

OAK PARK AND RIVER FOREST HIGH SCHOOL
201 North Scoville Ave.
Oak Park, IL 60302

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, March 11, 2008

A Finance Committee meeting was held on Tuesday, March 11, 2008. Chair John P. Rigas called the meeting to order at 7:35 a.m. in the Board Room. Committee members present were: John C. Allen, IV, Valerie J. Fisher, Dr. Ralph H. Lee, Dr. Dietra D. Millard, Sharon Patchak- Layman, and John P. Rigas. Also present were Dr. Attila J. Weninger, Superintendent; Cheryl L. Witham, Chief Financial Officer; Jack Lanenga, Assistant Superintendent for Operations; and Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board.

Visitors included Kay Foran, Director of Community Relations and Communications; Doug Willey, Supervisor of Finance; Tim Keeley, Purchasing Coordinator; and James Hunter, FSEC Chair.

Minutes

The Finance Committee minutes of February 19, 2008, were accepted, as presented.

Construction Update

Mr. Lanenga reported that each month the administration looks at the construction that has occurred at the high school. This building is valued both as a means of imparting education and as the community jewel that it is. Because of this, the administration presents to the Board of Education any changes taking place. This month there were only minor changes.

The work during Spring Break will commence Friday March 21. Airlock doors will be added to both ends of the mall corridor, the door near 116, and the door off the mall near the freshman cafeteria. It is anticipated that the work will be done prior to the start of school, March 31.

The District continues to look at ways to conserve energy. Over the past two years, the District has replaced 1) the boiler, the roof, and all of the windows in the 1967 addition. Updates to the electronic controls for the HVAC system are continuing. The airlock doors will save energy by providing an area for cold or hot air to remain when doors are open. Other areas to explore are finer control of room temperatures, green roofs, better window control, better door control, improved light control and other items.

Discussion ensued about the items on the list of projects including bike racks and lockers for the band room. Mr. Lanenga explained that 17 bike racks would be purchased for approximately \$15,000; they will be the same type as used in Daley Plaza, a U-bar. Ms.

Witham explained that staff had not ordered lockers for the band room, although two cabinets had been requested. Ms. Patchak-Layman noted that the Concert Tour Association was of the opinion that the lockers were to be ordered. Ms. Witham explained that they had not been ordered and that the deadline to do so had passed.

In response to a request to understand the operations of the building and the cost of projects and/or materials, Mr. Lanenga offered to provide the Board of Education members with a tour of the building. Mr. Rigas reported that he relies on the staff and the bidding process to determine the best prices. Dr. Lee expressed disbelief as to why a pool heater would cost \$54,000. Dr. Millard added that this building is older and the District tries to maintain its integrity and significance; this is particularly challenging with a pool that was built in the 1920's.

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked if the District would levy for Life Safety and if it were under the cap. She also asked why a separate budget for Life Safety and a separate budget for Operations and Maintenance were being kept. She asked if it all could be within the Operations and Maintenance Fund. Ms. Witham responded that the District has a limit of \$.25 in the O&M Fund, and was close to that level. The District may, instead, levy Life Safety and this sets aside funds for the agreed-to projects. It is an easy way to account for the funds and how the money is spent. Ms. Patchak-Layman also learned that the District does not have to set amount for architecture, as it negotiates its own rates, which may be only seven percent, three percent less than the maximum ten percent allowed.

BID Calendar and Process

Mr. Keeley provided the following written memo and a bid calendar.

“John Allen provided samples of an “executive summary” that his firm utilizes in reviewing and rating of RFP's and competitive bid responses. This review, coupled with the intent to further clarify the intent and scope of all future RFP's/bids, has led us to a more comprehensive approach to reporting a recommendation to the Board.

In the past, it has been the practice of the Business Office to offer a very straightforward recommendation with few details. Upon review of Mr. Allen's suggestions, I have determined that the addition of the following components would provide the greatest amount of clarity to the Board of Education:

- Report the comprehensive history, justification and rationale for the bid.
 - Specific district need being met by the product or service being bid.
 - Specific reason that the product or service that is indicated in the bid documents has been called for to meet said need.
 - Any other pertinent information that may justify the bid of said product or service.
 - Explanation of any rating system that was utilized to review bids.
- Detailed account of the bid process as it relates to the recommendation decision
 - Number of bids received.
 - Number of “qualified” vendors.

- Reason for rejecting any bids.
- Detailed summation of bid results (cost, features of services, etc.).
- Recommendation for the Board
 - Supporting information
 - Pricing.
 - Vendor background check.
 - Results of any reference checks.
 - Any other pertinent information that weighed into the recommendation decision.

“It was also brought to my attention that the Board would like more clarity on upcoming bids in the form of a calendar. I have attached a calendar that runs through July 2012 and includes all biddable purchases that are known at this time.”

Discussion ensued. Mr. Rigas did not want the staff to spend a lot of time reporting to the Board of Education on how mundane things such as class rings, landscaping, towel service, and office supplies, etc. were bid out, as they are commodities and bought at the lowest price. A more in-depth report would be necessary for bidding out cars, mini buses, contractual services for security, etc. Whoever bids a commodity at the lowest price is the way the District should precede. Dr. Lee reported that he found comfort in reading about the bids for athletic uniforms and the concerns that went into it. After reading the report, he felt this was the avenue to go. Mr. Rigas referencing an * on page two of the report about unacceptable sources who did not bid, said he did not want that level of detail. The Board of Education’s job is to set policy and to rely on the staff to do their jobs. Mr. Allen just wanted his two-page bid process so that he knew what was being done and that the process was necessary.

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked about things such as green industry standards and if they were included in the bid process. Ms. Witham stated that there is a Board of Education purchasing policy and if the Board of Education should want to impose a list of checks and extra points for a supplier being a minority business, using green products, being a local business, or having been made in USA, etc., or other restrictions, it should go back to the policy. Otherwise, the Board of Education should assume that the District would abide by the law and the Board of Education policy. Ms. Witham noted that the District is aware of not using sweatshops and acts accordingly.

Mr. Rigas said the policy now reads that the District takes the lowest qualified bid. Ms. Patchak-Layman asked if the District had an RFQ bid process and timeline on different companies. The District has talked about going out for legal and audit services, electrical work, etc. Does the District have a process for having a preferred vendor list? Ms. Witham noted that construction was separate from this list and would be a different discussion. An RFQ for legal services is not on the calendar and there is no requirement to do so at varying intervals. The audit firm provides a yearly engagement letter. She did not know of a contract with any of the law firms. Ms. Witham suggested they could put it on a cycle.

With regard to travel services, Ms. Witham stated that the organizations specific to helping students travel are very specific and the District has not done an RFQ for travel services. For the Marine Biology trip, the teachers put the trip together. The Ms. Witham continued that student activities do not have the same requirements as the school in spending the State's money, as students raise their own money. The District does not have to impose bid requirements on them.

Dr. Millard suggested that Dr. Lee review the purchasing policy to see what is included and what is not.

Facility Five-Year Plan

Mr. Lanenga stated that the District has always had a three- to eight-year plan for construction, dating back to the days of the Restricted Building Fund. The staff of Wight & Company has been instrumental in providing a path for using the District's financial resources wisely. This plan, which is part of the packet, is the beginnings of a five-year plan. The District has allocated the Life Safety money according to the architect's recommendation in the ten-year inspection.

The O&M Funds are to be allocated for each year beyond summer, 2008. The District has created a list of potential projects for 2009-2012 based on its review of needs and recommendations from staff, administration, the architects, and the community.

Although no action is required of the Board of Education at this time, the District wanted to advise the Board of Education of its plans. A School Facility Advisory Committee was formed to look at possible projects and make recommendations. Input will be sought from the group, a group of citizens with building backgrounds, who have given the District tremendous advice and ideas in the past. Input will also be received from the administration and the Board of Education's Finance Committee members. The plan would be brought to the Board of Education for final approval.

Bid for Athletic Uniforms

It was the consensus of the Finance Committee members to recommend to the Board of Education that it award the Cross Country and Boys' Soccer uniforms, Girls' Tennis and Girls' Volleyball warm-ups, and Wrestling singlets to Salkeld Sports and the Boys' Basketball warm-ups to Sunburst Sportswear at its regular March Board of Education meeting.

Ms. Patchak-Layman Commented that "inferior quality" was strong language with regard to something be stamped or embroidered on a fabric. She had no suggested replacement language.

Monthly Financials

No monthly financials were presented.

Treasurer's Report

No Treasurer's Report was presented.

Adjournment

Financial Committee meeting adjourned at 8:25 a.m. on Tuesday, March 11, 2008.