

BLOOMFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

ADMINISTRATION & EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE

There was a regular meeting of the above referenced subcommittee held on Monday, December 2, 2013 at 6:30 p.m. in Conference Room #5, Bloomfield Town Hall, 800 Bloomfield Avenue, Bloomfield, CT.

Committee members present were: Councilors Rivers, Hypolite, DeLorenzo and Deputy Mayor Gamble

Also present were: Wayne Casper, Director of Facilities, Donald Harris, Chair of Board of Education, Philip K. Schenck, Town Manager and India Rodgers, Clerk of Council

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m.

Update on all School Building Committees

High School – Mr. Casper reported that he is still awaiting the final bill from Newfield Construction. The plaque has been ordered and will be installed once received. The glass block replacement and bathroom renovations have been completed.

Mr. Casper also informed the subcommittee and noted that all financial reports are preliminary at this time (pre-audit figures). The total budget referendum for all school renovation projects was \$94,000,000 for 5 schools, then reconfigured to 4 schools.

Bloomfield High School allocation for renovations was \$35,000,000. The total cost estimate for this project was approximately \$31,000,000. There was approximately \$6,000,000 in ineligible items for reimbursement from the State of Connecticut – Department of Education. However, most of these items included, but not limited to change orders, submission of original plans, certain items were not eligible.

Carmen Arace – Mr. Casper stated that this project has been 100% finalized. The budget for this project was approximately \$28,000,000. The total cost estimate for this building was \$27,917,821.20, with a difference of \$900,478. There was approximately \$2,000,000 in ineligibles.

Elementary Schools – Mr. Casper also presented the cost estimates and budgets for the two outstanding elementary schools:

Laurel – This project is also complete, however, there are a few remaining small bills for payment, i.e. – playground and plaque. The budget for this project was approximately \$17,014,800. The total cost estimate for this building was approximately \$13,783,000, with a difference of \$3,232,349. There was approximately \$3,820,220 in ineligibles.

Metacomet – The project is complete, however there are several small bills that need to be paid. The budget for this project was approximately \$12,837,100. The total cost estimate for this building was \$11,940,000, with a difference of \$895,570. There was approximately \$4,346,836 in ineligibles.

Mr. Philip K. Schenck, Jr., Town Manager stated that the town would bond any remaining balance once the State has fully reimbursed the town.

Councilor Hypolite inquired about reimbursement rates and timeframe from the State of Connecticut. He also stated that the town is still borrowing to cover renovation expenses until reimbursement is received from the state. It was dually noted that the town will continue to peak over the next three years for bonding, which will determine if a referendum for capital improvement projects for the town can be considered.

Mr. Casper stated that town has received a portion of the budgeted amount from the state in the form of payment requests throughout the course of the projects. Mr. Casper also referred to the 2005/2006 original facility report and study in determining space adjustments and ineligibles for the budget referendum. Once the final payment application is submitted, the state has six months to complete an audit. If they cannot complete the audit in the allotted timeframe, they must grant the municipality an option to conduct an independent audit. All of the building committees are in agreement with this process.

Mr. Casper informed the committee that the Laurel and Metacomet elementary schools won design awards for their architectural uniqueness. Both design awards were published in the American Schools and Universities magazine.

Councilor Rivers stated that the enrollment figures, space standards and the demand of attendance at magnet schools have impacted the reimbursement amount from the state.

Mr. Donald Harris, Chair of the Board of Education stated that there have been preliminary discussions to build an addendum to the Global Experience Magnet School (GEMS), which would be re-designed for grades K-12.

Mr. Casper also gave a brief update on the installation of generators for both elementary schools. It was recommended that both generators are housed on the rooftop of the schools. These generators were paid for by the Board of Education.

Administrative Report from the Town Manager

Mr. Philip K. Schenck, Jr., Town Manager reported to the subcommittee several updates in town government affairs:

- Old Farmer's Exchange Building – the notice for electrical service termination was received from CL&P; however CNG notice is still pending. The town was notified that the owner of this property and the railway have been in communication to switch land parcels, which would be an independent transaction among two real estate owners.
- The Town Council meeting scheduled for Monday, December 23, 2013 has been cancelled.
- The town is working with Bloomfield Early Learning Center (BELC) regarding issues with the June 30, 2013 audit. BELC neglected to go through the RFP process to obtain an auditor for their audit which is required under state statute. Mr. William Hogan, Director of Finance is assisting BELC to resolve this issue. Mr. Hogan also spoke with Blum & Shapiro regarding the Town's audit as they are the grant recipient for BELC. It was noted that the auditing agency is in agreement that a statement can be included to explain the issue with an audit of BELC.
- J.P. Vincent School – Museum Academy has changed their temporary location in going to MetLife. They are exploring other options for placement until school renovations are completed in August 2015.
- Town Administration is considering a possible retreat with the Council in January 2014.
- The planning department is compiling a list of town owned properties that will be categorized by type. The town is also adopting a policy on the disposal of property.

Mr. Harris stated that since the schools have been renovated and the closing process has begun, he has recommended to the chair of the Administration & Education subcommittee to utilize future meetings to the sharing of information and open communication with the Council and the Board of Education.

Discussion regarding Term of Appointments for Boards & Commissions

This item was referred from the last Council meeting to discuss a uniform term of appointment for boards and commissions. Councilor Rivers suggested that this uniform appointment should be 4 year terms. However, there are various boards and commissions by either town ordinance or state statute must serve the time allotted for those respective groups.

Mr. Schenck has requested a copy of previous minutes for review to determine if the Council voted for this change in the past or if it was just a recommendation.

Adjournment

It was moved by Councilor Gamble, seconded by Councilor DeLorenzo and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 p.m.