

Mount Greylock Regional School District School Committee Finance Subcommittee

Location: Zoom Remote Meeting

Date: Thursday, December 17, 2020

Time: 4:00 PM Join Zoom Meeting

Open Session Agenda

- I. Call to order
- II. Approval of December 3, 2020 meeting minutes VOTE
- III. Review of warrants A. Payroll B. Accounts Payable
- IV. Use of the WES Renewal Fund for an HVAC repair (recommend to School Committee) VOTE
- V. Perkins Eastman proposal discussion
- VI. Mt. Greylock Renewal Fund discussion
- VII. Other items for discussion not reasonably anticipated by the chair 48 hours before the meeting.
- VIII. Motion to adjourn

Present: Carrie, Michelle, Steve

Also present: Jake, Joe

- I. Called to order at 4pm.
- II. Motion to approve the minutes by Michelle, seconded by Steve, passes unanimously.
- III. No additional items to add to the packet. There was one check that needed to be pulled back, Brenda was on top of that. Brenda is taking a vacation soon, practicing what happens when someone is gone for awhile, having people swap places.

Question: what is a PG sprayer? Pathguard fogging solution, spent a lot of time over last 6-8 weeks trying to find the most environmentally and human friendly way to disinfect air, so we can look at cycling rooms thru multiple groups of people with staff feeling comfortable. Product that rose to the top has been used by many local groups. Citric acid based disinfectant that can be put in a special fogging machine. Produces tiny micron droplets that can remain suspended in air, can take care of covid / other issues. Purchased three units, one for each school, received last week, custodians received training on Monday, excited to gradually start putting to use. Should yield significant benefits in terms of confidence of our ability to clean the air. This will come out of a grant we have that must be spent this calendar year on covid items. There is one more cycle, and we can journal entry some items to make sure we round it out. We are well in excess of the total with eligible expenses. Nothing was signed, timing of when things were scanned and when signed; Donna and treasurer have signed. FinComm does not need to sign, reviewing.

- IV. Use of WES renewal fund for HVAC, brought to FinComm so can bring to school committee. Packet has a copy of the WES fund agreement, different than the MtG capital gift. Per the regional agreement, anything over \$5000 paid for by the town if a building expense. Is this a building expense or a town expense?

For LES would have to go to the town, but as the gift exists to WES from the college the practice has been to use that gift and not go to the town. Once spent then go to the town.

Does the town or the school pay and then get reimbursed by the college? Have used the second clause, we have the college pay bills directly. Business Manager gets approval to spend money from the fund, have the work done, bring the invoice back to the school committee so that the school committee can sign off on it, then send to the college and the college pays directly to the vendor.

What are the balances? In the endowment / principal / spending. Principal as of end of fiscal year (5 months ago) was \$1,625,918. The spending account balance, portion the college pulls out to make sure spending without needing to liquate is \$51,187. Invoice is around \$21,000 so falls in the spending amount. This falls under Rob Wnuk's purview, has gone out and followed best practices to get the best price available from market now. Anything between \$0 and \$10,000 is open ended, no significant restrictions. Up to \$50,000 should get three quotes and choose best bidder, anything above \$50,000 put an invitation to bid, more rigorous process, length of time for gathering / selecting bidder based on laid out criteria. This falls in the middle. Will double check that we did get three bids.

Motion to recommend to the school committee for approval conditional on it having received three bids. Moved by Steve, seconded by Michelle, passes unanimously.

Technical question: does it need to be moved and seconded again at the school committee? From looking at Roberts rules looks like it might be considered as moved and no need to move and second.

- V. Perkins-Eastman Proposal Discussion: Additional info in the packet added, including note from John Skavlem that one bid would not have been over if not mis-interpreted and thought softball field was artificial turf as well.

Perkins-Eastman was architect for big building project (school), then became architect for projects related to the gift. When they first bid on this work, the hope was we would minimize costs by having PE handle the building directly and just be the architect of record, make sure coherent in the scope of the larger project for the fields related work. That work started. Traverse Architects became the sub-contractor that did the primary work for the district for the fields (Phase II work). PE mostly out of the picture.

When the bid did not go as hoped by the district last fall, according to PE they were clear about perhaps should have a different approach to understanding what the community

wants, scoping the work, getting out to bid. Conversation started b/w admin and PE on what is a better way to go about this as will be more challenging than initially thought. This is when PE went back to a renewed capital planning, could rebid with value engineering, wide variety of things, let us know what you want.

Is this reflected in the packet that spells out options? PE had higher level conversations with admin on bigger picture with community involved / forums / evaluation of options, taking a step back from getting out to bid without delay. When started to look like there would be a step back taken then PE said you are our client you let us know what you want. We can come and do surveys of community and conversation on options.

We then went dark for awhile, then Business Manager went back with the request from the school committee about how can we get the same project out to bid with some value engineering done first. PE's proposal reflects that. Follows what had been loosely proposed by the admin last fall, which has PE having a more direct role in process / value engineering, working with Traverse, being point of contact, making sure we doubly dot i's and cross t's. Walking us thru a process to get us to bid. That is what their proposal from November looks like. We still within our contract with PE have the construction administration portion that comes after the bids are accepted and a contractor comes in, PE with that contract still has that portion of that contract, that is work we can do, accepted a proposal for and we will happily do. We are inserting a revised approach that is a redo and a slightly different do into the middle of that, still have the construction administration portion as they monitor what is happening. That's where we stand with them.

They've been working with us for years, if he were us he doesn't think an objective third party group that looks at spaces doesn't cost significant amount of money (\$5k or \$10k), put that in front of us before we do that rebid to build more of a coalition of what we are doing and way. We have 120 acres of campus, almost unheard of, massive opportunity, would do that, doesn't take too long, over a few months. Can put out nicely structured surveys to get info, look for a 5-10-20 year plan for the campus.

Did ask about a discount. PE feels like they did what they were asked, Traverse did. Provided feedback that was very responsible. Used the cost estimator to get current market costs. Put out a request for proposals in the way it should, does not feel it should further discount.

Carrie: to take a few months to do what? Not to keep going over what we've been doing, but to come up with a long term plan? Something that hasn't been discussed?

Joe: I think this goes back to whether or not the work done to create the priorities, that work from 2016 – 2017, should that be revisited that creates a renewed sense of why these are the priorities, how fits with an evolution of the campus over the next 5-10-20 voices, allows all voices to be heard before bid again.

Steve: If do this, when would construction begin and end?

Joe: depends on the timing. Best time to get bids would be over the next few months. Want people to bid while not fully committed for the construction season ahead.

Carrie: would lose that window if we do this other thing, and we would still be obligated to the deadlines for ADA compliance and Title IX.

Joe: ADA is April 2022. Asked Dan Colli, who said can probably push thru the construction season due to covid. If try to do ADA compliance now and do not do anything else, then a decent chunk of that ADA compliance would have to be torn up and redone as part of the bigger project (softball, baseball, ...). New field and track would need to run solid paths that are accessible. Would do a lot of work to create ADA compliance for existing campus and then when do larger project would have to do a lot of new work and tear up work done. Doable but if know going to do something different a year later is this a good use of funds?

Michelle: Instead of splitting the project that way can we do ADA / Title IX and then the field. In my opinion the field is the sticking point. Do we do the turf field? That's the big question. No one asking turf on softball, just on soccer/lacrosse.

Carrie: What Joe was saying is that if we do a new field that becomes the place where we need accessibility, if do Title IX now but do not know about future field we have to make John Allen accessible, but if do a new field then we don't. We need to decide on a turf field before we decide on compliance. If say no new field then make all have compliant. Is that correct?

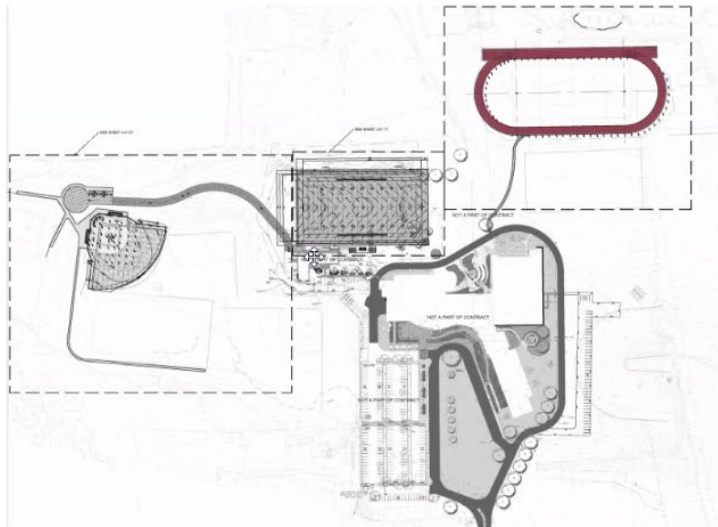
Joe: Kind of.

Michelle: Mentioned stuff on softball field that is ADA, might have to outfit John Allen field with more accessibility, would just be another accessible field, as a special ed teacher not a bad thing, should make everything accessible, not a waste of money.

Joe:



Fall 2019 RFP



- Aug-Sep 2019 RFP to bid
- 3 reputable bidders
- All 19-22% higher than expected

Primary goals:

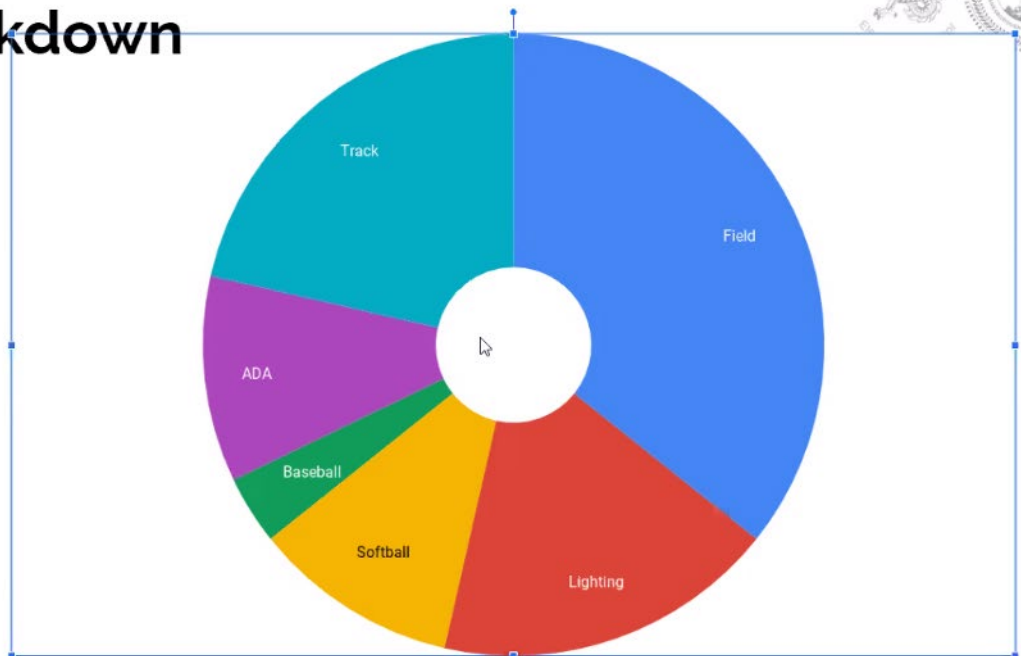
- ADA: roads, parking, and walkways
- New field (turf) in new location
- Lighting for new field
- Softball field revamp (Title IX)
- Baseball fields safety upgrades
- Portable bleacher system
- \$2.3M estimate => ~\$2.8M bid

Add alternate:

- Track (6 lane)
- \$450K estimate => \$550-850K bid

If do the field on the left now, might not necessarily be required but good to have.

Breakdown



Above shows project costs. Would be \$700,000 project. That is one that could be done right now

Steve: But if doing the other fields later ...?

Carrie: Is a larger project more desirable?

Joe: Regular logic says yes. Can ask.

Carrie: Recommendation for the committee?

Steve: As we have so many new people I think it is good to have it discussed as a full committee.

Michelle: Forum useful, have a few more questions. This is why thought of separating. No brainer – have to do ADA / Title IX. Giant project of an artificial turf is a big decision and a lot of money, want to make sure I feel comfortable. After reading the many strongly worded emails, I have some questions for Lindsey, need to go thru some stuff.

Steve: Suggest we have a list of questions from committee members so can have information....

Michelle: Problem is often one question can lead to another.... For me want to talk to the athletic director. Feel like another long term study on fields falls under her wheelhouse. Makes sense for her to make a projection on facilities. Not sure necessary to spend money on another study. We need to decide. Lot of pressure to get this done. There is a bid issue, favorable if do in the winter. Joe: how long will it take if we say go ahead and put out to bid. What process? What timeframe / timeline to stay in favorable conditions.

Joe: if accept the PE November proposal: 5-8 weeks. Once detailed design done but before go to bid, supposed to present to town as modifying over a trigger amount of our campus requires ZBA approval. Any lighting needs to be reviewed by the town, once town / school committee sign off that's when PE would put those docs out to bid for us. Would be 2-4 weeks before we could expect to get responses. In all likelihood would get same bidders as last time, limited number of companies in the area that do this work, that's the time we accept or not.

Carrie: This timing allows it to be done over the summer / ready for the fall.

Joe: Yes.

Carrie: Same process / time frame if committee decides to do all but track / field.

Steve: Agree we need to decide, worried about spending more and more money on studies. Might be useful to collect questions and answers.

Joe: What would a third party bring on planning? They would know the range of options that the district could use / utilize. Given that Phys Ed is one of the primary impacts, there are more people interested in middle / high school playgrounds with climbing walls.... These

impact everyone. That's the kind of thing a consultant would know, would know costs. While I agree that we should not keep spending money on opinions, we don't want to create a package that goes out to bid that is contentious and does not have support of community / committee and spend \$44,000 to go thru a process that didn't really want, danger of speeding things up if doesn't get to end goal.

VI. Mt Greylock Renewal Fund Discussion:

Carrie: call it renewal fund, not endowment, to distinguish. This is what WES has, money set aside to grow over the next decade. Several docs related to this in the packet. Comment submitted by Rob Abel, endowment calculator Steve developed, Williams College Investment Returns document. Question starting from Jose and others on the committee: if we put aside various amounts, what would that look like? Would the growth provide enough funding for things that need to happen?

Steve: to compare apples and oranges should remember to do a net present value adjustment.

Joe: Developed a document on investment returns. Looked at Williams College investor report for past 20 years for annualized returns. Goes over some very turbulent times. Briefly: the earlier you save and the more you save, the better in the future.

Michelle: If I look at the bids, say on the order of \$2.9 million. What's in the gift now?

Joe: \$3.6 remains.

Michelle: If we take \$2.9 million we are not at \$1.5 million. Less than a million.

Steve: Have used the gift for many things over the years: trailers, bathrooms. Some of these should be paid by the towns.

Michelle: bathrooms are capital improvement.

Carrie: \$1.5 million has been suggested, if we put that in do we have the ability to address everything that comes up? If we don't do a turf field and put \$3 million in, do we feel good about growing that? Have a lot in E&D and choice, a lot to sit on.

Steve: I'm in favor of a smaller amount and can always increase. Can we borrow money for projects and use the gift

Joe: We cannot take money and put in the stock market. I do not believe we have any way, not sure I have asked to see if we can hand to the college.

Steve: No, I'm saying that if we don't spend all the gift we can just decide not to spend more later.

Michelle/Carrie: We're just saying we commit to not touching certain amounts.

Carrie: making a statement we feel it is important to preserve some money for later.

Michelle: I think need at least a million.

Jake: Been part of many building projects. Topic around setting aside some money gets positioned as to we need to make a renewal fund to save the town / taxpayers money. Proponent of that, but things also go wrong with buildings that impact student experiences. Things go wrong that can impact teachers' ability to do job. Or staff. Important to talk about this in context of not always going back to member towns for capital improvements / renewal. Important foundational piece that if something goes wrong, impacts ability to support rich education.

Michelle: This is my concern in spending all this money on a turf field and then again in 10 years for replacement, what if something goes wrong.

Carrie: Installment cost is \$1.2 million, replacement about \$500-600,000. Purpose of looking at the numbers

Joe: looked at big items: Major long-term renewal costs:

Roof: \$3-6M in 15-20 years,

Floors: \$1-1.25M in 20-25 years,

Windows: \$1.5-1.75M in 15-20 years

(All in current dollar values and assuming significant one-time replacement comparable to our currently new roof, floors and windows.)

Agree with Steve that need to look at net present value, also need to look at technologies (can add stuff to roof to give it more years). Flooring is new, not sure how long will last. Windows....

Michelle: What are your thoughts?

Steve: I want to wait to see.

Carrie: I agree with Steve, but to me a million is the low end. If we don't do the track then a lot more money available. Important to protect. If that means we cannot do a track without waiting / fundraising, then that is what it means. My hope is that we can do a turf and track and have a million to set aside.

Steve: I'd be happy to see that as well. Had this with the administrative / multi-purpose building, costing a lot more than hoped.

Michelle: Afraid this will happen with turf.

Steve: Here though we did have the turf go out to bid, one bidder would have been fine if had interpreted correctly, and are doing value engineering.

Michelle: it always seems to end that way that things cost more than hope, spoke that way about the admin building, estimates were high and came in higher, everything seems to go that way, unforeseen things happen. Not 100% sure if an artificial turf proposal will pass both towns, concerned that giving to towns with upkeep costs, those are hard to swallow, that's why I need to talk to Lindsey to see if worth it.

Carrie: would you support a track but not a turf?

Michelle: need a field with proper drainage and can play on. Probably. Track also going to be used by Phys Ed. Many many more kids do track than lacrosse / soccer. Not same renewal costs. When my kids did track limited number of places where can have a meet. We're fortunate to hold at Williams College, but again have to bus kids there. Would be better to have on our campus. For community use track makes a lot of sense.

VII. Other items?

Jake: Numbers have come in: our towns are fine but county positivity rate is 3.9% so will be remote next week. Specialized programs will continue.

VIII. Motion to adjourn by Michelle, seconded by Miller, passed unanimously at 5:29pm.

Minutes taken by Steven Miller, Secretary Finance Committee

Approved 01.07.21