

MINUTES OF FACILITIES
COMMITTEE MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Stamford, Connecticut
January 30, 2008

The Facilities Committee Meeting of the Board of Education was held on January 30, 2008 at the Government Center, 888 Washington Boulevard. The meeting was called to order at 6:17 p.m. by Mr. Rubino, Chairperson, with the following Committee members present: Mr. Freedman, Ms. McManus (arrived at 6:38 pm), Ms. Nabel, and Mr. Rubino. Also in attendance: Mr. King, Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak, Dr. Starr, Mr. Dunn, Ms. Thessin, and Mr. Barbarotta.

Mr. Barbarotta gave an update on the arrangements to use the schools on Primary Day. He reported that he has been working with Alice Fortunato and Lucy Corelli from the Registrars Office. Equipment will be brought in on Friday afternoon and Saturday morning. Arrangements have been made at some schools for students to have lunch in their classroom. There will be a police officer assigned to each school. Cost for police and custodial overtime will be paid for by the Registrars Office. Dr. Starr noted that the Superintendent's Network has been flooded with e-mails about the lack of notification to school districts. Mr. Barbarotta stated that he has been working with principals to get information to the parents.

Mr. Barbarotta distributed a list of the modulars currently in use at various schools and indicated that there are no plans to tear down any modulars. There is maintenance required and this is taken care of as needed. Dr. Starr indicated that we need to have a comprehensive needs audit completed. Mr. Freedman asked if the Redistricting Committee should act to remove children from the school plan to demolish the modulars. Dr. Starr stated no.

Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak arrived at 6:25 p.m.

Mr. Barbarotta indicated that some modulars are in better shape than some of the schools. Ms. Nabel inquired about the capacity numbers and if they include the modulars. Mr. Barbarotta responded that the students in the modular classrooms are included in the capacity numbers. She asked if there was money to demolish the modulars and Mr. Barbarotta responded no. She then asked if the demolish of modulars would trigger the need for more redistricting and Mr. Barbarotta responded yes.

Dr. Starr asked which modulars were 15 years or older and Mr. Barbarotta indicated that there were 6 at Roxbury and 2 at Stillmeadow that fell into this category. He also noted that they are all maintained and are in usable condition and felt that as long as they are maintained they can be used past 20 years. Mr. Rubino asked for detailed knowledge of the usage and what increase it would be to the school if they were demolished. Mr. Barbarotta noted that it is not cost effective to move modulars. Mr. Freedman stated that it is cheaper to repair the modulars rather than move them. Mr. Barbarotta indicated that a modular is approximately 900 sq. ft. which is comparable to a classroom and that they all have air conditioning.

Mr. Rubino asked what the plans were for the modulars at Rippowam and Mr. Barbarotta responded that \$1M had been put into the Capital Budget to remove and relocate them. However, the \$1M was taken out of the Capital Budget by the Planning Board. Mr. Barbarotta explained that normally when you consider modulars we use a 3 year lease which is about \$30,000 per year and is usually what we use as an estimate for temporary space. The cost is approximately \$200.00 per sq. ft. or \$200,000 per room to build permanent space. Dr. Starr asked if the cost is in our budget to remove. Mr. Barbarotta responded no and the cost to remove and dispose the Rippowam modulars is approximately \$200,000; however there is money from AITE, but the City now owns these modulars. Lou Casolo is suppose to put a bid out to sell the modulars. Mr. Rubino asked for the balance in the AITE account and Mr. Barbarotta stated that it is close to nothing and it would cost \$1M to move and reinstall the modulars.

Mr. King and Ms. McManus arrived at the meeting at 6:38 p.m.

Under Current Projects, Mr. Barbarotta reported that they are trying to close out AITE & Stamford High School and that Westhill High School has been closed out. There have been several grievances filed by AITE teachers regarding an IT problem in a classroom. Parts have been ordered and this is being resolved. Mr. Gross has reported to Mr. Barbarotta that there have been some climate control issues. Mr. Dunn noted that Michael Pensiero from Technology has been at AITE to work with Mr. Gross on the IT issue. He also reported that with respect to Stamford High School, there is \$1.4M owed to the contractor and they are trying to get a meeting with the attorney. He also noted that with respect to AITE's climate control and electrical issues, that Fusco fired the original contractor. This has been an ongoing problem with the Engineering Department and it is costing us real money every day.

Mr. Barbarotta reported that on the Environmental Magnet project, that there is \$2.8M in the Capital Budget to complete the project and he has concerns that people are not aware that this is part of the \$5.8M. He also expressed concern about other facilities capital expenses and to keep money for projects such as the roof at Turn of River. He also noted that there was \$3.7M QZAB money approved by the state that is interest free. The Planning Board also took this out of the budget. All agreed it is important to have these funds restored.

Mr. Barbarotta reported on the Environmental Magnet School and indicated that the project is on schedule. There will be a meeting with Mike Freimuth and the Clairol staff next week about the walking access. Mr. Barbarotta will also attend this meeting. There was discussion about access from Seaside Avenue and Dr. Starr indicated he has had a conversation with the Sylvan Knoll Association and will schedule another one. There are security and liability issues. Ms. Thessin reported that she has been meeting monthly with Mr. Dunn, Mr. Barbarotta, Mr. Casolo, and Mr. Tromontozzi regarding the construction and currently the project is on track and there have been no extra expenses or problems. They are currently picking the signage. She also noted that the City Grants Department has started the process for reimbursement and that September is the deadline to file and if the numbers change in the next couple of months we can file again in November. The form is an ED049R which is a revision to the original application. Dr. Starr recommended to Chair Rubino that we add the Environmental Magnet School as a monthly agenda item and have Mr. Casolo and Mr. Tromontozzi in attendance at future Facility Committee meetings to give updates.

Mr. Rubino indicated that he needs to respond to the Board of Finance's request about the future plans for facilities usage and asked if there are any other changes besides the modulars and Toquam. Ms. McManus asked if he could respond with the Facilities Usage report which we should have soon. She also suggested including the enrollment at each level out 10 years with the number of seats. Mr. Barbarotta noted that the RFP for Facilities Usage has been done and will have information for the next meeting.

Mr. Barbarotta reported that he met with Jerry Pia regarding building usage and the program being run at Stark. He also stated that it is time to move forward with other organizations and make them accountable from July 1, 2008 and going forward. He noted that when Parks & Recreation use our buildings the majority of users are outside vendors who are making money. The Parks & Recreation Department collects the money from the vendors, advertise the program in the Parks & Recreation seasonal book and keep 20% of the money collected and returns 80% of the money back to the vendor. Our recommendation would be that the Board of Education keeps 50% of the 20% fee that Parks & Recreation currently retains. The new policy addresses all these concerns and will now meet with Ben Barnes, Mickey Docimo, and Laurie Albano to review. The majority of money is going to the organizations using the facilities. Ms. McManus indicated that it is clear that it would not be easy to collect past debt prior to July 1, 2007. Mr. Dunn noted that Mr. Barbarotta is trying to get a payment plan with each of the user groups using Board of Education fields or buildings. The issue with Lisa Reynolds is that the City does not want \$140,000 as a non-collectible debt for Parks & Recreation on the City books. Auditors have recognized that this has not been collected, but now it should stay current.

Facilities Committee Meeting

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Ms. Nabel moved, seconded by Ms. McManus to adjourn the meeting at 7:10 p.m. with the following Committee members voting in favor: Mr. Freedman, Ms. McManus, Ms. Nabel, and Mr. Rubino.

Joshua P. Starr, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools
Executive Officer