

**TOWN OF MADISON**  
**CONNECTICUT 06443-2563**

**MEETING DATE:** Monday, January 28, 2019

**MEETING PLACE:** Town Campus, Room A, 8 Campus Drive, Madison, CT

**SUBJECT TO APPROVAL**

**Ad Hoc Academy Building Guidance Committee**

Members Present: Sarah Barrett, Jerry Davis, Henry Griggs, Kathryn Hunter  
and Tom Scarpati

Members Absent: Rob Card and Bob Hale

Others Present: Al Goldberg, Board of Selectmen

I. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 5:47 p.m.

II. Public Comment:

Fillmore McPherson said there was some confusion about the purpose of the meeting, and that he had expected a presentation on the findings of the survey work by GreatBlue Research. Terry Kensler echoed Mr. McPherson's confusion. Mr. Griggs explained that the Committee was in an odd "limbo" situation. The Committee and the Board of Selectmen had agreed not to release the results separately. The Committee has to follow FOIA rules and couldn't discuss the results in an open forum without publicizing them widely. In order to 1) keep its agreement with the BOS, 2) comply with FOIA, and 3) hold a vote on a recommendation on the research, the Committee had no choice but to meet immediately before the GreatBlue presentation scheduled for later that evening at the start of the BOS meeting. The confusion lay in the wording of the Committee's agenda, which called for a discussion of the findings that would be presented in detail later that evening.

III. Minutes:

The discussion turned to the question of Committee minutes. The Committee had not met since November 14, 2018, when it made a public presentation at both the Senior Center and Polson School. Kathryn Hunter suggested that the PowerPoint presentation stand in for meeting minutes, since there was no other business transacted.

VOTE: Henry Griggs moved that the November 14, 2018 PowerPoint presentation serve as minutes, and Tom Scarpati seconded the motion, which was approved by all members present. A copy of the PowerPoint presentation will be posted to the Town's website.

IV. Discussion of GreatBlue Research Findings and Committee Recommendation:

Henry Griggs stated the headline results of the GreatBlue poll/survey research. Of all seven proposals tested, only the Community Center option gained majority support (59.1 % phone/68.4% online) when the question boiled down to which proposal respondents would be most likely to support at referendum. Another key finding was the strength of opposition to sale or development of the ballfields and park around Academy, with 84.9% phone/81.4% online of respondents opposed.

Tom Scarpati said that one step the Selectmen can take now is to formally remove Academy from any consideration for private development and release all developers who submitted proposals.

Ms. Hunter had drafted a Committee statement and recommendation to the BOS, which Mr. Griggs read in relevant part, stating: "The results set forth in the GreatBlue report show that a majority of those polled and surveyed support the Town's continued ownership of Academy School, restoration of the building as a community center and strong opposition to the sale or development of the surrounding ballfields and parkland. The Committee supports the findings of the GreatBlue report and recommends that the BOS be guided by these findings in presenting a plan to Madison residents for vote at referendum."

VOTE: Mr. Griggs moved that the Committee adopt the recommendation, and Mr. Scarpati seconded the motion, which was approved by all members present. Mr. Griggs said he would deliver the recommendation to the BOS meeting later that evening. A copy of the full recommendation is attached hereto and will be posted to the Town website.

V. Request for Instructions on Winding Down Committee:

With the GreatBlue poll/survey completed and presented to the Town, and with the Committee's recommendation being approved, the discussion turned to winding down the Committee's operations. Ms. Hunter suggested that two areas of activity might be

considered to continue the Committee's work: (i) reviving the architect's agreement with Centerbrook Architects (approved by the BOS in 2016) for the purpose of a current assessment of building conditions, preparation of a concept plan for a community center and cost estimates (being the Phase I services in the Centerbrook architect's agreement), and (ii) a concentrated effort to find sources of funding for the project to reduce bonding costs to Madison taxpayers (including research of historic preservation tax credits, grants and a private capital campaign).

Sarah Barrett stated her view that there must be a proactive effort to keep the idea of a marketplace alive, and that the long-term success of a community center will depend on generating funds for its operations.

Mr. Scarpati stated his view that the Committee had done what it was asked to do and that no further effort would be required.

Jerry Davis said he thought the next steps would be taken by a new committee and that it is up to the Selectmen to advance the process from this point.

Ms. Hunter explained that she was not suggesting that the Committee become a building committee, rather that the Committee's Charge be expanded by the BOS for another few months to include limited services relating to the Centerbrook agreement and research of funding sources in order to assist the BOS in moving the process forward to referendum. She suggested that the assessment information and cost estimates from Centerbrook and research of potential funding sources (to reduce the total cost of the project) will enable the BOS to bring the community center to referendum.

Selectman Goldberg offered that it is the responsibility of the BOS to determine whether to dissolve or extend the Committee's Charge.

Mr. Griggs said he would seek instructions from the BOS at the meeting to be held later that evening.

#### VII. Public Comment:

Several members of the public commended the Committee for its efforts. Roz Fahey expressed her support for extending the Charge of the Committee for the purposes detailed by Ms. Hunter. Catherine Donovan echoed the sentiments of others regarding the Committee's work and stated for the record that the BOS needs to acknowledge that the public does not want to sell this property.

#### VIII. Adjournment:

Mr. Davis moved that the Committee adjourn, which was seconded by Mr. Scarpati. There being no objection, the Committee adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

**Note: At the BOS meeting that followed the Selectman voted unanimously to de-commission the Committee, with thanks to all members for their service. The Academy Building Guidance Committee was dissolved effective January 28, 2019.**

*The Town of Madison does not discriminate on the basis of disability, and the meeting facilities are ADA accessible. Individuals who need assistance are invited to make their needs known by contacting the ToADA/Human Resources Director Debra Milardo at 203.245.5603 (Telecommunications Device for the Deaf -- 203.245.5638) or by email to [milardod@madisonct.org](mailto:milardod@madisonct.org) at least five (5) business days prior to the meeting.*

[See Attached AGC Recommendation to the BOS]

**AD HOC ACADEMY BUILDING GUIDANCE COMMITTEE  
RECOMMENDATION TO THE BOARD OF SELECTMAN**

On April 12, 2018 the Board of Selectman (BOS) unanimously approved a motion to establish an ad hoc committee to determine Madison residents' preferred path for the future of Academy School. On June 26, 2018 the Ad Hoc Academy Building Guidance Committee (AGC or Committee) was commissioned. Per the Charge established by the BOS, the Committee was tasked to examine private and public options, gather cost estimates and select feasible options to bring to public poll utilizing a polling firm selected by the BOS.

The BOS selected GreatBlue Research (GreatBlue) to conduct a phone poll of a representative sampling of Madison residents and taxpayers and accompanying voluntary online survey based on a questionnaire formulated by GreatBlue and the Committee. The questionnaire was designed to provide direction/guidance to the BOS in determining a community option or private development proposal most likely to be supported by Madison voters at referendum.

The phone poll commenced November 26, 2018 and was concluded on or about November 30, 2018 (with a total of 403 completed calls). The online survey opened December 3, 2018 and reached the contracted 2,000 submission limit on or about December 15, 2018. On December 19, 2018 GreatBlue issued a report of findings with the results of the data from the phone poll and online survey.

The results set forth in the GreatBlue report show that a majority of those polled and surveyed support the Town's continued ownership of Academy School, restoration of the building as a community center, and strong opposition to the sale or development of the surrounding ballfields and parkland.

The Committee supports the findings of the GreatBlue report and recommends that the BOS be guided by these findings in presenting a plan to Madison residents for vote at referendum.

Respectfully,

Henry Griggs  
Chair, Academy Building Guidance Committee