

Roxanne Maher

From: Timothy Ryan
Sent: Tuesday, September 19, 2023 10:31 AM
To: Chris Jelden
Cc: Town Council Group; BOE@ledyard.net; Jason S. Hartling; wdonaldson@ledyard.net
Subject: Re: JWL Cooling System and the Referendum Vote in October

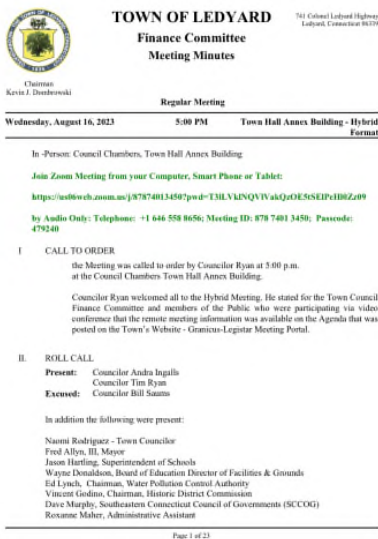
Mr. Jelden;

Thank you for your inquiry and let me first say that the well being of our residents - and especially our children - is always our primary concern.

The unusual heat wave experienced in our region at the beginning of September indeed created issues for a lot of schools both within and outside Ledyard, many of which do not have air conditioning or inadequate air conditioning.

I have copied Superintendent Hartling and the BoE Director of Facilities, Wayne Donaldson, so that they may help answer your first question and also are made aware of your frustrations regarding communication from the schools.

As for your second inquiry, the finance committee and town council have authorized the BoE to proceed with preparing the necessary grant application for the revised HVAC needs. Minutes from the finance committee can be found at the following link (council minutes have not yet been posted, but essentially approve the finance committee recommendation):



[View](#)
PDF Document - 252 KB

A BoE member can provide links to any BoE specific meeting minutes that may apply.

In general, the delay and need for additional funding circles around the redesign of the system needed to transition from a split unit setup to a more traditional central/ducted design, in accordance with grant requirements related to recirculating air.

Superintendent Hartling and/or Director Donaldson can expound more if needed.

Please reach out if you have any more questions!

V/R;
Timothy Ryan, Town Council

On Sep 19, 2023, at 9:31 AM, Chris Jelden <chrisjelden@gmail.com> wrote:

Some people who received this message don't often get email from chrisjelden@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello Ledyard Town Council and Board of Education,

I am writing this email for two main reasons.

- 1) I am asking for clarity regarding the plan going forward for the cooling system at JWL as well as the upcoming Referendum in October. What has been the time line thus far and is the expected timeline going forward?
- 2) What votes or actions have the Town Council and the Board of Education made to move towards completing the project at JWL? Are there specific meeting minutes I can read through to understand how the different groups have been handling this, where the various members stand, and to better understand what obstacles have stood in the way.

Some background on me and why I am reaching out. I have two children in the Ledyard school system, a kindergartner and a 3rd grader. This was our first year at JWL. We were not aware that the school lacked AC and only became aware of the severity of the issue during the week of September 5th when temperatures were significantly higher than normal. During the heatwave my family was in contact with various levels of our children's school administration, from our child's teacher up to the superintendent. I commend the staff on the ground (teachers, principle) for doing what they could to try and keep the kids safe and I appreciate the thorough response I received from the superintendent when I reached out.

Beyond the primary concern that our kids at JWL do not have a properly working cooling system my greatest frustrations are twofold.

- The plan in place for high temperatures in the building appears to be inadequate. My 3rd grader came home and threw up after a day in the classroom. We talked to other parents whose kids experienced varying degrees of discomfort and sickness. Whatever plan was in place doesn't seem to be enough.
- The communication through that week was completely inadequate. I was responded to by every level that I reached out to, and with great thought and care. However I had to initiate the conversation. We just so happened to have missed school Tuesday that week due to a family trip, and when we sent our children to school on Wednesday there had already been a day of high temps. If we knew there was no AC we may have not sent our kid into school. As it is we kept our child home on Thursday because no plan was communicated to us. It wasn't until after school on Friday that any communication about the heat was sent out to all parents.

I am happy to see the upcoming referendum and will be voting yes on allocating funds for these repairs. Any assistance you can give in helping me know how i can best stay informed about the project will be appreciated as well.

Thank you for your time

V/R

Christopher Jelden

3 Whalehead Drive, Gales Ferry