

REGION 4 BOARD OF EDUCATION

John Winthrop Security Project Building Committee Meeting

Date: Thursday, May 11, 2023 at 12:00 PM

Location: Google Meet (Remote)

Membership:

Region 4 BOE Representatives:

Rick Daniels, Chairman JWMS Security Project Building Committee	Not Present
Kate Sandmann	Present
John Stack	Not Present
Jane Cavanaugh	Present

Town of Chester Representatives

Tom Englert, Board of Selectpersons	Not Present
John O'Hare, Board of Finance	Not Present

Town of Deep River Representatives

Jim Olson, Board of Selectpersons	Not Present
Bud Eckenroth, Board of Finance	Not Present

Town of Essex Representatives

VACANT, Board of Selectpersons	Not Present
Keith Crehan, Board of Finance	Not Present

Region 4 Administration Representatives

Brian White, Superintendent, ex officio	Not Present
Melissa Morgan Hostetler, Principal JWMS, ex officio	Present
Jim Jake, Facilities Supervisor JWMS, ex officio	Present
Robert Grissom, Finance Director, financial consultant	Present
Rusty Malik, QA+M Architecture, architect	Present
Erin Benken, QA+M Architecture	Present

Call to Order

Mr. Grissom, serving for Chairman Daniels, called the meeting to order at 12:00 PM

Mr. Grissom performed a verbal roll-call.

Items / Discussion

Mr. Grissom began the discussion by reminding the Committee of the two actions they had requested at the previous meeting held on April 5, 2023, which were:

- (1) to understand the latest cost estimates of the two proposed options, either a covered ramp or an elevator in place of a ramp, as required by the local official, and
- (2) to learn more in regards to the impact of cost estimates on our authorized budget and ability to borrow.

In response to these requests, Mr. Malik first discussed a timeline of events. This began with the original project proposal that informed the November 2021 referendum, which anticipated a cost of approximately \$952,000. He then discussed changes in code requirements which occurred in November 2022 that resulted in additional required costs for lighting and a canopy over the proposed exterior stairs. He also discussed the need for additional site accessibility and ADA improvements identified by the building official which would need to be included in any project. Mr. Malik estimated that these changes to the original proposal would increase the cost to approximately \$1.3M.

Following this initial recap, Ms. Sandmann asked Mr. Malik for a detailed timeline of these events, including the dates when codes changed and when various approvals were submitted to and obtained from the State, along with cost estimates for the scope changes related to changes in the codes.

Mr. Malik then discussed the cost estimates of the two new options. The first item discussed was the addition of a canopy over the exterior ramp, which would be done along with the other requirements to satisfy current building codes. This estimated cost would be \$2,046,500 in total, with an estimated reimbursement from the State of \$852,100, for a net anticipated cost to the District of \$1,194,400.

The second option discussed was the addition of the exterior elevator, and the elimination of the exterior ramp, which would be done along with the other requirements to satisfy current building codes. This estimated cost would be \$1,575,000 in total, with an estimated reimbursement from the State of \$659,400, for a net anticipated cost to the District of \$915,600. Mr. Malik noted that this net cost would be within the total approved costs for borrowing authorized at the referendum in November 2021.

Mr. Malik then shared an update regarding the State's recent position on requiring schools to only borrow or otherwise show an ability to fund their anticipated share of the total costs. Previously, it was expected that schools demonstrated their ability to pay for the entire gross cost of a project prior to State reimbursement. In the two options presented, this change in position by the State would mean the District's bonding requirement would be \$1,194,000 or \$915,600, respectively. This position will need to be confirmed in writing by the State.

Finally, Mr. Malik discussed the need to submit a grant application revision to the State to show the change in the project scope and costs, which will ensure the State's commitment to reimburse the District at a cost higher than originally requested in the June 2022 application. Mr. Malik recommended this form be submitted by June 30 to move the process along.

Of the two options proposed, the Committee reached consensus that it would move forward in recommending the project scope change to add the exterior elevator and eliminate the exterior ramp.

Following this discussion, the Committee determined the next steps should be done, simultaneously to the extent possible, to avoid any delay.

- (1) Hold a meeting between representatives of the Committee and State representatives from the OSCG&R to inform them of the potential changes to the project scope and reimbursement, to alert them to the pending application revision, and to receive input on the State's requirement for borrowing (either net or gross costs).
- (2) Hold a special meeting of the Region 4 Board of Education where the Committee will present the latest information for Board discussion and solicit approval, via a Board VOTE, to proceed with the option of the exterior elevator.
- (3) Meet with Bond Counsel to determine statutory requirements with proceeding with this project, and to discuss any options available to the District if the State only requires the District to borrow up to its share of the project cost, which is within the amount authorized at referendum.

Public Comment

There was no Public Comment

The meeting was adjourned by Mr. Grissom at 12:46 PM