

CONTOOCOOK VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT
Office of the Superintendent of Schools
106 Hancock Road, Peterborough, NH 03458

Strategic Organization Planning Committee (SOPC)

January 26, 2023

6:00 PM

SAU Boardroom

Minutes

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Alan Edelkind
Elizabeth Swan
Richard Dunning
Thomas Burgess
Douglas Sutherland

Present: Alan Edelkind, Liz Swan, Richard Dunning, Tom Burgess, Janine Lesser, Dr. Kimberly Saunders

Alan Edelkind called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

1. Determine charge (purpose) of the Strategic Organization Committee (SOC).
Alan Edelkind said that there are seven documents to reference this evening. This is not an operational committee, it is an organizational meeting that might morph into the operational committee.
The draft charter reads:
“To develop and implement the best possible financially responsible, educationally rich, safe, socially responsive, community sensitive and organizationally sound physical model to support the ConVal community and students. Consideration will also be given to developing alternative models using the current physical plant based on the above noted criteria”

Kimberly Saunders asked if it is not the company contracted with to do some of this work. Alan spoke about overseeing the implementation. The SOC would be present during the implementation.
Kimberly asked what is trying to be communicated.
The charge would be for the Strategic Organization Committee, and not the planning committee, which is the group that is meeting here tonight. It is the charge for a community-based committee.

Alan Edelkind shared that the committee meeting tonight (SOPC) will likely meet once or twice and then dissolve. The Strategic Organization Committee meetings will follow.

Kimberly Saunders said that it is one thing to develop an RFP and have a group come in to look at components. She said that she hears that the committee of 10-12 people will develop the plan and implement it. She worries about that.

Liz suggested adding the words “and oversee”. Agreed.

The charter now reads:

“To develop and implement and oversee the best possible financially responsible, educationally rich, safe, socially responsive, community sensitive and organizationally sound physical model to support the ConVal community and students. Consideration will also be given to developing alternative models using the current physical plant based on the above noted criteria”

2. Determine makeup of the SOC (members) School board members etc.

Alan Edelkind said that the SOC will likely be school board, administration, not community in terms of membership. Kimberly said that the board can form a committee with community members.

Alan said that he was told that community members cannot be on committees.

Janine Lesser confirmed that community members can sit on the committee.

As a result, Alan added community members to the makeup of SOC.

3. Determine SOC structure (committee and sub-committees)

Alan Edelkind referenced the preliminary structure chart. The Consulting Organization, Strategic Organization Committee and Outside Communications Firm would feed into each other. Four School Board Committees that would be involved would include the Communication Committee, Budget & Property Committee, Selectmen's Advisory Committee, and Strategic Plan Committee. The Education Committee and Equity Committee were also suggested and confirmed as important committees.

The Equity Committee was discussed in terms of role. Equity issues within certain areas would feed to specific committees e.g. if it is an educational topic it would feed through the Education Committee.

Selectmen's Advisory Committee placement on the flow chart was discussed.

Kimberly Saunders noted that the only standing committee not represented in the flow chart is Policy Committee. ConVal policies might feed information to whoever responds to the Request for Proposal (RFP).

4. Outline activities, including timelines, of the SOC to be done up to engagement of outside firm.

Alan Edelkind said that companies heard from identify about eight months for preliminary work. There will be impacts with renovation projects.

Preliminary timelines for discussion were noted. Alan Edelkind said that writing RFP's are different for education. One month was allotted to write the RFP. Receipt of the RFP from vendors would allow one month leading to interviews and selection of the vendor partner by May 2023.

The project would become operational for eight months through February 2024.

Janine Lesser shared her concern if this was laid against Lavallee Brensinger's timeline.

Alan Edelkind said that this is looking at this project only. The renovation work lies mostly within the middle schools. Prioritizing the elementary schools and middle schools is undetermined. The timeline focuses on the work of the Strategic Organization Committee.

Much discussion is needed.

Kimberly Saunders said that if ConVal gets in line for building aid next January, we would have to have a full set of plans to the DOE by July 2024. She asked if an article on the 2024 warrant is a goal. Alan and Dick confirmed that it is. Kimberly said that a report will be needed sooner. Areas to compact the timeline were discussed.

Tom Burgess said that it appears that the elementary schools are most in need of consolidation. Others might feel that it is the middle schools. He asked if we really need to consolidate the middle schools or is it something that we are able to do without voter approval. Alan Edelkind said that the report will identify that.

Tom Burgess asked the sense of those present.

Dick Dunning said that elementary schools would be looked at. The CTE would be looked at. Bringing the middle schools for equity purposes should be looked at. Looking at the school start times should be examined.

Advantages of bringing the two middle schools would be examined. The Great Brook School facility could be used for an elementary school consolidation location.

Kimberly Saunders said that GBS has been looked at on multiple occasions for closure and the Antrim community has responded by looking at withdrawing to go to other schools.

Tom Burgess said that is political. Why has it failed in the past?

Changes to the Articles of Agreement would be required. Implementation should consolidation pass would follow.

Liz Swan said that it has failed in the past because the community schools vote against. The community does not understand the disparities between the education students are not getting. They want more but they don't want their taxes to go up. A heart centered communication around these issues is needed. They need answers as to why this is so important.

Kimberly Saunders said that we have never once put it on the warrant. The only time it appeared on a warrant was by petition.

Dick Dunning said that we now have a board that has a global picture. The other piece that is critical is getting teacher support. Communicating that a better education system with a minimal loss of staff is critical. The biggest voice in the community is that of the teachers.

Liz Swan said that whoever takes this on from a firm perspective will look at what might become of school buildings. The value of having a school is seen as valuable.

Dick Dunning said that people move into the district because of the high school.

Alan Edelkind asked since Requests for Information (RFI's) will be coming in, should another meeting be scheduled sooner than waiting a month. He suggested meeting next week.

Kimberly asked if Alan would look into compressing the schedule. If a report is not available until February 2024 nothing will go on the warrant.

Alan said that once the RFP is out the schedule compression can be considered.

February 2nd at 6:00 p.m. was suggested as the next meeting date.

5. Determine committee name (Strategic Organization Committee?)
Passed over.
6. Outline direction of SOC (what to be considered within scope)
Passed over.

7. Should SOPC “morph” into the operational SOC? Same members +/-
Passed over.
8. Elect SOPC Chair
Passed over.
9. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Marschok