

GREATER FALL RIVER VOCATIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
HOUSEBUILDING/FACILITIES SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES
251 STONEHAVEN ROAD, FALL RIVER, MA
DISTRICT OFFICE CONFERENCE ROOM
MARCH 9, 2023

In attendance: Donald DiBiasio of Somerset, Joan Menard of Fall River and Paul Jennings of Westport

Also in attendance: Brian Bentley, Interim Superintendent-Director, Andrew Rebello, Assistant Superintendent-Principal, Gregory Brilhante, Legal Counsel and Helena Neves, Executive Secretary

The meeting began with a roll call at 5:02 p.m.

It was moved by Mr. Jennings, seconded by Ms. Menard and voted unanimously to dispense with the reading of the February 9, 2023 minutes and approve them, as recorded.

Mr. DiBiasio deferred to Mrs. Torres for the Community Projects update.

Mrs. Torres stated that work on the active Community Projects is going well. The students are working on the playhouse for a 3 year old girl through Rosemary Wish Kids. Students were interviewed by FredTV. The playhouse will be on display at the Rhode Island Home Show. Mr. Cabral and his students have been going out to the softball fields to finish up some work.

Mr. DiBiasio deferred to Mrs. Torres for the 22/23 Housebuilding Project update.

Mrs. Torres stated that the students are finishing up painting. Plumbing and electricity will begin once painting is finished.

Mr. DiBiasio deferred to Mrs. Torres for the 23/24 Housebuilding Project update.

Mrs. Torres stated that Mr. Cabral is still reviewing the drawings but feels uncomfortable with students completing the roof on a tri-level house. Mrs. Torres further stated that the homeowner would not be interested in moving forward if the residential requirement is not waived. Building a house gives students the hands on experience and allows for multiple trades to collaborate on the project. Mrs. Torres asked who is responsible for monitoring the property once it is built to ensure that the residency requirement is met.

Mr. DiBiasio agreed that students would benefit from a house project. However, the concern is the size of the house and what would happen if the students were not able to finish the project. There was a past project that it was not finished and it ended up costing the district.

Mrs. Torres stated that there has been a discussion with the project owner that if for unforeseen circumstances the students were not able to finish the project, it would become the owner's responsibility. Ideally, it would be better for everyone if the project owner would agree to a smaller house.

Attorney Brilhante stated that the district needs to be careful in accepting a large project. Past experience with large projects have not favored the district.

Mr. DiBiasio asked Mr. Jeffery Cabral, Carpentry Instructor for his input on the proposed project.

Mr. Cabral stated that the proposed house is 2900ft² including the garage. The roof would not be completed by the students due to safety concerns. Mr. Cabral is concerned about not being able to finish the house due to its size and feels an agreement with the homeowner would need to be in place.

There was further discussion on the proposed 23/24 housebuilding project. The concerns raised were the size of the house, the possibility of not finishing the project, the residency requirement and work that is to be completed by the homeowner.

Mr. Jennings requested that Mr. Cabral be included in any future meetings with Mr. Lindo.

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Mr. Cabral expressed concern that if the project was to move forward, building permits would be attained under the instructor's license for each trade. If the project is not finished by Diman, it will become an issue as work will continue under the same permit and license.

Mr. DiBiasio asked to table the 23/24 Housebuilding Project and requested that Mrs. Torres and Mr. Cabral meet with Mr. Lindo to discuss the concerns and questions raised and report back at the next meeting.

Mrs. Torres asked if Members would entertain waiving the residency requirement.

Mr. DiBiasio stated that it could be waived if there aren't any other projects available. Building a house is the ideal project for the students.

Mr. Jennings stated that he would only agree to waive the residency requirement if it was done on a yearly basis.

Attorney Brillhante stated that waiving the residency requirement could possibly bring in additional applications.

It was moved by Mr. Jennings, seconded by Ms. Menard and voted unanimously to waive the residency requirement for the 23/24 Housebuilding Project.

It was moved by Mr. Jennings, seconded by Ms. Menard and voted unanimously to adjourn the Sub-Committee meeting at 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Helena S. Neves
Helena S. Neves

Materials Included:

February 9, 2023 minutes
Community Projects List
23/24 Housebuilding Application