



**DOVER SCHOOL
DISTRICT**

JOINT BUILDING COMMITTEE DOVER HIGH ATHLETIC COMPLEX MINUTES

Meeting Type:	Facility Tour
Meeting Location:	Exeter HS, Oyster River HS & Oyster River MS
Meeting Date:	Thursday, February 29, 2024
Meeting Time:	3:00 p.m.

I. CALL TO ORDER: A meeting of the Dover High School Athletic Complex Joint Building Committee was called to order at 3:00 pm at Exeter High School, 1 Blue Hawk Drive in Exeter NH.

II. ROLL CALL ATTENDANCE:

Present were Michelle Clancy, Fergus Cullen, Ernie Clark, Craig Flynn, and Ronan O'Doherty. Linnea Nemeth was excused.

Also present: Frank Huerta, Grounds Supervisor, Exeter High School

III. PUBLIC FORUM:

No members present, no comments.

IV. FIELD VISIT, EXETER HIGH SCHOOL:

- a. Exeter's William Ball Stadium was built in 2006 in conjunction with the new high school. The original facility included
 - i. a synthetic turf field with rubber infill
 - ii. four light towers, each with a speaker for the sound system
 - iii. home grandstands for about 3,000 people, handicapped accessible
 - iv. visiting grandstands for 1,000 people, handicapped accessible
 - v. a large and well-equipped press box of about 50x8 (400 sq ft) with a roof hatch and open-air, fence-enclosed rooftop
 - vi. one large and one small scoreboard at opposite ends of the main field
 - vii. Built into the home grandstand are two locker rooms of about 600 sq ft, a storage room / visiting referees room, and a spacious and well-equipped concessions room of about 720 sq feet with a bathroom.
 - viii. There is considerable open-air used for storage under the grandstands as well.
 - ix. The grandstand is elevated, such that the bottom row of seats is some 6 feet higher than the playing surface.
 - x. The top of the grandstand might be 30 feet over the field, providing a birds-eye view
 - xi. The benches are contoured, not flat – making them more comfortable to sit on
- b. Separate from and adjacent to the stadium is a full 8-lane rubberized track with a grass infield.
- c. There is a separate facilities building where maintenance equipment is stored. This was built by the school's building trades program. There are two shipping container storage units for track and football equipment on site.
- d. The field is double-fenced. The inner four-foot fence has been reinforced at the two-foot level to reduce the impact of bowling caused by ball strikes.
- e. Because there is no track inside the stadium, the field area is spacious, with room for lined boxes for soccer teams
- f. The original synthetic field, which was more astro-turf, lasted approximately 15 years. It was replaced in 2021 with rubber-infill synthetic turf by FieldTurf. It is marked for six varsity sports – football, field hockey, boys & girls soccer, and boys & girls lax. Markings are stitch-in. The end zones read EXETER in a dark blue field and there is a large E in the center.
- g. Mr. Huerta paints the 9-foot circular crease for girls lax, helped by stitched guide marks. These are painted annually and before playoff season.
- h. They did not install a shock pad when it was re-surfaced.



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- i. The original sub-grade drainage system did not to be re-done.
- j. Cost of replacement was estimated at \$500-600,000. Committee members will track down the actual cost.
- k. The field is subject to periodic GMAX testing. Standard is 125.
- l. An effort was made to recycle the original surface involving a company from NJ. Some went to batting cages and under bleachers for weed control and ease of cleaning.
- m. Mr. Huerta has a long history with the facility going back to it being newly built. His pride in the facility, and its proper maintenance, was evident. Of the fields we have seen, it appears more energy is put into maintaining the field than others. The 18-year-old facility is in outstanding condition and should serve the school for decades to come.
- n. Mr. Huerta and Mr. Ball attribute the lifespan of the original field to its relatively limited use. The field is only used for varsity games. Most JV games are played on the track infield grass field, which allows two games to be played at the same time and gets visiting teams home sooner. Football, soccer, and lacrosse practice on other grass fields on campus. Youth groups rarely are given access to the stadium field.
- o. This is possible because Exeter High, with an enviably spacious campus, has *seven* other grass fields on campus. This doesn't count the varsity baseball and softball fields.
- p. Members of the committee who had seen the field prior to its renovation recalled the original carpet was in only fair condition in its later years. The more astro-turf surface had been patched in places, had wrinkles, and could show standing water for brief periods.
- q. They do not plow the field, but have snowblowed it – a process that can take three days.
- r. They also disinfect the turf periodically and vacuum it, hiring an outside vendor (FieldTurf) to do this. Service is certified and documented. Mention of the surprising amount of hair that comes out.
- s. With markings stitched into the turf, grounds personnel do not need to be present for games, though two custodians typically are, preferably one female, for purposes of maintaining bathrooms.
- t. The track was resurfaced about two years ago. That suggests the original surface lasted 15 or 16 years.
- u. The track / JV field does not have seating for spectators. It has separate runways for TJ & LJ that are adjacent to the finishing straight, not the far side – a layout in a high-traffic area that invites crossing problems and requires the runways to be roped off.
- v. Meeting recessed at 4:10 and the committee traveled to the next location.

V. FIELD VISIT, OYSTER RIVER HIGH SCHOOL & OYSTER RIVER MIDDLE SCHOOL

- a. The committee reconvened at 4:40 p.m. at Oyster River High School in Durham, NH. All members present at Exeter were present at ORHS. We did not meet with OR personnel on this visit.
- b. Nestled in a residential neighborhood and abutted by Route 4 and wetlands, Oyster River has very limited space for athletic fields. Prior to 2016, the high school had just two grass fields – one of which doubled as the outfield for the baseball/softball field – and no track. The nearby middle school had one field.
- c. The facility is now about 7.5 years old. In 2016 ORHS installed a synthetic turf field with rubber infill surrounded by a rubberized 8-lane track with lights, and repositioned the baseball field to address sun issues. A pad was poured anticipating the addition of a single grandstand, contingent on funding.



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- d. That 1,040-seat structure was added in 2021 or 2022. There is no visiting grandstand – nor is there space on the opposite side of the track, which is tight on the baseball outfield which has a 20-foot high chain link fence.
- e. Temporary standards / netting is used for errant balls at the ends of the field
- f. ORHS does not have its own football team (it is in a coop with Portsmouth); its field is not lined for football, nor does the field need endzones. The crescents of the ovals are covered with the same rubber surface used for the track. HJ and PV are hosted in one end, with LJ and TJ having separate runways (with covered pits) on the other.
- g. Both the field and track – now about 7 years old – are showing some effects of aging. Lane one of the track is showing wear. Some seams on the turf were detectable, and there were places the crumb rubber had pooled a bit after rain events. The track surface may need some patching or repairing in a few years to extend its life prior to a full resurfacing.
- h. That said, the field surface was in very good shape. It was springy to walk on and obviously has many years of playability ahead of it.
- i. ORHS has a separate, pre-existing facilities building adjacent to the turf field. This includes bathrooms and a concession window.
- j. At 5:10 the committee moved up the road to the middle school. Ronan O'Doherty was not present for this portion of the visit.
- k. Oyster River built a new middle school adjacent to their old middle school in about 2021, then tore down the old building. In its place they built a single synthetic turf field with rubber infill.
- l. This field has no amenities – no lights, no buildings.
- m. There is a small seating area at ground level, with an obstructed view of the playing field through a four-foot fence. The seating area is a little hard to get to. It was unclear where handicapped seating is.
- n. A tall fence is in place to protect cars in an adjacent parking area

VI. ADJOURNMENT: At 5:25 committee members departed.