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MEETING MINUTES

Hancock Central School District – Capital Project

FACILITIES COMMITTEE PRE-REF KICKOFF MEETING

District Office

February 11, 2014

3:00 PM

I. Thanks / Introductions / Sign In

A. District Representatives – Mr. Terry Dougherty, superintendent, Scott MacDowall, business official, Frank Seely, superintendent of buildings and grounds
B. Project Architect – Highland Associates, David Gilmore
C. Construction Manager – Lend Lease, Bill Connor
D. Attendees – See attached sheet. Superintendent Dougherty welcomed everyone and thanked them for their participation in this important process. For future communications process, attendees were asked to funnel their correspondence through Mr. Dougherty's office so that he is informed of all questions and concerns. The consultants will do the same.
E. Project Mission Statement/General Parameters. Attached are the general parameters that are to guide the committee leading up to its recommendation to the Board of Education. Mr. Dougherty indicated that the committee and its charge have the full support of the Board and they have been made aware of the concerns of the existing facilities. Major highlights of the committee's parameters include a zero tax impact recommendation, funding the project through state aid and existing capital reserve funds.

II. Recent Capital Project History

A. 2007 Capital Project. Lend Lease briefly reviewed the last major capital project that began in 2007. It was valued at approximately $7.5 million dollars and addressed the highest of the priorities of the district at that time. The Hancock Board of Education was cognitive of the financial impacts to the community at that time as well, and therefore, not all needs were addressed. Some of the major highlights included the ES gymnasium, lobby, and classroom addition, athletic field improvements, MS/HS gymnasium abatement and new gym floor.
B. $100k Capital Outlay Projects. The District also recently completed one Capital Outlay project and has a second one in progress. Lend Lease and the District explained that the NY State Education Department (SED) now allows school districts to complete small, no greater than $100k projects. They are different than traditional capital projects because they must be completed in one year, they are paid for in one year and full aid is received the following year. These are relatively small, targeted scope of work type projects.
C. 2010 Five Year Building Condition Survey. Lend Lease reminded the committee members that every school district in New York State is required by SED to complete a five year building condition survey (BCS). The main purpose is for schools to be aware and have a roadmap of managing and maintaining their facilities in a fiscally prudent manner. Many of the items the committee will review have been identified on the most recent BCS completed in 2010. The difficult task for the committee will be to understand and then prioritize these items.

III. Capital Project Philosophy

A. Long Term Strategy

1. Multiple small projects more frequently vs. large single site improvements. Lend Lease reviewed the different perspectives school districts take in addressing their capital project infrastructure needs. Some prefer less disruption and therefore have larger projects less frequently. Others prefer to have more frequent but usually smaller and more manageable projects. Smaller districts have to consider financial capabilities, building aid, potential impact on the educational process, swing space needs, etc. in determining a project scope that works best for them. Each case is different. One reminder is that SED has recently begun to enforce their rule of not restarting the aid clock on a building for five years. This will be reviewed in more detail at a future meeting with Fiscal Advisors.
2. Infrastructure vs. program. The district committee will need to weigh the priorities of the building infrastructure with the changing needs of the educational program. Future meetings lead by building principals will be beneficial to the committee.
3. Merger Issues. Every district needs to understand the local climate of merger possibilities with neighboring districts. Mr. Dougherty noted that the district has had recent conversations with neighboring districts and the current focus is on shared services between districts.

B. Shifting Priorities

1. Personnel. Committee input often helps avoid designs that fit the preference of one particular person. School personnel like any other business changes over time so solutions should fit the need regardless of the instructor.
2. Mandates / Program / STEM. State mandates and education programs do evolve and change over time. It is important to be aware of the direction education is moving and to come up with solutions that will not be outdated in a couple of years. Again, district staff will be helpful to the committee in this regard in future meetings.
3. Infrastructure Failures. Inevitably, regardless of the high level of care the district maintenance staff provides, equipment and other infrastructure items fail unexpectedly. This can often abruptly change the needs and priorities of the district. Contingencies are important because the duration of school projects from start of planning to ribbon cutting often takes several years.
4. Energy. Commodity prices and technology breakthroughs can have an impact on the district's priorities involving its heating and power systems.
5. Security. With recent events around the country involving school violence, many districts have shifted their priorities toward school security. This will be a topic that the committee will review in further detail at future meetings.

C. Financing – future meeting. The District has a financial advisor firm on board for the project. The firm is Fiscal Advisors who will be led by Ben Maslona. Ben will be invited to a future committee meeting to review and explain the intricate process of financing school capital projects.

IV. Potential Project Scope Items

A. Refer to List. A copy of the list was provided to all committee members. Another copy is attached to these minutes. David Gilmore from Highland Associates reviewed the list in detail. Dave and his team of designers will be back next week to further review existing conditions and how they may impact the priority list.

V. Schedule Outline

A. Overall Targeted Timeline. Lend Lease distributed a copy of the timeline previously reviewed with the Board of Education. Lend Lease explained the overall capital project process typically involved with school construction in New York State. A couple of highlights include the process where most of the design work does not take place until after a positive voter referendum. The reason it is done this way is to save districts the potential exorbitant design costs that may go to waste if the voters do not support the referendum. Lend Lease reminded members that each project needs to be submitted to SED for their review and approval before proceeding to the bid phase. This can take several months. SED tracks their progress on their website weekly. They currently are taking approximately 5-6 months to approve projects. Once approved, projects will need to be bid with a minimum of four prime contracts (general construction, HVAC, plumbing, and electric) according to NY State law. Contractors' bids will reflect the fact that they will provide labor receiving wages according to the prevailing wage rate set by NY State. Keeping to the overall timeline is important – it was prepared in anticipation of meeting optimal timeframes to accept bids in winter and for contractors to be ready to begin work in spring and take full advantage of the summer construction season while children are away.

B. Next Meetings. The committee tentatively agreed to the following meeting dates: February 26th, March 12th, March 26th, April 9th, and April 23rd. We will assess where we are at the end of each meeting to determine the number of meetings likely needed moving forward. Progress will determine the agenda for each subsequent meeting.

VI. Tour Facilities. It was agreed to postpone touring the facilities until the next meeting.

VII. Questions. Mr. Dougherty concluded the meeting with the following take aways:

A. Thank you for your participation in this important process
B. The District cannot reasonably afford the entire current list so the committee will need to be careful and thoughtful in its deliberations and eventual recommendations of project priorities.
C. The project recommendation needs to reflect being a zero impact project.
D. The goal is to protect the community's investment.
E. The second week of September is the initial goal to make a recommendation to the Board of Education.