

**MINUTES ~ October 11, 2005**

Ponaganset High School Library

**1. Call to Order**

Mr. Gregory Laramie, Chair of the Foster Glocester Regional Building Committee, called the meeting of the Foster Glocester Regional Building Committee to order at 7:00 PM in the Ponaganset High School Library.

**2. Roll Call**

Mrs. Kecia Pierce called the roll. In attendance were Mr. Gregory Laramie of Glocester, Mr. Raymond Fogarty of Glocester, Mrs. I. Lorraine O'Connors of Glocester, Mr. William Abt of Foster, Mr. Dennis Chretien of Foster and Mr. George Jacques of Glocester. Mrs. Patti Fountain of Foster and Mr. Warren Ducharme of Foster were absent.

**3. Chairman's Report**

Mr. Laramie informed the committee that the district now owns the property. Mr. Laramie has spoken to Mr. Bruce Payton about developing a logging plan for the area that is going to be cut down and cleared for the middle school building and fields. Mr. Laramie reported that clearing services will go out to bid in a couple of weeks.

**4. Biomass Heat Source Feasibility Report Presentation**

Mr. Adam Sherman from the Biomass Energy Resource Center in Vermont provided the committee with a thorough review of the biomass heating feasibility report which he prepared for this project. Mr. Sherman informed the committee that he found that this type of system would be both mechanically and economically feasible for both the high school and the new middle school. Mr. Sherman reported that assuming the price of heating oil of \$1.69 per gallon, which is the price that the school is locked into for the current year, the payback period would be 8.1 years for the middle school with a net present value (NPV) of savings of \$500K over 30 years and a 6.7 year payback period for the high school with a NPV of savings of \$1M over 30 years. Given higher oil prices, the payback period will be much shorter. Mr. Sherman reported that over 25 schools in Vermont heat primarily with wood chips and the cost of wood is about a third of the cost of oil; the system is clean burning and there would be benefits to the community and environment.

Mr. Bruce Payton informed the committee that he has spoken to a few local mills which have supplies of chips and would be able and ready to sell to the district.

Mr. Laramie informed the committee that should a biomass system be used, there will still need to be a conventional oil fired back up heat source for the swing seasons and for the hot water system. Mr. Laramie reported that the cost of the system for the middle school would be \$587K. Due to budget constraints, Mr. Laramie reported they have been looking for alternative ways to pay for this system. Mr. Fogarty informed the committee that both Senator Chaffee and Reed have expressed interest in this project and the resources sub-committee has been working on a proposal to present to the congressional delegation by the

end of the week. Mr. Charlie Hawkins from Senator Chaffee's office informed the committee that they will work to support the project if possible.

There was also some discussion about using an Energy Service Company (ESCO) which provides upfront funding then the payback would be through the cost savings. The committee agreed that funding of this nature would need to be discussed with the school committee.

The Biomass Feasibility Report was funded by a \$7,500 grant from the R.I. State Energy Office and came about through the hard work of Rick Sparks, Bruce Payton and Julie Capobianco and others, and the committee expressed its thanks for their efforts.

## **5. Architects' Presentation**

### **Middle School Preliminary Design Revisions**

Mrs. Cindy Bauman reviewed the changes in the designs from the presentation at September's meeting. The two roads leading to and from the school site have been changed from one way roads to serve as both an entrance and exit, a drop off area in front of the school was added and the ring road was shortened but still allows for stacking of 34 buses. In addition, the building was moved forward a bit and the septic system has been moved back behind the playing fields.

Mrs. Bauman informed the committee that she and members of the A&E team met with the planning board last week to review the site layout, traffic study and grading of the site. They will be meeting with the planning board in two weeks to present the architectural designs and four weeks from that meeting will be the final meeting with the planning board in December to get them to sign off on the project. Mrs. Bauman also informed the committee that October 24<sup>th</sup> is the due date for the submittal for special use zoning application.

Mr. Mark Humphreys discussed changes in the layout of the building. The proposed building is now a two story structure as opposed to the earlier three story structure in order to reduce construction costs. The square footage of program space has not been reduced; certain areas have just been repositioned. In this latest scheme the main level will have the front (south) entry, the upper library, music areas, auditeria, and administrative suite in the public wing plus four team spaces in the academic wing. The administrative area has been moved from the academic wing to be in front of the auditeria. The lower level will have the specials area and three team areas in the academic wing, with the gymnasium, locker rooms, shop, physical plant and library in the public side. Mr. Humphrey's reported that the site has been recontoured to allow for lower level window exposure on the south side of the academic wing.

Mr. Humphreys reported that this scheme shows 7 pods of 125 students each which is one extra team than the current facility has. In addition, there is room for expansion on the back of the building if needed in the future.

Mrs. O'Connors moved and Mr. Chretien seconded acceptance of the preliminary designs and approval to continue on in the direction that they are going. So voted, 6-0.

### **High School General Planning Principles/Preliminary Budget**

Mr. Laramie reported that there are critical financial issues with the high school renovation project; the budget allocates \$16.5M to be spent on the high school. Deferred maintenance items were originally estimated at \$3M but realistically they will be around \$7M. The A&E team has been going through the school to determine which areas need the most

work. Mr. Laramie identified the six areas of the high school project and estimated costs as follows:

1. Deferred Maintenance \$5.5M-\$7M
2. Classroom Renovations \$3.3M
3. Core Renovations \$3M
4. New Construction \$1.3M
5. Physical Education \$.5M-\$8M
6. Site Work \$650K-\$2M

The issue of the tight budget brought about much discussion from both the committee and the audience on how funds should be allocated. Some people voiced opinions that the funds should be used for classroom space and programs while others felt that a field house and athletic facilities should receive the funding needed. There was also some discussion as to whether some of the deferred maintenance costs could be channeled back to the school committee. Mr. Laramie informed the committee that the final budget allocations to each program have not yet been determined and although certain planned renovations will need to be reduced specific areas have not yet been identified.

Mr. Laramie informed the committee that between now and the next meeting the A&E team will be looking at renovation costs, mechanical renovation costs, identifying areas that don't need work, working with the school committee on some of the deferred maintenance costs and looking at the quality versus quantity of space.

## **6. Sub-Committee Reports**

### **A. A&E**

Mr. Laramie reported that two viable bid proposals have been received related to the CM RFP. The bids of \$3.2M and \$3.3M were received from Gilbane and HV Collins. Members of the committee will begin interviewing the firms next week.

### **B. Resources**

#### Energy

Mrs. Wynette Dahlquist reported that a proposal for alternative energy funding will be submitted to Senators Reed and Chafee.

There was more discussion about the possibility of using an ESCO for the Biomass and other alternative energy projects. Mr. Fogarty moved and Mrs. O'Connors seconded that the building committee recommend to the school committee that we look into the feasibility of biomass for the high school and middle school and present the school committee with the feasibility report and also have representatives from an ESCO present information to the school committee on this type of financing. So voted, 6-0.

#### Innovation at Scale Pilot Program

Mrs. Dahlquist reported that this project is moving forward. Mr. Maruszczak reported that nine teachers have been involved in the meetings and a brochure is being developed which will be used in funding efforts.

#### Middle School Fields/Athletics

Mrs. Dahlquist reported that Mr. Jacques and his team have been working on getting information on the lights, scoreboards and possible athletic complex for the high school.

Mr. Jacques informed the committee that the town is looking at ten acres of land on the other side of Rustic Hill across from the new middle school site for a potential community athletic complex. The town recreation director and town planner are working to develop a capital program which would include this acreage. If this project goes through, the fields could be utilized by the middle school during the school day.

The next meeting of the resources sub-committee will be October 25<sup>th</sup> at 6:30PM in the high school library.

### **C. Technology**

Mr. Chretien reported that the committee is still looking for additional members. Dates of meetings and agendas will be publicized to hopefully attract more interest. Mr. Chretien informed the committee that they will be meeting with the middle school staff as part of the faculty meetings.

### **D. Finance**

Mr. Steve Winsor distributed the year to date financial activity report showing a balance of \$8.5M in the money market account, \$39K in the checking account and \$82K of interest earned. Mr. Winsor informed the committee that the major expenditure from the account this month was \$750K for the purchase of the land. Mrs. O'Connors moved and Mr. Fogarty seconded acceptance of the treasurer's report as presented. So voted, 6-0.

## **6. Approval of Minutes: September 14, 2005 Meeting**

Mrs. O'Connors moved and Mr. Chretien seconded that the minutes of the September 14, 2005 meeting be accepted as presented. So voted, 5-0-1 with Mr. Jacques abstaining.

Mr. Laramie reported that the next meeting of the building committee will be November 8<sup>th</sup> at 7:00Pm in the high school library.

## **7. Adjournment**

Mrs. O'Connors moved and Mr. Fogarty seconded that the meeting be adjourned at 9:40 PM. So voted, 6-0.

Prepared by: Kecia Pierce, Building Committee Clerk

Approved by: Foster Gloucester Building Committee, November 8, 2005