

**Town of Watertown
School Building Committee
Three Elementary School Projects
Wednesday, July 19, 2023
via ZOOM 6:00p.m. – 7:00p.m.**

MINUTES

Committee Members Present: Mark Sideris (chair), John Portz (vice-chair), Vincent Piccirilli, Deanne Galdston, Lindsay Mosca, Denise Moroney, Steve Magoon, Leo Patterson and Paul Anastasi

Committee Members Absent: Kelly Kurlbaum and Thomas Tracy

Committee Members No Longer with the Committee: - Heidi Perkins and James Kane

Others Present: Daren Sawyer, Nate Williams and Andrew Cunneen (Ai3 Architects), Thomas Finnegan, Vivian Varbedian and Alana Forbes (OPM, Hill International), Christy Murphy and Joel Giacobozzi (Compass Project Management), Andrew Street (Vertex Engineering) and Stacy Phelan

1. Call to Order: Chairman Mark Sideris called the meeting to order at 6:04p.m. John Portz took a roll call of School Building Committee members present.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes – July 19, 2023

Vivian Varbedian informed all that last month's May 17th meeting minutes were unable to be approved. The two meeting minutes that needs to be approved are May 17th and June 21st. Chairman Sideris made a motion to approve both the Elementary Meeting Minutes portions for May 17, 2023 and June 22, 2023 as written. Vincent Piccirilli moved the meeting minutes with John Portz seconded. All were in favor on a roll call vote.

3. Review / Approval of Elementary Schools Monthly Invoices

Vivian Varbedian presented the Elementary school work completed June invoices.

June 2023 invoices are as follows w/total at \$2,291,086.89:

- Hill International – \$67,960.00
- Ai3 Architects (Basic Services) - \$47,653.15
- Brait Builders (Payment Req # 37) – \$121,963.67
- CTA Construction Managers (Payment Req #16) - \$2,046,149.67
- UTS Lowell - \$1,391.00
- Ridgeline Energy Analytics (Hosmer) - \$971.25
- Ridgeline Energy Analytics (Lowell) - \$1717.00
- Colliers - \$2,171.15
- A. Walecka & Son Inc. - \$1,110.00

Chairman Sideris stated that an email was received from Megan who reviewed the invoices and is fine with how they were presented. Chairman Sideris asked for a motion to approve the Elementary School projects invoices for \$2,291,086.89. Vincent Piccirilli moves for approval of invoices with Steve Magoon seconded. All were in favor on a roll call vote.

4. Executive Summary

Vivian Varbedian presented and reviewed the Executive Summary highlights for July 2023.

The Executive Summary displayed pictures of progress of the interior of Lowell Elementary School building. The Executive Summary shows items that were already accomplished for the month and what is being anticipated for the next month. It also shows a quick snapshot of the schedule, financials and invoices which were approved.

Lowell Elementary school construction continues as the electrical switchgear of July 13th ship date has been delayed slightly. The chiller ship date remains scheduled for August 23rd. The PV Panels is scheduled to be completed this month. The casework and millwork continue throughout July and August 2023. Flooring continues throughout July and August 2023. Ceilings and painting continue throughout July and August 2023. Final inspections will be all lined up to start by September 2023. Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment (FF&E) to arrive September 5th - 22nd for installation. The move management will occur October 4th - October 9th. Sitework and Landscaping will be ongoing from July – October 2023.

5. Elementary School Questions / Comments

Question 1 – Chairman Sideris inquired about the landscaping when the school opens? Will it be done by the time school moves in? Will it be minimal? I just want to make sure there is no disruption.

Response – Thomas Finnegan stated that the majority of the landscaping should be done by mid-October. This is what the CPM schedules says right now. It will be substantially complete when school opens on October 10, 2023.

Question 2 – Leo Patterson asked Tom Finnegan what his opinion is? If there is significant risk to the schedule by any one condition? How would you rate how things are going now? You have said in the past how we will hit this date. Are you still remaining confident?

Response – Thomas Finnegan states that he is confident that we will hit this date. When the slide was put together for the electrical switchgear, we couldn't get a definite delivery date on the switch gear. This will be taken off the list. The switchgear arrived today. This is scheduled to be installed with Griffin Electric and Eversource next weekend. The biggest concern is the chiller. There was a Zoom call with the manufacturer of the chiller. He has all the material to put the chiller together except for one piece which is the control panel. This control panel is scheduled to arrive August 7, 2023. There will be a follow-up meeting on 8/7 to confirm arrival. Once this happens, we are definitely in the queue to have this done in (2) weeks. This will be shipped to this area and then the rig will turn it around in a day to set it. General Mechanical is all in line to bring it online within a week's time. By early September, we should have the chiller operational onsite. Leo Patterson asked if there is the Cupola going on the roof? Thomas Finnegan informed Leo Patterson that the Cupola was delayed for various reasons but right now it is scheduled for the first week of August.

Question 3 – Elodia Thomas asked how many people from the community (not including Committee members) are already attending through Zoom?

Response – Vivian Varbedian stated that there are (6) people in the Attendees not including the Committee members as panelist.

New Business – Chairman Sideris stated that both he and Vivian Varbedian have been going back and forth for quite some time about the storm water retention ponds at both Cunniff & Hosmer sites that are clearly not working. The neighbors have contacted Chairman Sideris, State Representative Owens, and other councilors. It is a concern that the SBC members need to be aware of that there is going to be a meeting of everybody involved shortly including Public Works. We now have our new Public Buildings Director, Denise Moroney that is now here with us. She will join the School Building Committee shortly on an official basis. If you go by the Hosmer Elementary school, everything is full of water. It is dangerous. The Health Department has raised concerns. We will try to address this but we might have to take further action if it isn't addressed. Vivian Varbedian informed all that they have been in touch with Ai3 Architects and Vertex who is also in attendance. We are all aware of the situation and will have a meeting to discuss and see what the circumstances are leading to and how it can be rectified. Chairman Sideris was given assurance that all the right individuals will be part of the conversation so we can come up with a resolution.

Question 1 – Lindsay Mosca believes there is some type of issue with how the retention ponds were installed or set-up. Is this something we can learn from and avoid in landscape work at Lowell ES or any similar features that may or may not be part of our High School landscape? The problem just appears very similar or there maybe a situation where it was attempted to be fixed but it still doesn't appear to be functioning properly. Worried about repeat problems.

Response – Chairman Sideris stated that it depends on what we learn when we get deep into the woods. This will help us as we move forward finishing the Lowell ES and starting the High School. Leo Patterson has not seen the standing water in the retaining pond areas. His mother lives very close to the Hosmer ES on the Boylston side. Leo Patterson states that this is a retainage and grading thing and a connection to civil. There has been a lot of rain, but these things were holding water before the major rains recently. He does not know why it is not draining. The inlet was possibly not vertically appropriated and connected to civil. Is it backing up or backfilling but happy to participate in the sidebar conversation. The standing water is a concern because it grows mosquitos and bugs. It seems like it is low risk for what it means for other projects. We have professional Civil Engineers working with DPW and others to really drain these sites effectively. Due to not seeing the standing water at Hosmer fields or other places, is it isolated to the retaining areas only? Is the concern about the retaining areas and how there functioning? Is it about a larger campus wide issue? Chairman Sideris says it is the retaining areas. The retaining area on the parking lot side all winter long retained water and was frozen. Andrew Street (Vertex Engineering) gave background information regarding the retention ponds. He states that the city has a very stringent storm water management standard and policy in place through the DPW. We have worked with them to get this designed and permitted. As part of these regulations, we are required to remove specifically phosphorus. The city under consent order from either DEP or EPA. The consent order to remove phosphorous from storm water or new developments including schools and public projects. There are several ways to do this. The gold standard by which we try to achieve is by putting it back into the ground underground. For example, there are chamber systems underneath parking lots and fields. When this is not possible, there are other measures to use, and these bio-retention rain garden areas are means to do that. They are designed and intended to capture then filter storm water as it makes it way back into the ground. They are intended to be draining. A reference was made about the inlets and grates that are elevated above. These are set specifically to try to encourage water to get back into the ground. Certainly, they are not functioning correctly, clearly, they are holding water, and this was not the intent. The back story to why they are there at all is to treat and filter the water. It supposed to be made with a specific soil layer media on the bottom and on the sides to encourage infiltration and provide that treatment. Most recently since this issue has been raised, there has been conversations with our Landscaper Architect who plays a part in these areas as well. They are specific seed mixes and plantings. Also, conversations have been ongoing with DPW. We have been actively working on it to produce solutions or a path forward.

Question 2 – Elodia Thomas asked when this will be resolved? Can there be some type of announcement through Watertown news because some time ago, the trees were cut down and many people was upset with what was going on. Scott has mentioned all the issues around water on the field. Now the issues are still not resolved. Whenever it is resolved, can somebody put a clear simple explanation out to the community to tamp down on this type of stuff. That would be very helpful.

Response – Chairman Sideris says that he is more than happy to do that but his focus right now is getting it done first.

6. End of Elementary School Project Business Meeting

Chairman Sideris ended the Elementary School Project Business meeting at 6:23pm.

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