



Thomas A. Golden, Jr.
City Manager

School Building Committee Meeting *Meeting Minutes*

Date: October 24th, 2024

Time: 6:00 P.M

Location: Lowell High School / Zoom

School Building Committee Members Present:

Thomas A. Golden Jr. (City Manager – School Building Chair), Michael Vaughn (Chief Procurement Officer), William Skinner (Superintendent of Schools), Michael Fiato (Head of Schools), Richard Underwood (Operations and Maintenance Director LPS), Mark Byrne (Former DPW Commissioner), William Samaras (Former Mayor of Lowell), Edward Kennedy (State Senator), Maryann Manzi (Director of Public Safety LPS), Benjamin Opara (Community Member), Paul St Cyr (DPW Commissioner), Vanna Howard (State Representative), Kendrick Del Obre (Student Rep), Jannaca Lang (Student Rep)

City Staff Present:

Shawn Machado (Assistant City Manager), Austin Ball (Deputy CFO)

School Committee Members Present:

Fred Bahou

Perkins Eastman Consultants Present:

Robin Greenberg

Skanska Consultants Present:

Jim Dowd

Suffolk Consultants Present:

Pannha San Chung

The order of business was as follows:

I. Attendance / Roll Call:

Meeting Called to order at 6:08 P.M by S. Machado on behalf of T. Golden and asked to accept and place on file remote / zoom participation, roll call showed 14 present.

City of Lowell:

S. Machado asked the committee to review the minutes from the last meeting and to make a motion to place on file. Minutes passed by roll call, motion by E. Kennedy and 2nd by W. Samaras.

II. Suffolk:

Phase 3 – Construction Update

Pannha – Working on various items in Building C and Building A. Commented on the 1922's building and that new windows have been installed. In November, will start skylight installation in Building C as well as the duct work in Building C. Will also begin the roofing in Building A as well as the window installation.

F. Bahou – Can you elaborate on the trim on the windows?

Pannha – Pannha spoke about the trim of the windows and where it was located.

Pannha – Showed progress photos of phase 2 as well as phasing overview.

Jim – Gave update on the current schedule. The 1922's building has posed many challenges and have run into asbestos issues that were not foreseen. We are going to break up the schedule into two sections for the 1922 building. One section will be the auditorium because there is no way the auditorium will be completed for the August end date. We are currently working with the school to arrange for the students / residents that would have used the auditorium to find another space. Our focus by breaking this up is to deliver the classrooms for the 1922 building. Currently, the classrooms are over a month behind and currently working with Suffolk to deliver the classrooms for August, however the auditorium will not be delivered in time but will be delivered in 2026.

B. Opara – Will there be any cost overruns based on the revised schedule?

Jim – Currently assessing these figures but the asbestos items have been concerning.

F. Bahou – Is asbestos removal MSBA reimbursable?

Jim – We are looking into this with the MSBA.

K. Del Obre – How long would the asbestos abatement take? Also, will the asbestos be in the air?

Jim – There will be no contaminants in the air, spoke about the process of abating the asbestos.

M. Byrne – Will there be additional costs due to the new schedule?

Jim – Not anticipating any at this time.

R. Underwood – Do you expect to find the same issues as we get into the next phase of the project?

Jim – Yes, we do have already begun to look at this and started to plan ahead.

R. Underwood – Have we looked into any cost benefits to extending the project?

Jim – The other costs that would be incurred to extend the project would make it unfeasible.

E. Kennedy – Mentioned that his office has been getting calls regarding the music department and asked if the project team could look into that. Also, since the auditorium won't be done but will probably use UMASS Lowell auditorium in the meantime, is there a way we could be reimbursed for these expenses?

Jim – The complaints have already been addressed. In terms of the reimbursement, we are working with the City Manager's office to address this.

F. Bahou – Just wanted to clarify that we are a month behind in the classrooms due to asbestos? Is there a way we can get caught up?

Pannha – Yes, working on trying to get caught up.

F. Bahou – Asked about access to auditorium with the new scheduling.

Jim – Working on a new access point.

M. Fiato – Commented on how the fine arts students will be disappointed to learn of the new schedule.

S. Machado – Any Questions? (None at this time)

III. Suffolk – MBE Workforce Update:

Pannha – Currently exceeding the goal of the minority workforce, the goal is 15.3% and we are currently at 25.6%. Project goal for female workforce is 6.9% and currently we are at 4.3%. Lastly, the Lowell resident workforce is at 9.21%. Currently working with DEI consultant to increase these numbers.

B. Opara – Commented regarding how these numbers are moving in the right direction.

IV. Perkins Eastman - Designer Update:

Robin – No update this month.

V. Skanska – Budget / Cash Flow Update

J. Dowd –The total budget for the LHS project is \$381.9 million dollars and the MSBA has reimbursed the city \$154 million to date. Last month’s billing to the city was \$5.8 million. Currently have 26 change orders to date and the contingency number is \$12.5 million remaining.

E. Kennedy – Asked about the \$3 million change order that is being reviewed. Is that one of the more significant ones for the 1922 building?

Jim – It will be one of the more significant ones for the 1922’s building.

M. Byrne – Is there any plan to try to get the auditorium on track?

Jim – Unfortunately, this wouldn’t be feasible because the auditorium is one of the hardest parts of the project to complete.

W. Samaras – Spoke about the contingency fund and asked about the comfortability of the remaining contingency.

Jim – As of now, we are closely monitoring it but feel as though we should be okay.

S. Machado – Any other questions? (None at this time).

Next Steps:

Jim – Next steps is getting into mechanical’s for the 80’s and 22’s building. You will be able to see the positive steps on the outside within the next couple of months.

F. Bahou – Do you expect to encounter the same asbestos issues in the other half of the building?

Jim – No, because it was in one area and we are actively trying to look for it in advance.

L. Skinner – Commented on how professional Skanska, Suffolk and Perkins are when concerns arise and LPS thanks you for addressing them head on.

B. Opara – Commented on the use of contingency and how carefully reviewed it has been.

S. Machado - Any other questions? (None at this time)

Motion to adjourn at 6:44 by B. Opara, 2nd by R. Underwood, so moved.