he could not comment on what went on internally, but once he was informed of the issues, he got involved and contacted O&G immediately and got the ball rolling.

First Selectman Temple explained that if the Board of Education has difficulty resolving building issues, they must notify him. He will get on the phone and make calls to get people moving. First Selectman Temple explained again the importance of the Board of Education accepting the building.

Board Member Michael Koosa asked Mike Dagostino for his recommendation as head of facilities. Mr. Dagostino explained to Selectman McKane that it took so long to get to this point because they had to go back and find the root cause of some problems; that took some time. Mr. Dagostino stated that they have gained much traction. He complimented Mr. Slie on his help in getting in contact with the right people. The process is moving forward with Mr. Slie's help. Mr. Dagostino now feels confident and strongly recommends that the board move forward. He stated that he spoke to O&G today, and they are committed to ensuring that this building is a stand-up project and that they use it for new business. Mr. Dagostino said that he feels comfortable that this work will be done.

Board Member Mr. Koosa asked if Mr. Dagostino would agree to this statement: From your perspective, should the board sign off on the building? Mr. Dagostino said yes.

Board Member Shelly Castellot asked if O&G works with an ADA consultant to ensure the building complies. She explained that there are different rules for reconstruction and new construction. She wants to ensure that all of our students can remain in the district and not have to go to another district because we do not comply with the ADA requirements. Mr Slie explained that the architect has people on staff who ensure compliance, and he also feels that the State would not have approved this project if we were not in compliance.

First Selectman Temple explained that it is up to the Board of Education to make a motion to accept the building if they wish to.

MOTION:

Mr. Michael Koosa made a motion to accept the Oxford Middle School Project (State Proj. 108-0034N) as complete and file a final grant application for a School Building Project, form EDO-049F, with the State of Connecticut Office of School Construction Grants and Review. Chairman Stephanie Miller seconded the motion. All Ayes, Motion carries.

Adjournment:

MOTION:

Selectman David McKane moved to adjourn the Board of Selectmen meeting at 6:35 p.m. This was seconded by First Selectman George Temple. 2 Ayes. Motion carries.

MOTION:

Chairman Mr. Michael Koosa moved to adjourn the Board of Education meeting at 6:35 p.m. Mrs. Stephanie Miller seconded this. All Ayes. Motion Carries. Abstain: None

Respectfully Submitted By:

Kristyn Rosa

Kristyn Rosa
Administrative Assistant

JOHN OF OXFORD, CT
STEPHANIE MILLER
TOWN CLERK

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