

Minutes of the Little Compton School Building Committee

December 2, 2009

Call to Order: The subcommittee workshop meeting of the Little Compton School Building Committee was called to order by chairperson T. Alder at 7:00 p.m. in the Wilbur/McMahon School Commons. A quorum was present.

Members Present: T. Alder, B. Borden, L. Brousseau-Lebreux, H. Devine, B. Gauthier, J. Gibney, D. Gomez, M. Harrington, D. MacGregor, M. Manning, C. Osborne, R. Racette, BG Shanklin, M. Shapiro, J. Talbot, and D. Wordell

Others Present: Consultant G. Smolley of JCJ Architecture and members of the public

Members Absent: T. Arkins, D. Freeman, P. Golembeske (alternate), R. Mushen, M. Rapp

I. There was a discussion of subcommittees which centered on the 'Little Compton School Building Committee Sub-Committees' handout distributed at the November 19th meeting. It was noted that there was a timeframe to most subcommittees – some were needed

later on in the process while others were needed early on. R. Racette suggested that we should consider a subcommittee that would consider the scope of work. D. Gomez felt that the scope of work was properly the responsibility of the entire committee rather than a subcommittee. B. Borden said that before we establish subcommittees, we should carefully consider the Stage II application and whether the proposed list of subcommittees correlates with it. BG Shanklin said that subcommittees should follow assigned responsibilities and be based on what information we need to get. Another member commented that subcommittees were to help with fact-finding and report back to the main committee for decisions.

B. Borden asked about the source for the state's square-footage requirements and how it relates to educational soundness. G. Smolley answered that RI based it on MA and it is a square foot allowance per student and that the Board of Regents determines educational soundness.

M. Harrington broadly summarized how the subcommittees would build on the work of each other – here's what we really need for space based on our needs, here's what it is going to cost, here's how we can go green, and here's where we're going to put it.

Following this initial discussion, G. Smolley proceeded to go through the handout subcommittee-by-subcommittee and talk about the usefulness and purpose of each. On the FF&E and TS&E

subcommittee, G. Smolley said this was a budget-driver and one of the most overlooked. M. Manning noted that with regard to technology systems, the school has already upgraded to new computers and invested in smart boards for every classroom, all of which would presumably be transferable. On the Programming subcommittee, M. Harrington asked how we find out about the best ideas on the ways we might do things, so we don't have to reinvent the wheel. G. Smolley referred the committee to several websites, such as Learning By Design. Several members emphasized the importance of the Site subcommittee, since the scope of work cannot be defined until we learn the limitations of the site. R. Racette said this really was the scope - whether the school will be here or elsewhere – and that the work of the other subcommittees will follow from this.

G. Smolley's advice throughout the discussion was not to over-think Stage II, but to get it completed as quickly as possible so we can "get in line" for the Board of Regents. He said we'll see as we talk to Mr. da Silva from RIDE at our next meeting that we've actually already done a lot of the Stage II work. He said to consider Stage II as the legislative act, or the funding piece.

B. Borden referenced the recent school built in Cranston for \$9.5 million. She asked what subcommittee would consider the possibility of building a school for less without state money. G. Smolley replied that with prevailing rate and bidding-process regulations he did not

think a private school comparison could be made in terms of cost. G. Smolley said the question we ought to ask is, 'What do I truly need to educate kids for the next 50 years?' rather than 'How little can we spend?' He said there is a threshold at which point we have to consider whether we are doing enough good to justify the money.

There was a question about meeting frequency. G. Smolley advised that subcommittee work relied heavily on phones and email between full committee meetings. This raised the question about open meetings law and rules on subcommittees. The Superintendent will invite the Attorney General's office to educate the committee on this ASAP.

There was discussion of any other subcommittees needed. R. Racette advocated for an Acquisition Strategy subcommittee that would look at the process of how we hire our professionals. He spoke of the many different approaches to consider, including a design competition.

BG Shanklin noted there would likely be several stages of subcommittees. He broadly categorized these as pre-bond, Stage II process and our own education, architect design, and concurrent construction.

R. Racette said he thought cost was the most important thing to get right in Stage II. It was recommended that we ask Mr. da Silva the

importance of the accuracy of the cost at this point of the process. A question was raised about a design-build scenario. R. Racette recollected from the initial meeting with Mr. da Silva, that while the state felt design-build may not be best, he didn't say it would not participate. T. Allder said we'll need to decide on a schematic design by the end of Stage II. J. Talbot asked whether we might consider engaging architects earlier in the process. L. Brousseau-Lebreux asked where the money for design services is going to come from. The Superintendent said that in addition to the contracted services with JCJ, we have the initial budget of \$5,000 to get us through Stage II and to the Board of Regents approval. B. Gauthier added that design is not our business at present – he sees that the purpose of subcommittees is to look for any surprises.

G. Smolley said Mr. da Silva told him that we are going to have to address traffic concerns as part of Stage II. Mr. da Silva also would like to see us use a professional demographer, which G. Smolley noted could cost \$5,000-\$10,000 and doesn't think is necessary.

G. Smolley advised that the location of the building is one of the most important next steps. It was agreed that critical subcommittees to consider creating at next meeting included public outreach, site development, and finance. Any members interested in serving on these should contact chairperson T. Allder.

II. Public Input – A member of the audience suggested that when

considering subdivisions of work, we should consider the expertise of the people or positions whose membership on the Committee was mandated by RIDE.

III. Adjourn: On a motion made by D. MacGregor and seconded by L. Brousseau-Lebreux, it was voted to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted by M. Manning, Secretary