

LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Saturday, October 13, 2012
Jonas Clarke Middle School, Auditorium
17 Stedman Road, Lexington, MA

Present: Dr. Paul Ash, Superintendent, Margaret Coppe, School Committee Chair; Alessandro Alessandrini, Vice Chair; Members: Mary Ann Stewart, Bonnie Brodner and Jessie Steigerwald

Absent: Sam Alpert, Student Representative

The Minutes were taken by Jean Curran, Recording Secretary

The Meeting convened at 10:10 a.m.

I. Call to Order and Welcome:

The Chair called the meeting to order and invited public comment.

There were no public comments.

II. Agenda

Margaret Coppe explained that two years ago it was discovered that the Joseph Estabrook Elementary School had unacceptable levels of PCBs and it was decided that a new elementary school would be needed. With the help of the Massachusetts State Building Authority (MSBA), a debt exclusion and Town Meeting appropriation the funds were in place to begin going forward with the school project. In late May the Committee was notified that costs were increasing due to the economic climate but the scope of the project had not changed. The Committee met Thursday, October 11th, with the Permanent Building Committee (PBC) to see how costs could be cut without impacting the scope of the project and close about a \$1,000,000 gap.

The Committee and PBC went through each line item to find ways to reduce the costs. There were certain line items that the Committee was not comfortable eliminating and wanted to review those items at today's meeting. The Committee is going to the Board of Selectmen on Monday, October 15th to talk about funding as it has become apparent that there is a need to ask for more money. A special Town Meeting will be held on November 19th. The timing of putting out bids and signing contracts is important to keep everything on schedule.

Ms. Coppe stated that today we are looking for the Committee's view on the Value Engineering items that were not decided Thursday night. These items include the 2 pipe system and/or 4 pipe heating and cooling system, the speech reinforcement system, whether to replace the receiving elevator with a dumbwaiter and some smaller items. There was much discussion from the Committee on these items.

Patrick Goddard, Director of Public Facilities took questions and comments from the Committee regarding (i) size of the gap, (ii) air conditioning systems, (iii) contractor fee, (iv) contingency fee and what would MSBA be comfortable with, (v) funding agreement with the MSBA, (vi) Gross Max Price working under M.G.L. Chapter 149A after all bids submitted, (vii) potential costs could be higher than the 60% and that is the reason for the high contingency, (viii) should the Committee go with the 2 pipe system versus the 4 pipe system which was in the original plan, (ix) entire budget package in terms of materials and costs which have risen and still working with Shawmut to identify those items to reduce the gap, (x) air quality, (xi) need for more money, (xii) risks associated with higher costs during the demolition of the existing school, and (xiii) the greenhouse.

Ken DiNisco, President, DiNisco Design shared that the PBC agreed to take the \$240k credit for not using a 4 pipe system due to cost constraints. Mr. DiNisco stated the true cost can only be determined when the system is bid. He also explained that a bid alternate can be used during the bidding process whereby bidders give two separate bids. However he noted that this will discourage some bidders in participating in the process because of the need to prepare two estimates. He recommends that the Committee decide to either go with the 2 pipe system or the 4 pipe system in order to broaden the range of bidders. There were questions and comments from the Committee with respect to the need for the 4 pipe system.

David Kanter, Town Meeting Member and member of the Capital Expense Committee, shared his opinion regarding asking for additional money at Town Meeting. His feeling is that there needs to be enough money available when the contracts are awarded at the end of December. He reinforced the message that this is not additional money to be spent but only to ensure that we can move on with the bid schedule. December 31st is a crucial date to get the best possible bid packages and he believes that we need to go with \$2,000,000 to fund it. He requested a simple list of major drivers so he can go to Town Meeting and be able to state the list of items that increased and were out of anyone's control as well as planning for anything that may arise during the demolition phase. He also provided his thoughts on the speech reinforcement system.

Dr. Ash addressed his concerns regarding dipping into the contingency fund too early and running the risk of not having enough funds to complete the project. He also noted that there are approximately 12 other communities racing to get their bids out so December 31st is a crucial deadline. He also concurred that we need to assure Town Meeting that the School Committee will not increase the scope of the project.

Sandra Trach, Principal, Joseph Estabrook Elementary School recommended having the whole building outfitted with the speech reinforcement system.

Pat Goddard raised the issue about whether Shawmut should procure the landscaping or whether the town should procure landscapers. The issue revolves around the hiring of union or nonunion workers.

Margaret Copped invited public comment.

Betsy Sarles, 36 Turning Mill Road inquired who makes the final decision on cuts regarding enhancements.

Dr. Ash shared that the PBC needs to live within its appropriate charge and if the Appropriation Committee goes out of their scope, PBC will get to decide.

Kamala Soparkar, 88 Winter Street expressed her concerns regarding replacing the wood stage floor with linoleum flooring. She also suggested that the Committee ask for a significant amount of money when they go to Town Meeting in order to be able to fund the majority of the items.

Paul Kalous, Owner's Project Manager with Collaborative Partners spoke to the sound reinforcement system and that if the system is not installed it might pose problems with the MSBA. He also spoke on the Funding Agreement which included an air conditioned building. He also does not recommend doing an alternate bid because the project will begin bidding on December 20th and will end on December 31st. He stated if the bid documents are really clear with no alternates they will be more appealing to contractors because they only have to price one system. We will get much more competition.

Tom Harrison, questioned Patrick Goddard whether (i) they have considered using heat pumps as an option, (ii) had he considered package deals and whether the seal is plastic, (iii) was there any way to expedite the HVAC bidding process, and (iv) who purchases the large bulk materials for the project (general contractor versus vendor).

Patrick Goddard responded that the analysis of air conditioning was discussed with the Energy Conservation Committee. The selection of what is in the design documents in this system will be what is most cost effective for the town and will be quieter with the chilled beam. Mr. Goddard explained the bidding process and the vendor prequalification process. He then explained that the vendors will be purchasing the products.

Sarah Kuli 6 Coach Road expressed her views on the PBC meeting that was held on October 11th and felt that PBC's outlook was very narrow and lacked the understanding on how the building would be used. She hoped the School Committee would continue to advocate for those that use the building.

Margaret Coppe responded that the PBC is aware of educational concerns, but their charge is to look at the numbers and keep the project on the budget that has been approved to date.

Betsy Sarles, 36 Turning Mill Road, questioned when the bid documents will be ready and will it be before or after Town Meeting.

David Kanter responded that on November 28th they would be finalizing the documents and they may go out by the end of November depending on the meeting with the BOS on Monday evening.

The Committee discussed taking a vote.

Motion to Not Accept the Credits on Line 8 – Switch to 2-pipe chilled beam system (\$240,000); Line 20 – Eliminate speech reinforcement system (entire system) (\$162,375) and Line 21 – Eliminate speech reinforcement systems from 16 classrooms (\$81,600); and Line 42 – Replace elevator at receiving area with ground loaded dumb waiter (\$40,000) (Brodner, Steigerwald) The Motion was Approved (5-0)

The Committee further discussed the other line items that were accepted or deleted.

Sharon, Estabrook parent, expressed her thoughts on the stage flooring, acoustics and the impacts for outside dance troops that use the school.

Ken DiNisco responded regarding the flooring and stated that he will pursue the issue of tap dancing and other dance studios using the linoleum flooring with respect to resiliency and acoustics and will provide a separate memorandum on that issue.

Scott Kosofsky, 36 Turning Mill Road expressed his thoughts on the type of flooring that should be considered for the stage and acoustics in the room.

Motion to Adjourn (Stewart, Alessandrini) The Motion was Approved (5-0)

The Meeting Adjourned at Noon

Documents: Meeting Agenda; Plan for Getting to Budget for 10.11.12; Email from Pat Goddard to Lynne Pease regarding Board of Selectman Agenda Item – Estabrook School Budget Update

Voted by the School Committee November 27, 2012