

**MANCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION
SMARTR COMMITTEE MEETING
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2013
Manchester Room, Town Hall**

MINUTES

PRESENT: M. Crockett, J. Doucette, M. Flick, S. Gates, J. Topping, B. Murphy, C. Pelletier, L. Stewart, A. Strong, D. Thames

ALSO PRESENT: S. Shanley, C. Till, J. Hoagland and C. O'Hare from JCJ

ABSENT: D. Hagenow, C. Pattacini, M. Tweedie

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

Motion to accept the September 25, 2013 minutes of the SMARTR Committee. Strong/Stewart

6/0/4

Motion to accept the September 11, 2013 minutes of the SMARTR Committee. Stewart/Pelletier

9/0/1

Chris Till reviewed the committee had directed JCJ Architects to investigate the comparative cost estimate for renovating Washington (with a total gut) verses a new build of comparable size, as the original new build was for fewer students. The comparison of equal sized buildings is required for the state, which is why a new estimate for a new build was needed.

Mr. Shanley and Mr. Hoagland reviewed some of the background of the Washington issues for Mr. Huck, a member of the press, who was present this evening.

Plan 1A – a new building to accommodate 530 students, with 5 classrooms per grade and 2 flex rooms has a total project cost of \$34,947,000 with an estimated cost to the town of \$12,231,450. Plan 2A – a total gut renovation of the 1912 building with an addition which was presented previously to accommodate 530 students has a project cost of \$42,771,000 and a total cost to the town of \$14,969,850. These figures reflect a maximum possible state reimbursement. For buildings older than 1950 the state gives a credit on square footage of 20%, which increases the reimbursement slightly, which is why the ultimate cost to the town is only about \$2.7 million different than a new build.

Discussion turned to parking on the renovation plan with Mr. Gates inquiring about the target number of parking spaces for a building this size. Mr. Hoagland reviewed 70-75 spaces would be the goal and currently there are 60. Several ideas on parking solutions were offered and it was determined this would not be a big issue to deal with.

Ms. Pelletier asked about PCBs and reimbursement rate on that remediation. Ms. O'Hare noted it would be the same percentage reimbursement and \$1-2 million is a conservative estimate for remediation of PCBs if they are found.

Mr. Topping noted that the building reviewed tonight has about a 40% larger capacity than the smaller school previously presented, but the cost only went up about 25%. Ms. O'Hare reviewed they had found the sweet spots, which was why 530 students was the target.

Ms. Pelletier wondered if the JCJ people knew of any school projects where the renovation figures exceed the build new figures by \$8 million and the state approved the renovation. Ms. O'Hare did not know of any projects like that off the top of her head, however this is a bit different because the state asked for the renovation figures as the Historical Society is trying to block a new build, so they might be more willing to approve a renovation even though the cost is much higher than a new build.

Mr. Stewart wondered if the Historical Society would be happy with this type of renovation. Mr. Hoagland felt they seemed fairly okay with the idea of this plan when last discussed.

Mr. Shanley noted that the plan may be less expensive if done at another location. Mr. Stewart wanted the figures for a new location, namely Verplanck. Mr. Hoagland stated a new build would be virtually the same, but a renovation plan at a different building would differ. Mr. Stewart wondered if we could get the estimate on that at the same time the state is reviewing the new verses renovate figures on Washington.

Mr. Strong felt we would not be able to sell the higher cost of a renovation for Washington. Mr. Stewart agreed, and felt the Washington project should be scratched. Ms. Pelletier wanted to hold her decision on that until we heard back from the state. Ms. O'Hare wondered if the Historical Society might come forth with any grants for the project, since they are the ones blocking a new build. Mr. Shanley stated in the past, the most a grant from them has been is approximately \$100,000. Ms. O'Hare also reviewed that the state is likely to reduce some of their funding if there are grants anyway.

Several committee members wanted to get a guestimate on figures for Verplanck. Mr. Stewart noticed that the figures seen previously for Robertson were not for the larger, 530 student schools and should be revised. Mr. Shanley noted that in November the Superintendent will present the demographic enrollment information and the Board of Education would make the determination on that.

Mr. Stewart felt that it would be critical to highlight the cost savings over 30 years of having fewer schools, including lowered maintenance and utilities. Mr. Shanley added the lack of need for massive capital investments would also be a savings.

Ms. Pelletier wondered if this would be the last meeting before the November elections, and if so she felt a recommendation should be made to the Board of Education. Mr. Murphy agreed. It was decided the committee would have one more meeting prior to the election.

Mr. Topping wondered, since he will no longer be on the Board of Directors after the election, if he would be allowed to remain on the committee. Discussion centered around having people on the committee that have been present and understand the situation. Mr. Shanley stated he would have Ryan Barry investigate this and noted both Boards would have to be in agreement. Ms. Pelletier noted that there has been precedent on the Board of Directors for committee members to remain in effect when the party lines have changed, though not regarding former members of the Board.

The next meeting was set for October 30, 2013 at 6:30 pm in the Manchester Room at Town Hall.

Motion to adjourn. Murphy/Topping

10/0

Meeting adjourned 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

J. Doucette, Secretary
SMARTR Committee