

Tuesday, May 7, 2019

MINUTES OF THE FACILITIES COMMITTEE OF THE
BRIDGEPORT BOARD OF EDUCATION, held May 7, 2019,
at Bridgeport City Hall, 45 Lyon Terrace, Bridgeport,
Connecticut.

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m.

Committee members present were Chair Hernan Illingworth, Maria Pereira and Sybil Allen. Committee member John Weldon arrived subsequently as noted.

Ms. Allen moved approval of the minutes of April 1, 2019. The motion was seconded by Ms. Pereira and unanimously approved.

The next agenda item was on the Fairchild Wheeler campus repair.

Robert Hammond distributed a document.

Nick Masciangelo, director of construction management services for the city, said seven of the eight items were one hundred percent completed. The remaining issue is the IT situation. He said a company representative has been out to the building. There should be an answer this week from the manufacturer. He said the company was proposing to do the work themselves, while he proposed having the work done in-house. He said it was a matter of making sure we're not voiding any warranties and totally resolving the situation.

Jeffrey Postolowski, IT director, asked for an estimated completion date because the weather is getting warmer. Mr. Masciangelo said the entire process should take about five

to ten days, probably a bit longer if done in-house.

In response to a question, Mr. Postolowski said he was okay with that.

In response to a question, Mr. Masciangelo said if it was done in-house there would be some overtime work on weekends to get it done. He said he believed the costs would be covered by capital funds. Ms. Pereira noted it was very important and expensive equipment. Mr. Masciangelo said sometimes in the long run for the morale of the team it is better to let the in-house employees do it.

Ms/ Pereira said morale and overtime were not important, but the major and expensive equipment was the most important thing. Mr. Masciangelo said it was possible the work could be done faster in-house than by the manufacturer depending on schedules.

Mr. Postolowski said the cost of the equipment for one room would be about \$200,000.

Mr. Masciangelo said he would prefer to have the company do the work, although a grievance was possible. Mr. Illingworth said the details of such a grievance was a moot point.

Mr. Illingworth asked that Mr. Masciangelo forward the proposal received from the company to Mr. Wallack or Mr. Hammond for transmission to the board.

Mr. Postolowski asked that the vendor do the NDF first before proceeding to other work. Mr. Masciangelo said that sounded plausible and would coordinate with Mr. Postolowski and Rick Paz.

John Ricci, director of public facilities, said he can guarantee outside sources would be used for the necessary work. Ms. Allen said she had some concerns if the work was done in-house it might need to be done again.

Ms. Pereira said the big issue for her was the roof. Mr. Hammond said Mr. Hedman is trying to get the contractor to come out to reassess what was done on the roof. He said there have not been any leaks since the work was done. Mr. Hammond said the district's roofer looked at the roof and there have been no leaks since weep holes were cleaned.

Ms. Pereira said we can't officially say the problem has been resolved. Mr. Masciangelo noted the heavy rains in the past month and that there have been no issues since the corrections were made. He said the roof's warranty comes from the manufacturer, not the installer.

In response to a question, Mr. Ricci said asking for longer warranties on installation would lead to higher prices.

In response to a question, Mr. Masciangelo said the tiles around a shifted column enclosures have been repaired. He said it is believed the problem was created by the use of a cleaning machine. He said the structure is more than sound.

Ms. Pereira moved *"to table discussion and possible action on naming of the Harding High School music wing."* The motion was seconded by Ms. Allen and unanimously approved.

The next agenda item was on school gardens. Mr. Illingworth noted the curriculum side of the matter would be handled by the Teaching & learning Committee.

Assistant Superintendent Dr. Christiana Otuwa said the decision was made to gather a group with Ms Pereira to discuss the school gardens.

Mr. Weldon arrived at the meeting.

Angela Bhushan, director of science, said some principals responded to a survey that they wanted a garden, but did not make a selection as to the type. She said principals were currently preoccupied with testing.

Dr. Otuwa said she would circulate the garden list to principals tomorrow.

Dr. Joseph Raiola, Bassick principal, said a small teaching staff will work with the garden. He said the beds are being rebuilt by the construction program with lumber stored in the basement.

Ms. Pereira said the Harding garden is coming along very well. A fence has been ordered for the garden.

Ms. Pereira said Dr. Johnson approved her conducting a meeting of the contact people for the best seven school gardens. Among the topics to be discussed are best practices, a possible policy and how to keep the gardens maintained in the summer.

The next agenda item was on the board requesting full funding support from the city to make the old Harding High into swing space for Bassick High School.

Ms. Pereira moved that "*the board request the City of*

Bridgeport/City Council to bond for \$2.5 million to bring the original Harding up to standard to accept Bassick High students for the fall of 2021.”

Mr. Hammond reported a recent break-in at the old Harding High led to broken glass in library showcases, paint splatters, an internal window and damage from fire extinguishers. He described where the entry was made and the confusion about the dispatch of the police when the alarm went off.

Mr. Ricci said the damage could be taken care of in the \$2.5 million estimate to make the old Harding suitable for use. He said when the board approves the use of the building he can go back to his capital budget and amend it to get the \$2.5 million in place.

Mr. Masciangelo said the work on the new Bassick would commence in the summer of 2020.

Ms. Pereira noted there was some City Council opposition to bonding for \$2.5 million to be paid back over twenty years without an end use for the old Harding building.

Ms. Allen seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

The next agenda item was on the end use of the original Warren Harding High School building. Mr. Illingworth said the district was in dire need of a swing space. He said he believed the \$2.5 million would only be a band-aid for the Harding building. He suggested going to the state to request funding for a renovation of the building. He noted the board in effect said the building was not good enough for the former Harding students, which led to a new Harding High

being built.

Mr. Wallack said another building project could be started for the former Harding. He said the state would likely look favorably on the request because it would eliminate an 1894 building being used by Classical Studies.

Ms. Pereira said the regional special education program was proposed for the old Harding High School, which would have to include ADA improvements.

Mr. Masciangelo said the biggest obstacle would be creating a separate area for the special needs students from the rest of their peers. He said the state would not allow that to happen.

Mr. Wallack said the special education students that would be sent to the school from other districts would include students who require proper settings.

Mr. Ricci said if we don't have a swing space, we don't have a Bassick project. He said the discussion about the eventual end use of the old Harding could take place during or after the utilization of the building as a swing space for Bassick.

Mr. Weldon said there were a lot of issues that don't have to be crammed into the current discussion.

Mr. Weldon moved *"to recommend to the Board of Education that it commit to having a long-term end use of the original Warren Harding High School building beyond its use as a swing space as it relates to the Bassick project."* The motion was seconded by Ms. Pereira and unanimously approved.

The next agenda item was on the naming of the Harding

High School music wing.

Dane Brown, principal of Harding, described the school committee, which included teachers, community representatives and students. that was convened to study the issue. He said a link was posted on the website to the matter for the community and the staff. There were four meetings held: February 7, February 16, March 14, March 21.

Mr. Brown said the four names developed by the committee(in reverse order) were Harding Fame Academy, Fine Arts and Music Entertainment Academy; Robert Nesta Marley Performing Arts Center;, Duke Ellington Performing Arts Center, and Sheena Graham Performing Art Center. He said the committee was unanimously in recommending the last one.

Ms. Pereira moved *"to approve naming of the Harding music wing as the Sheena Graham Performing Arts Center."* The motion was seconded by Ms. Allen.

Mr. Illingworth said his only concern was naming it after someone that has not even retired yet. He said that had to be first time this has been done. Ms. Pereira noted the Central gym floor was named after an active coach. Mr. Illingworth said he would not oppose the proposal.

Ms. Allen and Ms. Pereira, a Harding graduate, said they had no concerns. Ms. Allen said she believed Ms. Graham deserves it. She said Ms. Graham was very active in the community and her church.

Ms. Pereira noted none of the other suggested names have a direct connection to Harding. She said she loved that

Cesar Batalla and Geraldine Johnson, who had connections to the community, had schools named after them.

Mr. Weldon said because Ms. Graham is current and recently was honored as teacher of the year there is very little distance to look elsewhere for someone with a connection to Harding.

Asst. Superintendent Janet Brown-Clayton said the value of having students involved in the naming process would add to their memories of Ms. Graham. Ms. Allen said the ownership the students will take of the decision and their future children who may be Harding students will be meaningful.

Ms. Pereira said there had only been two Bridgeport teachers ever who were named state teacher of the year.

The motion was unanimously approved.

Ms. Pereira moved the meeting be adjourned. The motion was seconded by Ms. Allen and unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John McLeod