

The buildings and grounds committee met on November 16, 2020 at 4:30 p.m. with the following present: Joe Dwyer and Barb Neprud. Jill Decent was absent. Jamie Skjeveland and Bill Tollefson were also present.

Plan for CTE Wing Remodel in Summer 2021 – Project Budget – The committee revisited the CTE Wing remodeling budget that was initially discussed at the October 26, 2020 regular School Board meeting. The CTE remodeling has shifted from a pre-referendum budget protocol of light remodeling to a level of medium to heavy remodeling. This, in addition to the equipment upgrades that were planned pre-referendum, results in an updated budget projection that is \$1.1 million higher. Family and Consumer Science (FACS) was not part of any pre-referendum budget, and the expansion of the project to include remodeling the FACS foods room adds \$150,000 to the project budget. Finally, an expansion of remodeling of the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade pod to include improvements and renovations to make more efficient and effective use of the space in the area around the student restrooms in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade pod adds an estimated \$380,000 to the remodel budget. This brings the total expanded budget up \$1.6 million over the pre-referendum planning estimate.

When these budget updates are melded with the Phase I almost-actual costs and the projections for Phase III and beyond, the total over-budget estimate is \$844,000. After reviewing a number of factors associated with the pre-referendum budget and what is included (or not included) in the overall budget calculation, there are a number of factors that will work to eliminate this over-budget. These include a pre-referendum budget estimate of remodeling contingency at 15% which will likely run closer to 5%; interest earnings on invested bond fund proceeds are not included in the overall budget to this point and there has already been over \$550,000 in interest income earned through June 30, 2020; an excellent bidding market is anticipated for Phase II and possibly Phase III, which should result in actual costs less than budget; CTE was initially anticipated in Phase III and included an additional year of inflationary cost adjustment that will no longer be applicable; there is some inherent redundancy or duplication of budget as the facilities evaluation costs occasionally overlap with project remodeling costs; the roof is the final project and there may be some options that will lower the cost and/or scope of the roof replacement, if needed; and the Board has one final opportunity to review the overall project budget as they consider taking action to award bids in March or April 2021. These factors will eliminate the current project over-budget.

The committee members expressed their desire to continue with plans for CTE, including the addition of the FACS food lab remodel, so that this space would become a focal point of the overall project and would be designed and furnished to serve student needs for many years to come. There was a discussion that some of the very expensive manufacturing equipment pieces may not be available with current budget proceeds, but would be planned into the design and become part of a longer-term budgetary plan. The committee was satisfied in their understanding of this option.

Status of Phase I Projects and Historical Perspective – The committee reviewed a number of factors that resulted in the delay of the completion of the Phase I (summer of 2020) projects. Plans were submitted to the State of Minnesota plan review division in March 2020 with an expected turnaround that is normally about four weeks. Because of COVID and the movement of State employees in plan review not allowed to work from their offices, this delay continued much longer than anticipated, ultimately leading to approval of plan review on August 4, 2020. \

Contractors had bid the project in the spring of 2020 assuming that the construction work would start in early June 2020. The normal process would have been a bid of the job and go to work. With the delay in plan review completion until August 4, the result was the need to coordinate and reschedule bidders to start work over two (2) months later than they (the bidders) had anticipated, created the most significant challenges and delays. Bidders plan work around what they are bidding and the work they have lined up into the future. The Crosby-Ironton School project moved beyond the timeframe that most bidders anticipated, sliding the school work into projects that were then-current and were considered or planned to have happened for the contractors after the school work would normally have been completed. The delay in plan approval also resulted in delays in ordering of materials which needed to be field verified prior to final order, pushing some expanding lead times due to COVID even farther into the COVID pandemic time period. There was also the need to complete some additional construction functions beyond the plan because construction needed to take place when school was in session rather than over the summer,

including the installation of area of separation walls between the construction zone and the rest of the school. The gym divider curtain wall and the folding wall in STEAM were also delayed by the supplier due to an inability to complete submittals and shop drawings.

There were a number of things that worked well through the process. Communication has been exceptional between all elements of the construction team. There have been no contractors who have taken the delay and used it as a reason to leave the project completely, nor to use the delay or COVID as excuses to apply back charges. Communication with building uses was also effective, with delays being communicated with building administrators and impacted stakeholders so that alternate plans could be made. These groups have been patient and accommodating to the process. Site improvements, which were not subject to the plan review being completed, were started and finished on time.

Improvement plans include the potential of submitting the CRES and High School remodeling projects for the summer of 2021 separately in the hopes that at least one will make it through the process on time. Because of the scope of the summer of 2021 projects and the inability to hold school without those areas available to staff and students, no demolition will take place until there is an assurance that the building permit can be secured timely and that the project can still be substantially completed before school starts in the Fall of 2021. Initial steps in the process need to happen sooner, including Board approval to be taken in January (or earlier), rather than February, as was the case for summer of 2020 projects. This will allow more time for plan review and the other steps to be completed before school dismisses for the summer, so that remodeling can start promptly in late May.

Moving Toward Consensus – District Vision, CTE Staff, and Manufacturing Partners – Skjeveland reviewed the process that was undertaken in bringing CTE staff and manufacturing partners together to help plan toward the District vision for this area. All three component groups – the School District, staff, and the manufacturing partners – have strong beliefs and are coming from differing and diverse backgrounds. This has created detailed dialogue and exhibited the need for staff and the manufacturing partners to develop a communication flow to keep all components of the planning moving forward, including areas where compromise was necessary. The committee again engaged in dialogue about the need for a longer-term vision and plan for certain pieces of very expensive equipment and a tiered approach to the inflow of equipment over time, but which has a place or location identified on the building footprint, with mechanical and electrical infrastructure in place to accommodate the installation of the equipment that will be purchased in the future.

The meeting adjourned at 5:35 p.m.

Respectfully prepared and submitted by William Tollefson