

Tuesday, March 1, 2022

MINUTES OF THE FACILITIES COMMITTEE OF THE BRIDGEPORT BOARD OF EDUCATION, held March 1, 2022, at Central High School, 1 Lincoln Boulevard, Bridgeport, Connecticut.

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

Committee members present were Chair John Weldon, Michael Maccarone and Albert Benejan*. Board member Joe Sokolovic was present. Mr. Benejan arrived subsequently in-person as noted.

(*remote participation)

Superintendent Michael J. Testani was present.

Mr. Benejan moved approval of the minutes of the meeting of October 5, 2021. The motion was seconded by Mr. Maccarone and unanimously approved.

The next agenda item was on the heating system at Columbus School. Mr. Weldon said there had been some unfavorable press about an incident that occurred.

Jorge Garcia reported on January 17th a boiler was shut down following a visit from a state inspector. This left one boiler in the building. On January 24th, there was a report of the building being cold; the boiler was reset at 7:34 a.m. and the heat was restored. He indicated that outside of that there have been only some minimal work orders. He said there have been some complaints of cold rooms; ventilators have been ordered for a cluster of three classrooms. He described how temperature readings can vary depending on the device used. He said head custodians use digital

temperature guns to assess temperatures.

Mr. Benejan arrived at the meeting in person.

Mr. Garcia said since the January incident, the second boiler has been repaired and both boilers are operating.

Supt. Testani said he received an e-mail from the Columbus principal at 7:39 a.m. that indicated teachers said the rooms were freezing. Photos were sent over an hour before school begins of thermometers at 56.8 degrees and 59 degrees. He said the custodian informed him that it would take an hour to get to 62 degrees. By 9:30, the temperatures were in the high 60s. He said he spoke to the teachers' union immediately about the situation. He said the union was not happy about the newspaper article, which was based on an anonymous teacher commenting.

Mr. Garcia said we have started to unify controls throughout the district. Once the systems are calibrated, he said, we will be able to see things remotely, which will include alarms, alerts, and messages.

In response to a question, Mr. Garcia said the priority will be on the larger schools and then we will work our way down.

Supt. Testani said one of the biggest cost-savings in past construction projects has been HVAC, which is unfortunate because it falls upon the facilities department to fix problems. He said he wished Mr. Zirkel has been included in the planning process of the buildings. He said Central High has an undersized cooling system, which means it will fail a lot sooner than later. Mr. Garcia said there will be renewals of chillers at Fairchild Wheeler and the JFK Campus this summer.

The next agenda item was on the Stewardship Report. Mr. Garcia said it gives a sense of what the facilities department does and provides a facilities profile. He said it breaks down concerns and heartaches of the department, along with initiatives that are underway.

Mr. Garcia said he did not have an electronic version available to e-mail to the committee members. Mr. Weldon suggested tabling the item until the next meeting so the members could have it in advance.

The next agenda item was a request for authorization to expend funds for roofs at Curiale School and the Nutrition Center.

Mr. Garcia said the state requires a committee-level presentation on the expenditure of the city's match. He said Curiale has a 78 percent reimbursement rate and the Nutrition Center is 58 percent. The city has bonded the money and is holding the money currently. He said a motion from the board was needed to pursue the projects.

Mr. Weldon said the state reimburses different types of projects at different percentage levels. The city pays the full amount up front and when the projects are completed, the state reimburses the city for the indicated percentage of the project.

Mr. Benejan moved *"to expend up to \$378,000 to replace the Curiale School roof and up to \$540,000 to replace the Nutrition Center roof."* The motion was seconded by Mr. Maccarone and unanimously approved.

Mr. Garcia said after board approval, the application and the

bidding process will begin.

Mr. Garcia said there was an internal estimate of the cost. Mr. Weldon said he has suggested the department retain an estimator for this type of work such as from an engineering firm.

Mr. Garcia said estimators are used on larger projects. He said an engineer is needed when engaging in bid specifications for HVAC.

Supt. Testani noted the low bidder on the Bassick demolition project was brought in for an interview and they provided answers that were concerning. He said a lot was learned by the experience in the Central High renovation, which Mr. Garcia was not involved in.

Mr. Benejan moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Maccarone and unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John McLeod

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