

Minutes of the  
Gorham Randolph Shelburne Cooperative School District Building Committee

Tuesday, March 7, 2006

Family Resource Center

Board Room

Building Committee Present: Ben Mayerson, Craig Burcalow, Robert Demers, John Carpenter,  
Reed Leberman, Kathleen Kelley, Dennis Pednault, and Jean Tremblay

Administration Present: Pauline Plourde, Keith Parent, Dave Goyette

Call to Order by Ben Mayerson at 6:32 p.m.

Minutes: John Carpenter moved to accept the 2/21/06 minutes as read. Bob Demers seconded the motion. All in favor, motion passed. Dennis Pednault moved to accept the 2/28/06 minutes as read. Craig Burcalow seconded the motion. All in favor, motion passed.

School District Meeting. The next meeting will be Wednesday at the School District Meeting March 15 at 7 pm in the Gym. The Facilities Committee has discussed the process that will be followed during the meeting. Ben will present the PowerPoint presentation for the Building Committee before the Warrant #8 vote. Our question and answer bulletin will be mailed tomorrow. The Supervisors of The Checklist will be collecting the completed questionnaires from attendees at the voting table for each town. We will have 250 extra questionnaires available for those who forgot to bring theirs. Pauline will bring about 100 additional bulletins with her to the meeting. The questionnaires are also on the web site.

Evaluation of Proposals: Ben summarized that based on feedback he has received from Committee members, the Committee would like to move forward with awarding a contract for

engineering analysis of the GMHS building. Dennis said he knew of a contactor who did not respond to our request for proposals, but does provide consulting services to determine, where a building does not meet code.

Dennis Pednault left the meeting at 6:55pm.

John Carpenter said that he thought HKT and Banwell proposals included an analysis of the existing building in three components:

- o Civil and structural
- o Electrical
- o Architectural integrity

Banwell is in New Hampshire and Vermont and HKT is in Massachusetts.

Reed suggested that if we do the engineering analysis before we get a coach on board we must do all of the specification for the engineering analysis ourselves. He suggested that we award the coaching contract at the same time as we move forward with selecting a firm to do the engineering analysis. John Carpenter said that if we have an unfavorable vote at School District Meeting then we would find we do not have the money or the need for a coach.

Ben suggested that we invite up to three firms to our next meeting, which will be 3 hours long, 45 minutes with each representative, and some time to process their proposal. Pauline suggested that we develop questions to be asked at these meeting to find out what each meant by "engineering

analysis." Jean suggested as we invite these vendors to send us more of a layout of how they will proceed with the engineering analysis of the GMHS.

Ben suggested that to reach a consensus on which direction to move, each present Committee member would have five minutes to express their opinions before we make a decision. Craig warned that if we move this way without a coach and public input it may appear we are going in one direction to "renovate the building" and not considering alternatives. After much discussion we all agreed that we must know whether the GMHS is structurally sound no matter which direction we choose.

Bob Demers said he felt renovation should always be a strong consideration. The Committee agreed. Ben reminded that it was our charge to consider all three options, before making a recommendation to the School Board.

Jean Tremblay summarized his opinion that we need a comprehensive engineering analysis of GMHS to determine if it is salvageable and which parts. He would like to wait to hire a coach until after the vote next week, but he agrees a coach could be instrumental in presenting viable options to voters at the next School District Meeting.

Reed said we need clear concise goals as we move forward and the consultant will help us lay those out. He is willing to support hiring an engineering analysis of GMHS, because we all know it is in tough shape. There have been smart dedicated people on the previous building committees, but they did not present a clear picture to the voters in the past and so we need a coach to help us layout all of the options to voters. Reed expressed concern that the closing of the Pulp mill might have an impact next week, on the vote.

John Carpenter's opinion was that we need to move forward ASAP on the engineering study of GMHS. We need to have all of the options out on the table for the voters to choose. We need

"knows" about the buildings more than we need coaching right now.

Craig Burcalow said we need to know what we are dealing with in GMHS. We need a coach to help us through these decisions and we may need one to help with the criteria for the engineering analysis contract. If some firm could provide both engineering analysis and coaching as we go through this next year of deciding whether to repair, replace, or renovate the GMHS, we would be better off. "We need clarity and I am lost in all of the reports we have received from past studies" Craig said.

Kathleen Kelley said we need both the coaching and the engineering analysis. The coaching will take this question out of the political and into the practical solution arena. We could interview the two or three vendors that can provide this study now and at the same time find a coach. Clearly two or three vendors that have responded to our request have the experience to do this work. We need the coach to help us talk with the voters about their desires and to find out what the community can handle in terms of investment in school buildings. Two of the vendors mentioned educational programming as the first issue that must be looked at, before engineering analysis. The coach could help us specify that as well. The mill closure may exert pressure to find a "cheaper" solution, but not necessarily the best solution.

Dave Goyette said it is up to the School Board where we go next in the process. We know a lot about what is wrong with the building. We know where the codes have changed over the years. We must improve the ventilation and we must upgrade the roof. He felt the best part of the

building is the 1969 and center core. He didn't think we will get much by reconfiguring those sections in terms of usable space and the footprint of this lot leaves a lot to be desired.

Keith felt the center core as it exists does not meet any sq. footage for educational delivery space. The 1969 space can service part of our needs, but it too has issues.

We took a straw vote on how to proceed. Five voted for hiring a project coach and an engineering firm and one voted for just an engineering firm.

Pauline said all consultants responding to our request know we need a program coach and many of them responded to that. Pauline pointed out that both she and Keith have worked with some of the firms that responded to our request.

Reed said next week if warrant #8 is voted down, given the \$14,000 we have for this fiscal year, what we should spend it on. Is this our decision or the Cooperative Board's? The group responded that it is the Board's decision based on our recommendation.

Jean and John suggested at this time we look at the proposals. After some discussion it was decided to invite HKT and Banwell to our March 21 meeting. Committee members are encouraged to send questions for these candidates to Ben and Pauline who will compile them into a list.

Ben suggested that we structure the hour with the firm(s) to have time for them to make a statement, then give each member of the Committee a few minutes to ask a couple of questions, time for follow-up, and then a closing statement. To that end Ben suggested that each member take the opportunity to further review Banwell and HKT's package, if they need more time and formulate a couple of questions. It is important that the same questions be asked to each of the firms, so that we can try to get an apple-to-apple comparison.

Ben thanked the Committee members for their dedication to this very hard work.

- Next meeting will be March 21, 2006 at 6:00 p.m.

Bob Demers moved to adjourn the meeting, John Carpenter seconded the motion. All Agreed.

Sincerely presented,

Kathleen Kelley

bwm

