

# **Whitman Middle School Building Committee**

## **Meeting Minutes**

**Time: 4:30 PM**

**Place: Virtual, Google Meeting**

**Date: Tuesday, July 23, 2024**

### **Members Present:**

Kathleen Ottina, *Vice Chair*

Robert Curran

Jeffrey Szymaniak

Justin Evans

George Ferro

Brandon Frost

Beth Stafford

Stephen Marshall

Mike Driscoll

Mary Beth Carter

**Building Team Present:** Mike Carroll, OPM – Colliers Project Leaders (CPL), Shirley Ng, OPM - Colliers Project Leaders (CPL), Julie Rivera, Architect – (Ai3), Troy Randall, Principal Architect – Ai3 Architects (Ai3), Harani Kumares, OPM – Collier Project Leaders (CPL), Elizabeth Dagnall – Website maintenance

### **Absent:**

Frederick Small, Don Esson, Josh MacNeil, Crystal Regan, Rich Pulkinen.

### **Call to Order:**

Kathleen Ottina, The Committee Vice Chair, opened the meeting by calling it to order and taking the attendance.

### **Pledge of Allegiance**

***Ms. Ottina asked if there was anyone for public comment.***

#### **I. Public Comment**

John Galvin raised concerns with the committee, mentioning that the project is at or under budget. He pointed out that the cost of borrowing money is significantly higher than what was considered when this was voted on at the town meeting. Additionally, he mentioned that the Whitman—Hanson school district is struggling to get a competitive bond rating, which might affect the Whitman taxpayers. In conclusion, he requested the committee to look into why the district cannot get a competitive bond percentage and consider that the project is technically not under budget.

## **II. Design Update**

### **A. Cost Estimates & Value Engineering**

Mike Carroll presented the 60% CD cost estimate analysis and briefly explained the reconciliation process by pointing out both estimators' initial and reconciled estimate numbers. He mentioned that the average between both estimates is \$104,788,839; as we move towards construction, we typically lean towards the estimator from the design side. However, in this case, since the design estimator's number is lower, the team is recommending splitting the difference between the two estimators and going with the \$104.8 million figure to be more conservative. Mike also mentioned that the current estimate is currently \$1.8 million under budget compared to the estimates submitted in August 2023. He added that the current budget includes replacing one of the softball fields, which was initially an add alternate. He then revisited the discussion on the stack shack, emphasizing that there is no need for relocation as per the feedback from the town, including the youth organizations, and the overall updated budget includes the estimates for the improvements of the stack shack.

Brandon Frost asked if the cost of shipping dirt off the site is subtracted from the total budget and if the refurbishment of the softball field is now tied to the overall construction budget. Mike confirmed that both are correct.

Next, Mike presented the list of value engineering items, briefly explaining the different categories, and stated that the team will not make any selections in this phase as the project is currently under budget.

### **B. Schedule Overview**

Julie provided an update on the project schedule. She highlighted that the first cost estimate during the construction documentation phase for the project was completed. With the committee's approval, the next step is to move forward to the 90% construction document phase. Julie summarized the items completed for the 60% construction document submission, noting that the three outliers have been initiated. She then mentioned that Colliers is coordinating and soliciting proposals for the third-party structural peer review as per the MSBA requirements for reviewing the documents. Julie further noted that the draft report had already been distributed to the committee, and the updated report could be shared with the committee members before the August 1st submission if required.

The next step is the 90% construction documentation phase. Julie noted that the tasks are similar to the 60% CDs as the team refines and moves closer to 100% construction document completion. Julie stated that the team is on track for the October 24th date for the 90% CDs, followed by additional fee weeks for the 100% CDs, targeting December 12th.

### **C. Design Updates**

Julie provided a brief design update, pointing out that the latest update is included in the documents provided for estimate. She explained that after reviewing the section's topography, it was decided that the stream next to the soccer field will not be incorporated into the design as originally planned during the development phase. Based on recommendations from the civil and landscape teams, it was determined that the stream will be redirected underground through a culvert. The area will then be landscaped to include bio-retention features to better manage

rainwater on site. Julie also noted that the design documents include details on these bio-retention areas. Furthermore, she pointed out that the transition from the emergency access drive at the rear of the pool down to the wetlands will have a low retaining wall due to the elevation change.

#### **D. 60% CDs – Cost Estimates & Value Engineering**

Julie summarized the estimates for the total project budget, noting the difference of about 2M between the designer's cost estimates during the schematic design phase and the 60% construction document phase, with the renewable energy system as the single add alternate. She mentioned that various options regarding renewable energy systems will be discussed with the committee in the coming meetings.

Julie next presented the value engineering list and reiterated that the design team is not proposing to accept any of the items listed at this time as the project is currently under budget. The list is for the MSBA submission as per their requirement.

***Ms. Ottina entertained a motion to authorize the submission of the 60% Construction Documents to the MSBA.***

***Motion made by Jeffrey Szymaniak.***

***Motion seconded by George Ferro.***

***Roll Call***

***Motion passed unanimously.***

#### **III. Payment of Invoices**

Mike presented the June invoices #0023B-2203, #0017E-2203 and #961798 with the cover letters for Colliers and Ai3.

***Kathleen Ottina entertained a motion to approve the June invoices as presented.***

***Motion made by Beth Stafford.***

***Motion seconded by Brandon Frost.***

**Discussion:** Mary Beth noted that the district had borrowed 8M for this project and asked what the current balance was before these invoices were approved. Mike explained that before the approval to pay the bills tonight, the project was expensed at 5.59M, and with the current invoices, it would be 6.38M. Mary asked if the district had received any MSBA reimbursement paid to date. Mike replied that the team is coordinating to set up the pro-pay account since the project has moved from the schematic design phase. Jeff Szymaniak confirmed that he signed off on Monday afternoon to set up the pro-pay account.

***Roll Call***

***Motion passed unanimously.***

#### **IV. Next Steps / Next meeting**

***The Next School Building Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, August 20th, at 4:30 pm.***

## **V. Adjournment**

***Ms. Ottina entertained a motion to adjourn.***

***Motion made by Jeffrey Szymaniak.***

***Motion seconded by Brandon Frost.***

***Roll Call***

***Motion passed Unanimously.***

To view the full recording of this meeting please visit:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1VpL-TcJKdJHp9FBQ113gD1PsdhnciP/view>