CONCORD SCHOOL DISTRICT
Committee Meeting Minutes

School Board Committee: Joint City Council/School Board
Date: August 21, 2009

Committee members present: Chris Casko, Chair, Jack Dunn, Eric Williams

School Board Members present: Kass Ardinger, Board President

City Council and City employees present: Tom Aspell, Allen Bennett, Jim Howard, Mayor Jim Bouley, Fred Keach, Fred Regan

Others present: Chris Rath, Superintendent, Matt Cashman, Director of Facilities & Planning, Michele Croteau, Business Administrator

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 a.m.

Matt Cashman reported on the process used for the search and selection of an architectural firm. It was noted that HMFH, the selected firm, specializes in K–12 public education facilities. As a result, it has experience with projects that presented similar challenges to those which will be faced in Concord. Mr. Cashman also indicated that he has received feedback expressing concern that HMFH is not a NH-based firm. Mr. Cashman pointed out that 40% - 45% of the architectural cost will actually go to support the work of two (2) NH-based firms that will be working directly with HMFH on this project. Those two firms are Rist-Frost Shumway of Laconia and Nobis Engineering of Concord.

Mr. Cashman distributed a projected work schedule. He stressed the importance of the upcoming meeting on September 2nd to be held at the High School auditorium and extended an invitation for all to attend. The meeting will start at 6:15 p.m. with an informal opportunity for the public to meet the architects of HMFH. A formal presentation will follow at 7:00 p.m., with a question-and-answer session at the end of the presentation. A discussion ensued regarding the School District’s intent to move forward with Task Force III, which will be charged with looking at possible alternative uses of school facilities vacated as part of the consolidation process. There is a strong desire among both School and City officials to work together to address the overall needs of the Community during this entire school consolidation process.

Tom Aspell noted that the City runs its projects through the same process required for all commercial projects.
Michele Croteau presented information regarding the $800,000 Planning Bond proposed to finance the architectural work through the schematic design. If the Board authorizes a Planning Bond, the District will pursue short term financing via Bond Anticipation Notes (BANs). BANs can be carried for a period of up to 5 years before they must either be paid off by the District or refinanced via a Bond issue. During the BAN period, the District pays interest only on the amount borrowed. Utilizing BANs allows the District to roll the $800,000 into a larger Bond issue when the construction plan has been identified at the completion of the schematic design process. The total financial plan encompasses the elementary facility project that addresses facility needs at Kimball and Conant Schools; includes an additional new facility on the Broken Ground School site and the renovation of Dewey School for administrative use; plus the HVAC renovation at Rundlett Middle School for a total financial commitment estimated at $60,000,000. State Building Aid is anticipated on these projects.

Alternative financing sources were then presented by Jack Dunn. He discussed P3 options (Private, Public, Partnerships) and the project delivery models of Design-Build and Design-Build-Finance with a lease-buyback scenario. He shared that it was determined that although the District would be eligible for Building Aid in a P3 structure, in the case of a lease-buyback scenario, the Building Aid payments would begin after the full lease was paid by the District. Although this limits the viability of this financing source for the construction of the elementary facilities, it may still be a beneficial method of addressing needs relative to the recommissioning of the existing school buildings once vacated. Jack stressed the importance of looking for ways to put the vacated buildings back into use as properties that will generate tax revenue for the City.

There was much discussion regarding the City’s budget philosophy going forward and the impact on programs such as Recreation. Fred Keach chairs a committee to identify the costs of various programs and to review external and internal revenue streams for these programs. The intent is for these programs to become self-sufficient. It was agreed that this is an opportune time for both the City and School District to review services each provide to the other and to identify the full-cost implications of those services.

There was a short discussion regarding the State’s decision to bond the cost of Building Aid as a financing mechanism to meet its financial commitment to the Building Aid program.

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 a.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted,

Chris Casko, Chair
Michele Croteau, Recorder