

Minutes of School Committee Meeting 05/12/2016

A meeting of the Barrington School Committee was held on Thursday, May 12, 2016 in the Administration Building. Mrs. Brody called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m. Present were Mrs. Brody, Mr. Alessandro, Mrs. Clancy, Mr. Guida, Mr. Messore, Mrs. Dillon, and Mr. Tarro. Absent was Dr. Shea. The following invited guests arrived at 6:45 p.m.: Mr. Samuel Bradner, The Peregrine Group, Mr. Brian Solywoda, Kaestle Boos Associates, Mr. Daniel Tavares, Compass Group Architecture, Owners Project Manager for the Barrington Middle School Building Project, and Mr. Lawrence Trim, Kaestle Boos Associates.

Old Business from Superintendent and Staff

Mr. Guida and Mr. Tarro presented a Barrington Middle School (BMS) Building Committee update, including a synopsis of its May 9, 2016 meeting. The Building Committee, by unanimous vote at its May 9, 2016 meeting, recommended “to the School Committee and Town Council that they present to the General Assembly and the Rhode Island Department of Education that Barrington desires to build a new Middle School for Grades 6-8 as detailed to date by the preliminary plan and project budget prepared by Kaestle Boos Associates for an amount not to exceed \$74,604,818. The Committee acknowledges that the estimated project cost has already been decreased by approximately \$10 million and further recommends that the design and cost estimate process continue to reduce the total cost of the project.”

Mrs. Brody reviewed the rationale for the sense of urgency relative to the timeline for the Joint Meeting of the School Committee, Town Council and noted that the Committee on Appropriations had posted its meeting for the same time this evening in anticipation that a quorum of its members would be present for the Joint Meeting at 7 p.m. In light of recent developments in the General Assembly, the School Committee will request the support and endorsement of a resolution for a bond referendum for a new middle school.

The Committee discussed the work currently underway with Kaestle Boos Associates to develop final plans that are more cost effective than the current estimates. Mr. Guida noted his concern relative to unknown competition for Rhode Island Housing Aid that would become a factor with any delay in the timeline for the BMS Building project. Mrs. Brody noted her concern relative to the anticipated total budget cost per square foot of \$491 for BMS as compared with the range of total budget costs per square foot for new middle school construction in Massachusetts of between \$415 and \$572 with project start dates on or after January 1, 2014. Mrs. Brody cited data from the Massachusetts School Building Authority that she had requested be provided to the School Committee for its reference. The Committee conducted a lengthy discussion relative to concerns about the current total estimated project costs and its associated burden to the taxpayers of Barrington.

The Committee discussion continued relative to the need for a continued analysis of program and floorplan assumptions against Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) requirements and District expectations to confirm the validity of cost adjustments. Mr. Guida noted his concerns with the associated risk of a compromise in the ability to meet program needs. The Committee discussed the potential for consideration of a reduction in the not to exceed cost figure for the bond referendum, per recommendation of the BMS Building Committee, prior to moving the request forward to the Town Council at the Joint Meeting this evening.

Mrs. Brody noted that in compliance with the Open Meetings, Act, it would not be an option for the School Committee to take such action at this meeting since the only agenda item posted is that of the BMS Building Committee update. However, the Committee could take action at the Joint Meeting prior to making the request of the Town Council for endorsement of the resolution for the bond referendum.

Mr. Guida suggested that the School Committee recess and then continue its meeting with the Town Council and Committee on Appropriations at 7:00 p.m.