

WESTWOOD SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Westwood, Massachusetts

EMERGENCY MEETING MINUTES

June 23, 2022

Attendance and Call to Order

The meeting, held remotely¹, was called to order at 4:02pm by Chair Charles Donahue. Also present were: Vice Chair Anthony Mullin; Clerk Amanda Phillips; Maya Khuri Plotkin; and Dorothy Parmelee. Superintendent Emily Parks and Director of Business and Finance Lemma Jn-baptiste were present on behalf of the district. From approximately 4:19pm to 4:21pm, Maya Plotkin experienced technical issues connecting to the remote meeting.

John Cianciarulo recorded the minutes.

A live-stream of the meeting was available online at www.westwood.k12.ma.us/live.

Discussion Item

Superintendent Parks advised that the bids for the Hanlon-Deerfield Elementary building project came in higher than anticipated. One method to offset the impact of the increase is to apply mitigation funds received as part of the University Station redevelopment project. Roughly \$2M was received by the developer to be used if enrollment from the new housing development exceeded the range projected in the fiscal impact study.

Enrollment from University Ave. has not reached the low end of the projected range. At the time, the projection for Gables was an increase of 49-63 students, with an increase of up to twelve at University Place. Enrollment from both currently totals 38.

The district has not needed to access these funds to mitigate the impact and the money has been saved. The use of the funds is not restricted and the School Committee governs its use.

Use of Mitigation Funds for Building Project

Maya Plotkin, also Chair of the School Building Committee, elaborated.

Market conditions have changed dramatically since February. In December 2021 at 60% design, the project was on budget. In February, at 90% design, it was slightly over budget. More significant increases have been seen between February and June.

Bids were received yesterday and, even with the buffer created in anticipation of a potential overage, there is a \$3M shortage for an ideal project.

The School Building Committee will be meeting tomorrow to discuss how to proceed. Since the School Committee can access the \$2M in mitigation funds, that could be applied to the project. Without the additional funding, it will be difficult to move forward.

Mrs. Plotkin further explained the intent of this meeting is to gauge the Committee's interest in applying the University Ave. mitigation funds to the building project. She stated that the mitigation funds were being saved for a rainy day and the market conditions for construction have generated the storm.

The School Building Committee has thirty working days to accept the bid and will not be taking a vote at tomorrow's meeting. Whether or not the School Committee is opposed to using the funds for the project will impact the discussion at tomorrow's School Building Committee meeting.

The Committee discussed using the funds and other options, including delaying the project. However, any delay to the schedule would need to be approved by the Massachusetts School Building Authority.

The Committee did not take a vote, but did reach a consensus that they would be willing to approve the use of the mitigation funds for the building project.

¹ Remote meeting held in accordance with an Act relative to extending certain COVID-19 measures adopted during the State of Emergency.

Mrs. Plotkin stated that she would relay the support and move ahead with the School Building Committee.

The School Committee will schedule a later meeting to vote for the approval.

Adjournment

MOTION made by Amanda Phillips to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Dorothy Parmelee.

Roll-call vote:

Charles Donahue: **Yes**
Anthony Mullin: **Yes**
Amanda Phillips: **Yes**
Maya Plotkin: **Yes**
Dorothy Parmelee: **Yes**

The meeting adjourned at 4:23pm.

Documents/Exhibits Used at Meeting

- None