

GREATER LOWELL TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL

BUILDING EXPANSION COMMITTEE MEETING

Minutes of September 21, 2023 Meeting

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 5:46 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Jill Davis, Superintendent-Director
Michael Knight, School Business Administrator
Erik Gitschier, Director of Plant Services
Lee Gitschier, School Committee Chair
Kelly Richardson, School Committeeman
Fred Bahou, School Committeeman

Members Absent: Ralph Hogan, School Committeeman (absent at roll call – arrived @ 5:55 p.m.)

Also Present: Matthew Sheehan, School Committeeman

School Business Administrator, Michael Knight, provided an update on the building expansion to the committee members. Mr. Knight informed the members that we are currently held up with special permitting with the town of Tyngsboro as a result of a recent Tyngsboro Zoning Board meeting in September.

Mr. Knight reviewed the timeline of events which began with permit filing in July; however, Tyngsboro was in the process of getting a new engineer contract in place resulting in a town engineer meeting occurring in August where changes were discussed and completed. Mr. Knight returned to the September Zoning Board meeting with an agreement between engineers that we had met all requirements, with the only engineering requirement in bi-laws that remained to be met was regarding piping. Superintendent Davis included that we had approval from the Conservation Committee, as we met guidelines to build in flood zone.

At the Zoning Board meeting, Mr. Knight met with some resistance from the members. The board has now requested 100-year storm data for storm water management from us as opposed to what is generally used (25-50 years), looking at the rest of the school property for other viable options, as well as asking for the purpose of the expansion. Mr. Knight informed the board the expansion would be used to lower class size as our current classrooms are at or above capacity.

Mr. Bahou asked about the expansion increasing enrollment. Mr. Knight stated he did not include that in his response. Superintendent Davis responded to Mr. Bahou that the expansion would not be to increase enrollment, but to lower class size with the possibility to expand high demand technical programs, as well as the possibility to add an additional technical program. Director of Plant Services – Mr. Gitschier also spoke

regarding the current lack of space and the number of additional desks purchased recently in order to support our current students.

Mr. Bahou asked Mr. Knight how many votes were needed for approval. Mr. Knight informed the committee that four (4) out of five (5) votes were needed from the Tyngsboro Zoning Board for approval. He also included that only one vote could be taken without having to go through an appeal process; therefore, due to there being only four (4) members present and the apprehension presented, Mr. Knight asked for a continuance in order to determine next steps.

Mr. Knight noted the importance of the permit approval needing to be secured at the October 5th meeting, as the timeframe of the expansion project is of great concern due to the funding source needing to be spent by September 30, 2024. Superintendent Davis has reached out to legal counsel for their input and availability to attend the next Zoning Board meeting on October 5th. Mr. Gitschier (Director of Plant Services) informed the members that he will be able to attend the meeting along with Mr. Knight. Mr. Erik Gitschier added that water management issues have been addressed over the years and we currently continue to do environmentally friendly steps to keep the water down. Mr. Knight added that our architects will be supplying us with a statement of their remarks disputing the need for the 100-year storm data request to present during the meeting.

MOTION: by Mr. Fred Bahou, seconded by Mr. Richardson to adjourn at 6:15 p.m.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 7 Yes, 1 Absent (Mr. Barton)