

SPECIAL MEETING
ASHE COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
October 8, 2019

The Board held a special dinner meeting in the annex beginning at 5:00 pm as scheduled. The purpose of the meeting was to gather information on the two major types of contract methods for construction of the middle school—design-bid-build and construction management at risk. The Superintendent contracted with an impartial party, LT Consulting, LLC, Bill Powell, who has over 42 years of experience in construction and facility management. Also present at the open meeting were Superintendent Yates, Finance Officer Amanda Coldiron, Maintenance Director Jerry Baker, Architect Larry Greene, Engineer Jason Herman, Principal Dustin Farmer, Assistant Principal Lindsey Williams, Reporter Logan Parks and County Commissioner Todd McNeill.

After his in-depth presentation to the Board on the pros and cons of each contract method, Mr. Powell answered all questions before leaving. Open discussion was then heard between Board members and the others in attendance. Different points were made on each method. The architect stated that prime bidding was the most transparent to tax payers because it was black and white while construction management at risk was more subjective. Information gleaned from the presentation indicated that bringing a construction at risk manager in at this point would not allow the project to reap all the efficiencies that this cost method offers. Bidding would allow the project to begin in the spring. Choosing construction at risk manager now could push the bidding date out from two to four months.

Commissioner Todd McNeill stated that he and the other Commissioners understood that this decision was totally up to the Board of Education and that there would be no hard feelings or retribution on the Commissioner's part regarding its final decision. A motion by Mrs. Eldreth and a second by Mr. McClure moved to use construction management at risk. Discussion on the motion was heard. Concern was expressed about the possibility of having to reduce the square footage of the project due to cost and the possibility of pushing the completion date out. Mr. McClure then rescinded his second, and the motion died on the table. Mrs. Jones then made the motion to go with lump sum bidding, and Dr. Beckworth seconded the motion. Following discussion, the Chairman called for a vote—the motion passed four to one, with Mrs. Eldreth voting against.

Board members expressed that this was one of the most difficult decisions that had been before the Board. Principal Farmer stated that he and his staff were good with the two-story plan.

There being no further business, a motion by Mr. McClure and a second by Mrs. Jones adjourned the meeting at 8:35 pm.