

**MANCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION
SMARTR COMMITTEE MEETING
WEDNESDAY, January 2, 2013
Conference Room A, Central Office**

MINUTES

PRESENT: M. Crockett, M. Flick, S. Gates, D. Hagenow, N. Leon, B. Murphy, L. Stewart, A. Strong, J. Topping, M. Tweedie, S. Walton

ALSO PRESENT: Dr. Kisiel, S. Shanley

ABSENT: J. Doucette, C. Pelletier

The meeting was called to order at 6:37 p.m. by Chairperson Crockett.

**Motion to accept the December 19, 2012 minutes of the SMARTR
Committee. Tweedie/Murphy**

10/0/1 (Walton abstained)

Mr. Crockett noted this meeting was to work on formulating a report to the Board of Education, for their next meeting.

Mr. Shanley stated the RFQs went out and are due back January 23, 2013. At that point a review committee will be put together and two or three firms will be hired.

Mr. Murphy noted that there is a mandatory, pre-submission meeting tomorrow for the architects interested. The meeting will be held at Washington school at 3:30 p.m. Another mandatory meeting will be held January 7th. They will do a walk-through and be able to ask questions about the project. Sometimes these walk-throughs result in an addendum to the RFQ, if the same questions are asked by many. Jerry Dupont, Director of General Services, and Mark Carlino, Director of Public Works, will be present to handle any questions. Dr. Kisiel will also be there. Mr. Strong would like to see a list of any questions asked, though he is not able to attend.

Mr. Crockett noted the report to the Board of Education is due January 14th. Ms. Flick will be heading that team.

Ms. Walton wanted to review the questions that the Board asked:

1. Educational Model
2. Priority elementary schools
3. Magnet school recommendation.

She noted that regarding the educational model, we had settled on a recommendation of a pre-K/K-4, 5/6, 7/8, 9-12 model. Regarding the order of priority, the top three were decided as Cheney/Bennet, Washington, and Robertson, with others on the punch list as Verplanck and Bentley. Regarding the magnet, the committee is recommending a magnet school for the town.

Mr. Stewart had issue with listing Verplanck and Bentley as being the next priorities. Mr. Murphy noted we are not talking about "priorities". Mr. Leon noted it is important to update the Board of Education on the status.

Ms. Walton felt the pre-K-4 recommendation will be a big deal to others.

Mr. Tweedie wondered if we should share details of the RFQ with the Board. Mr. Murphy will be at the meeting to answer any questions about that.

Ms. Hagenow wondered if we should explain why we settled on these facilities?

Mr. Leon pointed out that the Board had prioritized Washington, Robertson, and Verplanck, so we do need to explain why we strayed from those three. We also need to be prepared for questions on the other schools.

Ms. Flick noted it is not fiscally sound to address all the schools at one time. Mr. Gates noted these are the schools we reached consensus on, consistent with the direction from the Board of Education over the last several months.

Ms. Walton felt we should formulate a list of what we are asking from the Board of Education at this time. Mr. Crockett added that we need a timetable for their answers as well.

First, we need the Board to approve the educational model. Mr. Leon felt they should be able to provide their answer the night of the presentation. Mr. Shanley asked if the Board of Education members on this committee are all okay with this educational model? It was noted that all four were on board for various reasons. Ms. Walton felt it made sense financially. Mr. Crockett noted it was a good use of the Cheney building, which would have to be addressed eventually. Ms. Hagenow was in favor of freeing up space in the elementary schools. Mr. Leon felt that the Pre-K concept needs to be sold first.

Ms. Walton stated it is a better model than we have currently and although this does not minimize transitions, it does provide stability in the 5th-6th transitional period.

Mr. Topping does not think Pre-K needs to be "sold" first. This model is not to add pre-K, but to open up space in the schools. Dr. Kisiel added that we had 157 new kids this year and we have no space in the schools. We need to free up room for future growth immediately and possibly to expand Pre-K in the future. Ms. Walton agrees that this plan allows for the Board to implement Pre-K at some point, but they do not need to approve Pre-K now.

Mr. Leon wondered, if the referendum passes, in what order will the buildings be addressed? Mr. Shanley felt doing Cheney first creates a swing space, but the design for the others can be moving forward at the same time.

Mr. Leon questioned what we do over the next few years if we cannot wait for more space? Mr. Strong suggested that building new at one of the elementary schools might be the plan. Ms. Walton felt that might be done concurrent to Cheney.

It was determined the three Board of Directors present were all in favor of the plan.

Mr. Stewart noted all were in support of the recommended educational model and the feasibility studies were in progress.

Mr. Leon asked about creating a backwards timeline. Mr. Murphy noted that Mr. Till was working on that. By March or April Mr. Murphy hopes for a new vs. like-new study to be complete and then the Board has to decide on one or the other. Mr. Gates felt his original backwards timeline is not far off.

Mr. Gates noted that if we need room in any schools prior to construction we may need portables. Dr. Kisiel noted leasing a portable is approximately \$50,000 per year for one classroom. Mr. Leon felt there may be security issues around portables.

Ms. Walton felt it would be helpful to have dates on when the feasibility study will be done, when the Board has to take action on items, etc. She also asked about the next step on the magnet recommendation – if the Board endorses a magnet school they need to start on that ASAP and take immediate action on moving forward.

Mr. Crockett asked who currently owns Nathan Hale? It was noted by Dr. Kisiel that the Board of Education currently owns the property and they are working in conjunction with the Town to care for it currently.

Ms. Walton wondered if we should specify Nathan Hale as a magnet site? It was noted that is the likely site for consideration, but ultimately the State Board of Education will decide.

Mr. Crockett felt we should wrap up the report to the Board with what we plan to do while waiting on the architecture studies to come back. He listed Bentley, Central Office, an indoor track, and other work among the topics to discuss. Mr. Gates felt an ongoing priority list from the Board of Education needs to be updated.

Mr. Leon wondered what everyone felt was the timeframe of the SMARTR Committee. There was no consensus on a timeframe, but Mr. Shanley noted that it is important to have an overall plan for the big picture, even if all will not be addressed in this first phase.

Mr. Leon wondered what else we should add to the referendum and should we mention that on January 14th? Mr. Gates agreed the referendum will fail if we only present three schools. We need a long-term plan outlined.

Ms. Flick noted she can email the SMARTR Committee with a draft of the presentation to the Board prior to the next meeting. She asked that everyone read the presentation and make notes to be presented at the next meeting, but refrain from emailing comments. It was determined the next meeting will solely be to edit the report and minutes will not be taken.

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 7th at Central Office at 6:30 p.m.

Motion to adjourn. Gates/Hagenow 11/0

Meeting adjourned 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

J. Doucette, Secretary
SMARTR Committee