

DEEP RIVER BOARD OF EDUCATION SPECIAL MEETING, Thursday, August 1, 2019

A special meeting of the Deep River Board of Education was held on Thursday, August 1, 2019 in the Central Administrative Office.

In attendance were: Paula Weglarz, Chair; Miriam Morrissey, Vice-Chair; Lenore Grunko; Bob Ferretti; and David Berardis. Absent were: Tracy Dickson, Imran Munawar, Mary Elizabeth Campbell, and Matt Resnisky.

Also in attendance were: Brian White, Superintendent; Kristina Martineau, Assistant Superintendent; Christian Strickland, Principal; Kim Allen, Business Manager; and Angus McDonald, First Selectman.

Also present were: David Carpenter, President, New England Energy Controls (NEEC); Stephen Possidento, PTE Contractors; and William Giblin, PTE Energy.

Chair Weglarz called the meeting to order at 5:07 PM.

The Board discussed the Town's Energy Efficiency Proposal from PTE Energy for DRES. The proposal includes electrical work of replacing 28-watt fluorescent lighting fixtures throughout the school with new 10-watt LED lighting fixtures, including ballasts, power supplies, and LED drivers. LED bulbs have an expected lifetime of 50,000 hours. The proposal also includes mechanical work of replacing 88 pneumatic valves for the heating system throughout the school with new digital valves, and the associated software and controls. Also included are 4 fans in the gym and 2 fans in the library with electronic SMART controllers.

NEEC and PTE are approved vendors by Eversource.

The last lighting retrofit inside the school was in 2005. The mechanical equipment (pneumatic valves) are much older and prone to failure based on age and obsolescence.

The cost of the installed system is \$272,711, less an incentive provided by Eversource of \$50,323, for a net cost of the project of \$222,388. Annual electric savings are projected to be \$16,130.

Annual gas savings are projected to be \$1,757. Annual maintenance savings are projected to be \$9,856. The payback is projected to be 8 years with an ROI (Return on Investment) of 12.5%.

The system would be financed over 10 years at a fixed rate of 3.5%, and a cost of \$2,228 per month, from the DRES budget. The estimated savings would be \$2,312 per month, so the system would be cash-positive. The above savings do not include any increases in the cost of electricity or natural gas rates, so as electricity and gas rates increase over the years, the savings increase and the system becomes more beneficial financially. The first payment of the system will be due six months after completion of the system.

The electric and gas savings benefit the DRES budget. The maintenance savings (replacement of old pneumatic valves) benefit the Town of Deep River budget.

In addition to commercial considerations, the LED lighting is easier on the eyes of the students than fluorescent lighting. Also, the mechanical improvements mean more comfortable classrooms and areas throughout the school as temperature is more uniformly maintained. With the mechanical improvements, there would be far less of the frequent replacements of pneumatic valves in the heating system.

Proposed project timeline schedule is August through October, 2019. Work would mostly be done at nights and weekends when the students are not in school.

Upon discussion, some of the concerns of the Board included: the project being done during the school year rather than being completed in the summer; being rushed to make a decision; a higher ROI on the electrical portion of the system than the mechanical portion of the system; accuracy of the estimations for savings; and effect on future BOE budgets if savings are less than expected.

The proposal was recommended by First Selectman McDonald, and it was noted that both the Board of Finance and Board of Selectmen voted unanimously to approve the project. The Board of Education was assured by McDonald that if any unforeseen costs come up during the project, they would be covered by the Town of Deep River, and also if the Deep River Elementary School is ever changed in the future to no longer be used as a school, the Town would cover the loan.

On motion duly made and seconded, the Board voted 4-1 to approve the Town's Energy Efficiency Proposal from PTE Energy for DRES, and forward it to a Town Meeting for a final vote. (Weglarz, Morrissey, Ferretti, and Berardis voted in favor and Grunko voted against.)

On motion duly made and seconded, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn at 7:25 PM.

Respectfully Submitted, Dave Berardis