

BUDGET / FACILITIES SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

MINUTES

Monday, May 16, 2016

Mt. Hope High School - Cafeteria

Present

Subcommittee: Marjorie McBride, Chair; John Bento and Bill O'Dell

School Committee, Administration and Staff: John Saviano, Mario Andrade Superintendent; {left at 6:47 p.m.}, Pauline Silva, Director of Administration & Finance; and Scott Medeiros, Assistant Facilities Director {arrived at 6:48 p.m. & left at 7:25 p.m.};

Marj M. called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

Marj M. stated that, in order to accommodate the Superintendent's schedule, the order of business would be rearranged.

{For continuity sake, the minutes have been recorded aligned to the order of business as posted.}

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: John B. made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 18, 2016 meeting; seconded by Bill O. The motion passed unanimously.

FACILITIES FOCUS

MHHS Heating, Ventilation and Air Quality (HVAQ)

ENE Energy Savings Summary Quote

By way of history, Pauline S. stated that ENE is an energy management service company hired by the State. Electric company customers pay into an energy efficiency fund as part of their utilities bill. The State controls the energy efficiency fund and makes it available to big consumers such as schools and hospitals. ENE and the utility company collaborate to work with and help fund “shovel-ready” projects for larger institutions.

ENE is currently working as BWRSD’s agent and have vetted out three energy efficient bids for the MHHS HVAQ work, a portion of which will be funded through the Energy Efficiency Fund. This project will also be receiving housing aid reimbursement at \$.76 on the dollar.

Marj M. reiterated that the MHHS HVAQ project has already been approved by the School Committee. Tonight’s discussion was merely for clarification purposes.

Guiteras Baseball Field Nets & Fence

Scott M. reported that consideration is currently being made to use marine netting on the Guiteras Baseball Field pending cost analysis.

John B. asked about whether the use of marine netting would affect the play of the game such as scuffing the baseball.

Marj M. questioned whether the Interscholastic League would approve of marine netting.

Pauline S. responded that there are no specific criteria for the type of nets used on a school baseball field. She added that the installation of netting is for liability purposes.

A discussion ensued on whether to wait to install new nets until the beginning of the next baseball season.

Scott M. will speak with George S., Facilities Director, on the most feasible time to install the new nets.

Marj M. stated that the Guiteras Baseball Field Nets & Fence will be placed on the June Budget/Facilities Subcommittee agenda at which time a full decision will be made on pricing and the net installation timeline.

SMMA Controls

Scott M. reported that the pre-bid for the controls districtwide will occur on May 26th.

Pauline S. expanded that SMMA will be doing a pre-bid conference with prospective bidders. The RFP is in the process of being developed.

Scott M. explained the details and benefits of the new computerized controls system.

Pauline S. stated that the new controls system is reimbursable through housing aid at \$.76 on the dollar. Once SMMA completes the design phase, the plan will be presented to the Budget/Facilities Subcommittee.

{Scott M. left at 7:25 p.m.}

BUDGET FOCUS

FY16 Budget

Pauline S. distributed the monthly School Committee Budget Report for review and discussion.

Pauline S. stated that the FY16 Budget is tight due to the end of the year, but the budget is right where it needs to be at this time.

A discussion ensued on those budget line items highlighted by

Pauline S.

FY17 Budget

Pauline S. reported that the FY17 Budget is still very preliminary.

Marj M. raised a concern that the budget is not formalized by the beginning of the school year. Marj M. commented that she understands that many protocols set outside of the District preclude the budget from being formalized by September, but would like to see the possibility of coming before the School Committee in June with a preliminary budget based on the approved JFC bottom line amount. Marj M. understands that the preliminary budget would then need to be revised once budgetary issues “settle out”.

Pros and Cons of presenting a preliminary budget to the School Committee were discussed.

A consensus was reached to provide the School Committee a preliminary budget containing the JFC bottom line amount for acceptance by June 30th. It is understood that the preliminary budget will continue to be revised until the entire budget process is finalized.

John B. suggested that the Policy & Curriculum Subcommittee be notified for the purpose of revising the Budget Deadlines & Schedules Policy to include acceptance of the preliminary budget by

June 30th. Marj M. will speak with the Policy & Curriculum Subcommittee Chair to that end.

Bond Refinance

{See discussion below under Action Items.}

Impact to Budget re: Removal of Busses

Bill O. brought the question to the table regarding the removal of busses and the subsequent impact to the budget.

In response to Bill O., Mario A. explained that the goal of the District is to remove four busses from the transportation fleet which would yield a savings of approximately \$400,000.

Mario A. referred to the current ridership statistics which details enrolled students, eligible riders, riding average, number of busses and number of seats available. Mario A. stated that the current statistics indicate that three busses could be removed from service at KMS with a possibility of removing one additional bus from MHHS.

Mario A. stated that the full School Committee will be voting on a new BWRSD Transportation form at May's Business Meeting. He will be recommending that parents "opt-in" rather than "opt-out" to ensure active engagement of parents.

Mario A. emphasized that students will always be eligible for a seat

on the bus. If a student's circumstances change, the parent will simply need to submit a letter to opt their child back in for a seat on the bus.

Bill O. asked if there were any legal ramifications to this initiative. Mario A. responded that the state currently uses a transportation opt-in program. Schools in Massachusetts also use a transportation opt-in program.

John S. raised a concern that all students legally have a "right to a bus seat" and believes a transportation "opt-out" is a better approach.

Mario A. responded that Andrew H., the District's Solicitor, has been consulted about "opting-in vs. opting-out" language, and is not concerned from a legal standpoint. Mario A reiterated that no student will be denied bus access.

A discussed ensued.

Mario A. stated that BWRSD was the first District to engage RIDE about a transportation opt-in program. Since that time, two other districts will be piloting the transportation opt-in program this September.

Mario A. stated that once the School Committee approves the

Transportation Opt-in Form, parent notification will commence.

Capital Projects

There was no discussion.

ACTION ITEMS:

- 1. Recommend for a full School Committee vote approval of bond refinance**

MOTION: John B. made a motion to recommend for a full School Committee vote approval of a bond refinance; seconded by Bill O.

DISCUSSION: Pauline S. reported that periodically First Southwest, the District's bond issuer, is consulted to determine whether a bond refinance would be prudent. Pauline S. stated that at this time conditions are favorable to proceed with a bond refinance. Pauline S. reported that there are 12 years left on the District's bonds with overall debt through 2028. If a refinance is conducted at this time, the District will experience a cash flow savings of \$1.4 million over the remaining 12 years averaging to \$150,000 per year.

Pauline S. reported that she and Mario A. attended a preliminary meeting with RIBEC where the preliminary refinance process has begun.

Subcommittee members asked about the cost of any fees associated

with a bond refinance. Pauline S. stated she would report back with that dollar amount. Pauline S. added that the fee would be part of the issuance, not cash out of pocket.

A discussion ensued.

Pauline S. stated that she is looking to do the bond refinance in June.

Marj M. reiterated that in the midst of the current bond refinance, the District will still go out to bid for bond counsel.

The motion passed unanimously.

2. Recommend for a full School Committee vote transfer of \$125,000 from Purchase Service to Equipment

MOTION: John B. made a motion to recommend for a full School Committee vote approval of transferring \$125,000 from Purchase Service to Equipment.

DISCUSSION: Pauline S. reported that the new technical staff recommended replacing outdated equipment currently being utilized in the tech office.

The motion passed unanimously.

3. Recommend for a full School Committee vote assignment of \$180,000 from Capital Projects for Wireless Classroom Initiative Project

MOTION: John B. made a motion to recommend for a full School Committee vote approval of assigning \$180,000 from Capital Projects for the Wireless Classroom Initiative Project (WCI).

DISCUSSION: Pauline S. reported that additional funds for Phase 2 of the Wireless Classroom Initiative Project (WCI) will be available until June 30th.

Phase 2 will bring wireless capabilities to all educational areas to include common areas such as the libraries, gymnasiums and auditoriums.

Pauline S. explained in detail the WCI Phase 2 Cost Summary.

Pauline S. explained the rationale behind using funds from Capital Projects for the Wireless Classroom Initiative Project.

The motion passed unanimously.

Next meeting – Monday, June 20, 2016

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: At 7:47 p.m. Bill O. made a motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by John B. The motion passed unanimously.

kd