

Monday, June 1, 2020

MINUTES OF THE FACILITIES & SECURITY COMMITTEE  
OF THE BRIDGEPORT BOARD OF EDUCATION, held  
June 1, 2020, by video and telephone conference,  
Bridgeport, Connecticut.

The meeting was called to order at 5:02 p.m.

Committee members present were Chair Hernan Illingworth and Albert Benejan. Board member Joseph Sokolovic was present. Committee member Sybil Allen joined subsequently as noted.

Acting Superintendent Michael J. Testani was present.

Mr. Benejan moved approval of the minutes of the meeting of May 4, 2020. The motion was seconded by Mr. Illingworth and unanimously approved.

The next agenda item was the security report. Mr. Testani said he speaks pretty much on a daily basis to Lt. Grech.

Ms. Allen joined the meeting.

Mr. Testani said security was deployed at all the feeding sites during the closure. He said last week administrators and clerical staff have returned to the buildings for distribution of donated book packs, packet distribution, return of devices, and picking up of student belongings. The security guards have had their best attendance rate in school security history.

Mr. Testani said he reached out to labor relations for a

possible amendment to the NAGE contract for security officers to make the work year coincide with the school year, which would prohibit vacation days while school is in session.

Mr. Testani said security and food and nutrition have gone way beyond the call of duty in this since the closure. Mr. Illingworth said they went over and beyond.

In response to a question, Mr. Testani said all high school graduation plans have to be submitted to Lt. Grech for approval in regards to being able to deploy SROs and school security to maintain proper traffic flow and health and safety.

Mr. Testani said the SROs have done an amazing job, including delivering packets to families that could not get to schools and delivered masks to staff.

Robert Hammond reported on facilities. He said materials and equipment are being prepared for summer cleaning and the Lighthouse summer program. He said there will be a focus on procuring PPE and storing PPE and gallon-sized sanitizers that will be stationed throughout the schools.

Mr. Hammond said he has spoken about staffing with Mr. Illingworth and the superintendent. It is still being assessed.

Mr. Hammond said the closure presented a great opportunity to do some projects in the schools that could not be done during the school year. The work on student bathrooms in Read School will start soon. Alan Wallack said state permission is needed to go out to bid for the Marin School roof.

Mr. Wallack said there are six unused, underground gas

storage tanks at schools that are required to be removed and he is working on a grant to do that. He said Mr. Flatto is going to require the board to pay for the removal, which should come in under \$100,000.

Mr. Testani said once final pricing is received he will approach the city about supporting financially because it should be their responsibility to help us out. Mr. Wallack said the state is going to pay about 80 percent of the cost. He said the city has already paid for Dunbar, Classical Studies and Curiale.

Mr. Hammond said the Tisdale external HVAC chiller unit is aging and has had problems. He said with the city's help he has rented a chiller to keep the building cool through September.

Mr. Hammond said over a million dollars in capital money has been provided to replace an undersized chiller at Batalla School.

In response to a question, Mr. Hammond said the typical warranty on HVAC components range from one to five years, with the realistic lifespan ten to fifteen years. He said recent city funding has gone to updating elevators.

Mr. Testani said to the city's credit they did not hesitate for support with Batalla and Tisdale's chillers.

Mr. Hammond said an old carpet is being removed from Blackham School and new window air-conditioning units have been purchased for the school.

Mr. Sokolovic said he was concerned about the opening of Lighthouse at a time when the district cannot put students in

the buildings. Mr. Testani said Lighthouse had to submit their plan to the state for approval, including meeting health and safety precautions. They were also approved for a waiver on the size of some groups.

Mr. Testani said he expressed concern to Ms. Papa and he will have further conversations with her. He said the governor is prepared to issue an order to allow these programs to run in school buildings. He said the best approach is to cooperate.

Mr. Testani said he would caution Ms. Papa that he would like to limit the number of kids at each site, particularly where permission has been received to have eight groups of ten at some schools. He said he didn't think the program would be able to afford a nurse at twenty sites.

Mr. Testani said he did not think it was a good idea to run basketball camps in the summer indoors – although skill-building would be okay, games would not be safe due to the regulations. He said the security officers who run the camps have not submitted safety plans to him, let alone to the appropriate state departments. He said in the past the camps were insured by the board for injury.

Mr. Testani said the majority of the Lighthouse camps will involve outdoor activities, with limited indoor usage.

Mr. Illingworth said he was concerned about the size of the proposed Lighthouse groups. Mr. Testani said they were approved for twenty sites and half the number of kids they typically service. He said he would express the view to Ms. Papa that group sizes be limited to thirty at each site.

Mr. Sokolovic said the use of the buildings will require

additional cleaning and more work for our staff. Mr. Testani said staff will not be available during the school day to maintain bathrooms, but Ms. Papa said she is hiring staff to wipe down bathrooms. He said Lighthouse would be responsible for the district paying overtime to sanitize spaces used at the end of the day.

Mr. Testani said he suggested the programs be cancelled for the day if there is threat of rain. He said there would be no district transportation involved or use of the swimming pools.

In response to a question, Mr. Testani said Ms. Papa indicated she has plenty of adult staff and must follow the ratio of ten children per adult, with no outside visitors allowed.

In response to a question, Mr. Testani said he believed Ms. Papa was trying to accommodate families who go back to work first for participation in the program.

Mr. Illingworth asked that Mr. Testani express our concerns to Ms. Papa regarding the numbers.

In response to a question, Mr. Testani said the requirement for every summer camp is that there has to be a nurse onsite and temperatures have to be checked. Anyone exhibiting symptoms has to be sent home immediately. It is possible some sites would have to be shut down in certain circumstances.

Ms.. Allen moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Illingworth and unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John McLeod

*Approved by the committee on July 23, 2020*