

# WESTWOOD SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Westwood, Massachusetts

## SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

July 7, 2022

### Attendance and Call to Order

The meeting, held remotely<sup>1</sup>, was called to order at 8:01am 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.

John Cianciarulo recorded the minutes.

A live-stream of the meeting was available online at [www.westwood.k12.ma.us/live](http://www.westwood.k12.ma.us/live). The meeting was also recorded by Westwood Media Center for later viewing on its platforms.

### Discussion Item

#### Use of Mitigation Funds for Building Project

Maya Plotkin reminded the Committee that the bids for the Hanlon-Deerfield building project have come in over-budget. While brainstorming ideas to close the gap, there were discussions of the pros and cons of continuing with the project versus putting it on hold. Both Compass, the project management firm, and Dore and Whittier, the design firm, recommend doing everything possible to accept a bid now.

In connection with that recommendation, there were discussions about using University Station project mitigation funds as a way to close the gap. The School Committee and the district have always earmarked the mitigation money for emergency use. It was not used during the pandemic, as alternate funding sources were secured at the time. The current situation with the bids could be an appropriate use of the mitigation funds.

The Committee held an emergency meeting last week about potentially using the money. Today's special meeting is to have a final discussion and to vote on whether to proceed with the project using these funds.

Superintendent Parks confirmed that there is currently \$2,036,513.31 in University Station project mitigation funds.

Vice Chair Mullin asked whether the bid would be lowered if costs are reduced. Mrs. Plotkin responded that a bulk of the materials are purchased up-front and the bid is reflective of the cost of items purchased now, with estimates for things done at the end of the project, such as landscaping, furniture, fixtures, and equipment. Additionally, value-engineering will be done throughout the project in an attempt to save money. While the full amount of University Station mitigation money may not be needed, it should be anticipated that the full amount will be used.

Mr. Mullin would like pressure to be put on the project management team to maintain costs. He also asked whether the profit would go to the builder if costs are reduced, or if it is refunded. Mrs. Plotkin will ask Compass what would take place.

Further, a healthy contingency is included in the budget and the design team is being asked to work as if that contingency cannot be spent, in the hopes of having some of the \$2M from mitigation remaining.

Chair Donahue recommended seeking other sources of financial support which may be needed, as this may be an ongoing issue throughout the project.

### Action Item

---

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

Appropriation of Funds to the Hanlon School Building Project

**MOTION** made by Maya Plotkin to use the [University Station project] mitigation funds for the [Hanlon School Building] Project. Motion seconded by Amanda Phillips.

Roll-call vote:

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

**Result: 5-0-0 (Approved)**

Adjournment

**MOTION** made by Maya Plotkin to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Anthony Mullin.

Roll-call vote:

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:11am.

Documents / Exhibits Used at Meeting

- None