

1 Joint Facilities Advisory Committee Meeting

2 Thursday, February 18th, 2021

3 Meeting Minutes- Approved 03 18 2021

4 Attendees Via Webinar:

5 Administrative Team: Adam Steel- Superintendent, Michele Croteau- SAU #39 Business
6 Administrator and Roger Preston- SAU #39 Director of Facilities

7 Committee Members: Amy Facey- SCSB Member/ JFAC Chair, Shannon Gascoyne-JFAC Vice
8 Chair, Amherst NH, Tom Gauthier- ASB Member, Amherst NH, Ellen Gruzdien- ASB Member,
9 Amherst NH, Stephanie Grund- SCSB Member, Amherst NH, Jeanne Ludt, Amherst NH, Brian
10 Coogan, Amherst NH, John Bowkett, Amherst NH, Lisa Eastland, Amherst NH, and Victoria
11 Parisi- Amherst NH

12 Meeting Minutes: Danae A. Marotta

13 Public: Lance Whitehead and Anne Ketterer- Lavallee Brensinger Professional Architects,
14 Manchester NH.

15 I. Call to Order

16 **Chair of the Joint Facilities Advisory Committee, Ms. Amy Facey, called the meeting to**
17 **order at 5:01PM.**

18 II. Minutes Approval

19 **Ms. Parisi motioned to approve the 01 21 2021 Draft Minutes. Mr. John Bowkett seconded**
20 **the motion. Motion passed. No one opposed. Ms. Lisa Eastland abstained.**

21 There was no further discussion.

22 III. Subcommittee Updates

- 23
- 24 • Amherst School Board Subcommittee

25 Ms. Gascoyne noted that earlier in the month the ASB took a resolution to carry on the work
26 with the facilities project, this would be for the March 22 ballot. It would be similar in scope to
27 what they have been working on, a new elementary school and a major renovation to the middle
28 school. They would be continuing with the work of the JFAC. It was a productive meeting and
29 they have shared the process to date and where they have stopped in their plans with PR.

30 She asked Ms. Facey if she had missed anything.

31 Ms. Facey added that they have embedded ASB members to their subcommittees. They are a
32 part of the Slack channel now. The JFAC is looking forward to working with the ASB
33 collaboratively.

- 34 • Construction Cost Subcommittee

35 Ms. Gascoyne noted that there are two ASB members that have joined the Construction Cost
36 subcommittee.

37 SAU #39 Director of Facilities, Mr. Roger Preston, added that they have a meeting set up for
38 next week on the 24th from 3-5pm to go over the numbers for the proposed project. ASB Chair,
39 Ms. Elizabeth Kuzsma and ASB Member Ms. Terri Behm have joined the subcommittee. He is
40 looking forward to a good discussion.

41 Ms. Parisi thanked Mr. Preston for bringing that group together so quickly.

42 Ms. Facey added that they want to take another deep dive in the numbers and balancing the
43 scope with the cost. They want to take the time to and get that solidified. It will be important for
44 the messaging.

45 Mr. Lance Whitehead, Lavallee Brensinger Professional Architects, Manchester NH, commented
46 that they will be reviewing the costs and will want to be reviewing escalation the closer they get
47 to the bond vote. Time will generate cost and they had predicted a 4.5% escalation, it is
48 something to take into account.

49 • Finance Subcommittee

50 Ms. Facey commented that they do have ASB members on that subcommittee as well. She would
51 like to set up a meeting with that group and the bond counsel to understand how the finance
52 process works. They will need people that have a clear understanding.

53 Mr. Bowkett asked if they had talked with Mr. Joel Gordon, from the Advisory Finance
54 Committee.

55 Ms. Facey replied, no, this is more for the bond financing.

56 Mr. Coogan inquired if this about the bond financing at large or is it the Bond Counsel and their
57 opinion.

58 Ms. Facey replied that she was thinking of the second option. She wants to have a firm grasp as a
59 subcommittee if and when there are questions.

60 Mr. Coogan replied that he has a general understanding, but it is not his domain.

61 Ms. Facey noted that Superintendent, Mr. Adam Steel, has let them know that the Bond counsel
62 can be at a subcommittee meeting.

63 Ms. Gascoyne inquired if they can come up with a list of questions and answers.

64 SAU #39 Business Administrator, Ms. Michele Croteau, suggested a separate meeting just on
65 those items. They have some federal funding that may be available. They can then come back to
66 this group.

67 Ms. Facey thanked Ms. Croteau. She will connect her to get that meeting set up.

68 Ms. Parisi inquired if there was anyone on the Town side that can help with information.

69 Ms. Facey added that they can brainstorm and figure out who to reach out to.

70 Ms. Ludt added that she is concerned about the comments that she has seen on social media. She
71 inquired if in the case of cost, should they try to get additional citizens on those committees. It is
72 just a thought. They cannot have large public forums at this point.

73 Ms. Facey replied that it is a great suggestion and more participation is always welcome.

74 Ms. Gruzdien added that it sounds like a PR subcommittee responsibility. She believes that it is a
75 good idea. She suggested that they take note of the comments so that they can use it in a positive
76 way.

77 Mr. Coogan commented that they need to be thoughtful in looking for the perspectives from the
78 community. It needs to be proactive and not reactive.

79 • PR Subcommittee

80 Ms. Gascoyne added the PR group has met and they had discussed informing the community and
81 using March, April and May. They know that their project will still be a new school and a middle
82 school renovation, and those costs are still being refined. They will spend the spring exploring
83 ways to message the need and having office hours. This will be around specific topics and there
84 will be three members of the committee, starting in April.

85 They discussed Ms. Parisi finalizing the calendar, building out a spreadsheet with the mailers, fb
86 posts and website updates. They discussed June as starting the information campaign, doing it
87 earlier than that can confuse voters, 4th of July is also a big opportunity.

88 Ms. Eastland volunteered to help with the PR Subcommittee. She noted that the community is
89 already discussing it on social media and suggested they give people notice.

90 Ms. Gruzdien reminded the committee that putting out information too early people will be
91 confused. She asked Ms. Eastland if she would be willing to help them with the social media
92 aspect. It is a job to manage the climate on social media.

93 Ms. Eastland replied yes; she has been moderating that already. She suggested to put the trailer
94 out.

95 Ms. Gascoyne added that this is still a commitment by the ASB and want the time to allow the
96 citizens to be fully informed. They will not be discussing finance in the early office hours but
97 rather need. They are still in a stage where the numbers are being refined. The costs might go up
98 in terms of construction escalation, but not scope. They have done so much homework and so
99 much research in terms of the need and those will be the first meetings.

100 Ms. Ludt mentioned that they know the reasons why the ASB has chosen not to add this to the
101 ballot this year, but they haven't really put something out (only in a board meeting) that
102 encapsulates that. She suggested that the ASB put out something that explains the reasoning, it
103 is not their job as a committee. Without that information, you have that rumor mill and
104 miscommunication.

105 Mr. Gauthier explained that he did an editorial for the Amherst Citizen and it is published in the
106 February edition. They will be discussing it at their next meeting as well.

- 107 Ms. Gruzdien commented that she wants to be methodical about their plan going forward and
108 wants to have all of the right information.
- 109 Ms. Facey remarked that they can add that is the path that they are on.
- 110 Mr. Coogan emphasized that they have been discussing this for years in the community.
- 111 Ms. Eastland added that she understands but still people are not aware.
- 112 Mr. Coogan suggested that they have to have an Open House to show the community the dire
113 facility needs. They have devices that they can't even find parts for.
- 114 Ms. Gascoyne added that when they are looking at educational infrastructure it is not a local
115 problem but a nationwide problem. They have a virtual tour and it is not just in Amherst. They
116 are a committed group.
- 117 Ms. Grund mentioned that there are a lot of parents that are distracted, especially this year and
118 they have lost focus. She suggested they get tours and people in the buildings.
- 119 Ms. Facey added that they do have their work cut out for them and it is a huge deal for their
120 community. The more they can be calculated in getting the message out in every avenue the
121 better they will be.
- 122 Mr. Preston noted that there are 4 RFP's that they want to send out they need to work on the
123 details and find a project manager and offer some savings as well.
- 124 Ms. Facey added that she had a discussion with Mr. Steel to discuss their next phase of their
125 work and to get prepared for what is to come this year and hopefully, if the bond should pass.
126 She met with Ms. Gascoyne, Mr. Preston, Ms. Kuzsma, and Mr. Steel to discuss what they need
127 to do now to get some work done to refine the project that they are looking at and also to be
128 prepared to execute for next year.
- 129 Mr. Steel suggested that they look at putting out an RFP for the architect, and it is something that
130 they need to do. They would like to get that process started. They discussed having site and civil
131 engineering come underneath that, and hiring a CM and PM. They do not have a lot of money to
132 spend but they need to look at securing these people. They have some budget left and can have
133 some initial work that can be done.
- 134 Mr. Preston added that they have 4 RFP's that they want to send out, architectural and site and
135 civil at the same time. They are looking to have this published by April, back by May and
136 interviews hopefully in June.
- 137 Ms. Facey added that they met as a small subcommittee and are looking to expand as things
138 progress.
- 139 Mr. Steel mentioned that when this bond passes next March that they don't delay any time in
140 putting the team together. The four prime contractors include an architect, a site and civil
141 engineer, construction manager and an owner's project manager. They also discussed the use of
142 the remaining dollars, which would be an updated construction cost estimate if need be and

143 doing some of the site and civil engineering work and/or geotechnical studies so that they can
144 validate the Wilkins site.

145 Ms. Gruzdien inquired if they would be looking for all new design.

146 Ms. Facey replied, no, the designs belong to them if LBA is selected or not.

147 Mr. Steel replied that the community expects them to have a competitive selection process.

148 Ms. Parisi added her support for getting to these steps and that they are moving forward.

149 Ms. Facey noted that they have some more time to discuss the Clark School. It definitely
150 warrants another subcommittee.

151 Ms. Gascoyne mentioned that they need to speak to the options and there are lots of ideas. If
152 there is a group willing it would be a worthy subcommittee to set up.

153 Mr. Gauthier added that they should understand what the building could be used for and they
154 need to clarify what that is before someone buys it.

155 Ms. Ludt commented that they need to remember that the Amherst Village is largely residential.
156 She is inclined to believe that it would be a great asset for the community, all kinds of things
157 because of low impact and benefit.

158 Ms. Grund mentioned that they need to ask the neighbors because they need their buy in.

159 Ms. Facey remarked that she is looking for someone to head up that committee. This would be a
160 good opportunity to look to the wider community.

161 Ms. Gascoyne noted that Ms. Grayson added that she is willing to help.

162 Ms. Grund replied that they were waiting for budgets to settle down before they reached out to
163 Principal Berry for the Souhegan 2.0 subcommittee.

164 IV. Next Steps

165 Ms. Facey added that the Cost Committee will be meeting next week, and she was interested in
166 more information on Ms. Croteau's funding sources.

167 Mr. Whitehead remarked that they tuned in to see if the committee needed anything from them.
168 He asked them to keep them informed and they are definitely interested.

169 Ms. Facey replied that they will have more information at the next JFAC meeting.

170 She thanked Mr. Whitehead.

171 V. Meeting Adjourned

172 **Ms. Facey adjourned the meeting at 5:57PM**

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