

WESTWOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS BUILDING PROJECT COMMITTEE  
Westwood, Massachusetts

**MEETING MINUTES**  
**March 5, 2021**

**Attendance and Call to Order**

The meeting, held remotely<sup>1</sup>, was called to order at 8:02am by Chair Maya Plotkin. Also present on the video conference were: Ken Aries, Brian Bayer, Allison Borchers, Christopher Coleman, Sarah Cronin, John Cummings, Charles Donahue, Pam Dukeman, Mary Kate Ferreira, Jen Flanders, Abby Hanscom, Nancy Hyde, Lemma Jn-baptiste, Josepha Jowdy, Michelle Miller, Anthony Mullin, Emily Parks and Amanda Phillips. Carol Lewis was absent. Allison Borchers arrived at 8:18am.

Tim Bonfatti and Chin Lin of Compass Project Management; and Don Walter of Dore and Whittier were in attendance.

John Cianciarulo recorded the minutes.

Maya Plotkin recognized the live stream of the meeting which was provided for real-time, public access to the activities of the School Building Committee. Members of the public were able to view a live stream of the meeting via the Internet at [www.westwood.k12.ma.us/live](http://www.westwood.k12.ma.us/live). Westwood Media Center also recorded the meeting for later broadcast on their platforms.

**Chair, Subcommittee, and Working Group Reports**

**Chair's Update**

Maya Plotkin thanked Westwood Media Center for their assistance in community outreach related to the building project.

*School Committee's March 18 Community Forum*

The School Committee will be hosting a community forum on March 18. A forty-five minute presentation will be followed by a forty-five minute question and answer session.

**Schematic Design Package Submission to the MSBA**

The Schematic Design Package has been submitted to the Massachusetts School Building Authority, which has acknowledged receipt. Westwood is scheduled for the Board's April 15 meeting where a final determination on reimbursement will be made.

**Contract Amendments**

Two contract amendments will be voted upon later in the meeting.

Maya Plotkin reviewed feasibility funding:

Uncommitted Feasibility Funds...\$292,290  
Feasibility Uses:  
    Compass fee...\$40,000 (Two months at \$20k per month)  
    Dore and Whittier fees  
        Cost of full survey...\$56,870  
        Geotechnical investigation work...\$12,870  
Total Feasibility Uses...\$109,740  
Remaining Uncommitted...\$182,550

An amendment for Compass' work is being drafted and will be voted upon at a future meeting.

Nancy Hyde asked why there were uncommitted funds. The feasibility funds of \$1.75M was an estimated figure. Some costs came in below estimates, including for the Owner's Project manager and architect. Additionally, the expense for Westwood Media Center has not been charged due to the pandemic.

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<sup>1</sup> Remote meeting held in accordance with Executive Order of Massachusetts Governor, March 12, 2020.

Christopher Coleman asked about the timetable on the contract amendments. They will run from February 14 through April 14.

### Discussion Items

#### Town Tax Impact

Town Finance Director Pam Dukeman presented updated debt estimates related to the project.

The high school debt was reviewed. Total outstanding, outside of Proposition 2 1/2 on the high school project, as of June 30, 2021, is \$3.5M.

The MSBA has since revised its process. The high school was one of the last projects under the older process. The Town issued full debt for the project and then the MSBA pays an amount each year for their share which resulted in a lot of extra interest for towns and the MSBA. The new project will have the MSBA paying their share as the costs are incurred.

#### *Total Net Exempt Debt – Outside Proposition 2 ½*

- High School and Library bonds
- Principal and interest payments for projects approved outside Proposition 2 ½
- Exact amount of debt cost, net of State school reimbursement, is raised in taxes
- When bond ends, exempt taxes end
- FY'21: High School \$573k, Library \$644k
- High School bond ends in FY'23; Library in FY'31
- Payments decline approximately \$100k per year
- High School bond ends 2023
  - Debt roll off comes as elementary school project begins
  - FY'23 high school net amount - \$406k

#### *High School Remaining Debt (Subsidized with MSBA Funding)*

- Annual debt declines each year
- MSBA subsidy is level at \$1.4M
- Net Town portion declines each year
- FY'23 High School net amount \$406k
- High School Project
  - Total net cost to average house \$4,693 or an average of \$233/year for 20 years

#### *Debt Estimates*

Construction of New Hanlon/Deerfield Elementary School

Estimated Total Cost...\$87,820,400

MSBA estimated effective reimbursement rate at 21.12% rate...\$18,543,430

Town estimated cost...\$69,276,970

Bond issued as thirty-year level debt service payment

The cost impact was reviewed:

- Annual Principal and Interest Debt Service at 4%/30 years
  - Total cost: \$121,203,049
    - Average annual cost: \$4,040,101
- Cost per \$100k of home value
  - Total cost: \$2,146
    - Average annual cost: \$72
- Cost per Department of Revenue average home FY'21 value of \$837,300, FY'21 tax bill of \$12,375
  - Total cost: \$17,970

- Average annual cost: \$559

The current \$44M 20-year High School bond, reimbursed at 59% by the MSBA, will be completed in FY'23. At the time of the last debt payment, the \$406k currently raised in taxes would service an approximate \$7M, 4%, 30-year bond.

John Cummings asked if the bond could be issued earlier if interest rates increase. Pam Dukeman responded that this was possible. The Treasurer will monitor.

Anthony Mullin stressed that it is important to reinforce that this is the best known on current interest rates. Tax rates would not increase for a couple of years, likely FY'24. Prior to that, short-term notes will be used until the larger bond is issued.

Josepha Jowdy stressed that the impact is based on the assessed value, not the actual value of the property.

Brian Bayer suggested that the cost of constructing two schools -- rather than the combined Deerfield and Hanlon -- be included when explaining the project to the community. Having this figure known, along with the amount of simply base repair for both schools, will aide in educating the public.

The Committee discussed community outreach to promote the project and the upcoming community forum.

#### Finance and Warrant Commission Presentation

The building project will be presented at the Finance and Warrant Commission's public hearing on Monday, March 8. The School Committee is requesting a warrant article for bridge funding of \$1.45M to run from April until October. This is an effort to bridge the cap and keep the project on schedule.

#### Action Items

Vote to Approve Meeting Minutes of February 5, 2021

**MOTION made by John Cummings to approve the meeting minutes of February 5, 2021. Josepha Jowdy seconded.**

Roll-call vote:

Maya Plotkin: **Yes**

Ken Aries: **Yes**

Brian Bayer: **Yes**

Allison Borchers: **Yes**

Christopher Coleman: **Yes**

Sarah Cronin: **Yes**

John Cummings: **Yes**

Charles Donahue: **Yes**

Pamela Dukeman: **Yes**

Mary Kate Ferreira: **Yes**

Jennifer Flanders: **Yes**

Abigail Hanscom: **Yes**

Nancy Hyde: **Yes**

Lemma Jn-baptiste: Unable to cast vote due to technical difficulties

Josepha Jowdy: **Yes**

Carol Lewis: **Absent**

Michelle Miller: **Yes**

Anthony Mullin: **Yes**

Emily Parks: **Yes**

Amanda Phillips: **Yes**

**Result: 18-0-0 – Approved**

Vote to Approve Meeting Minutes of February 12, 2021

**MOTION made by Charles Donahue to approve the meeting minutes of February 12, 2021. Amanda Phillips seconded.**

Roll-call vote:

Maya Plotkin: **Yes**  
Ken Aries: **Yes**  
Brian Bayer: **Yes**  
Allison Borchers: **Yes**  
Christopher Coleman: **Yes**  
Sarah Cronin: **Yes**  
John Cummings: **Yes**  
Charles Donahue: **Yes**  
Pamela Dukeman: **Yes**  
Mary Kate Ferreira: **Yes**  
Jennifer Flanders: **Yes**  
Abigail Hanscom: **Yes**  
Nancy Hyde: **Yes**  
Lemma Jn-baptiste: **Yes**  
Josepha Jowdy: **Yes**  
Carol Lewis: **Absent**  
Michelle Miller: **Yes**  
Anthony Mullin: **Yes**  
Emily Parks: **Yes**  
Amanda Phillips: **Yes**

**Result: 19-0-0 – Approved**

Vote to Approve Contract Amendments

*Amendment #8 – Survey Work*

**MOTION made by Nancy Hyde to approve the contract amendment for survey work. Seconded by John Cummings.**

Roll-call vote:

Maya Plotkin: **Yes**  
Ken Aries: **Yes**  
Brian Bayer: **Yes**  
Allison Borchers: **Yes**  
Christopher Coleman: **Yes**  
Sarah Cronin: **Yes**  
John Cummings: **Yes**  
Charles Donahue: **Yes**  
Pamela Dukeman: **Yes**  
Mary Kate Ferreira: **Yes**  
Jennifer Flanders: **Yes**  
Abigail Hanscom: **Yes**  
Nancy Hyde: **Yes**  
Lemma Jn-baptiste: **Yes**  
Josepha Jowdy: **Yes**  
Carol Lewis: **Absent**  
Michelle Miller: **Yes**  
Anthony Mullin: **Yes**  
Emily Parks: **Yes**

Amanda Phillips: Yes

**Result: 19-0-0 – Approved**

*Amendment #9 – Geotechnical Work*

**MOTION made by John Cummings to approve the contract amendment for Geotechnical work. Seconded by Charles Donahue.**

Roll-call vote:

Maya Plotkin: Yes  
Ken Aries: Yes  
Brian Bayer: Yes  
Allison Borchers: Yes  
Christopher Coleman: Yes  
Sarah Cronin: Yes  
John Cummings: Yes  
Charles Donahue: Yes  
Pamela Dukeman: Yes  
Mary Kate Ferreira: Yes  
Jennifer Flanders: Yes  
Abigail Hanscom: Yes  
Nancy Hyde: Yes  
Lemma Jn-baptiste: Yes  
Josepha Jowdy: Yes  
Carol Lewis: Absent  
Michelle Miller: Yes  
Anthony Mullin: Yes  
Emily Parks: Yes  
Amanda Phillips: Yes

**Result: 19-0-0 – Approved**

*Amendment #1 – Extended Owner’s Project Manager Service for Schematic Design*

This vote was tabled to a future meeting.

Vote to Approve Payment of Invoices

**MOTION made by Josepha Jowdy to approve payment of invoices totaling \$65,149.29 for the period ending February 28, 2021, as recommended by Compass Project Management. Charles Donahue seconded.**

Roll-call vote:

Maya Plotkin: Yes  
Ken Aries: Yes  
Brian Bayer: Yes  
Allison Borchers: Yes  
Christopher Coleman: Yes  
Sarah Cronin: Yes  
John Cummings: Yes  
Charles Donahue: Yes  
Pamela Dukeman: Yes  
Mary Kate Ferreira: Yes  
Jennifer Flanders: Yes  
Abigail Hanscom: Yes  
Nancy Hyde: Yes  
Lemma Jn-baptiste: Yes

Josepha Jowdy: Yes  
Carol Lewis: Absent  
Michelle Miller: Yes  
Anthony Mullin: Yes  
Emily Parks: Yes  
Amanda Phillips: Yes

**Result: 19-0-0 – Approved**

**New Business**

There was no new business.

**Adjournment**

**MOTION made by Charles Donahue to adjourn the meeting. Josepha Jowdy seconded.**

Roll-call vote:

Maya Plotkin: Yes  
Ken Aries: Yes  
Brian Bayer: Yes  
Allison Borchers: Yes  
Christopher Coleman: Yes  
Sarah Cronin: Yes  
John Cummings: Yes  
Charles Donahue: Yes  
Pamela Dukeman: Yes  
Mary Kate Ferreira: Yes  
Jennifer Flanders: Yes  
Abigail Hanscom: Yes  
Nancy Hyde: Yes  
Lemma Jn-baptiste: Yes  
Josepha Jowdy: Yes  
Carol Lewis: Absent  
Michelle Miller: Yes  
Anthony Mullin: Yes  
Emily Parks: Yes  
Amanda Phillips: Yes

**Result: 19-0-0 – Approved**

The meeting adjourned at 9:00am.

**List of Documents and Exhibits Used at Meeting:**

- Correspondence from D. Walter, Dore and Whittier, to M. Plotkin, dated February 26, 2021, regarding Amendment #8
- Correspondence from D. Walter, Dore and Whittier, to M. Plotkin, dated February 26, 2021, regarding Amendment #9
- Draft debt estimates for Hanlon School Building Project, dated March 2021
- Draft meeting minutes of February 5, 2021 for the Committee's review and approval
- Draft meeting minutes of February 12, 2021 for the Committee's review and approval
- Vendor Invoice Package for period ending February 28, 2021