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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS.

TOWN OF NORTH PROVIDENCE

SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE

MEETING IN RE:

SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE

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FEBRUARY 9, 2023
9:00 A.M.

2000 SMITH STREET
NORTH PROVIDENCE, RI

PRESENT:

- G. RICHARD FOSSA, CHIEF OF STAFF, CHAIRMAN
- MAYOR CHARLES LOMBARDI
- ALBERT COSTA, PURCHASING AGENT
- JAMES FUOROLI, SUPERINTENDENT OF BUILDINGS
- DR. FRANK PALLOTTA, SCHOOL COMMITTEE
- JOSEPH GOHO, SUPERINTENDENT
- ROBERT O'BRIEN
- MARIO MARTONE, COUNCILMAN
- RONALD BACCALA, COUNCILMAN
- CHARLES POLLOCK, SCHOOL COMMITTEE
- THOMAS NORATO
- STEVEN PITASSI
- LISA CASINELLI

ALSO PRESENT:

MATTHEW MCBURNIE, LEFT FIELD

APPEARANCES:

FOR THE PURCHASING BOARD. . . CHARLES RUGGERIO, ESQ.

SUSAN V. FITZPATRICK
CERTIFIED COURT REPORTER

1 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay, meeting will come to order.
2 I'm going to turn it over to Matt and see where we go from
3 here.

4 MR. MCBURNIE: Thank you. Hello everyone, Matt
5 McBurnie with Left Field. Thank you all for meeting this
6 morning. I just wanted to give all of you kind of a general
7 overview of the status of the project now. We'll start with
8 the status of the request for qualifications and request for
9 the proposals for the 2 bids that will be going out. The
10 first for qualifications will be for the design services for
11 the 3 elementary schools. Those will be all together as one
12 group, so we will be looking for one design team to complete
13 the work for the 3 elementary schools together. That will be
14 advertised tomorrow and bids will be open on March 3rd. And
15 between now and then we will have a pre proposal meeting, I
16 believe it's a mandatory meeting, and it will also be open
17 for questions. Questions I believe the 16th -- oh no, I'm
18 sorry, the 23rd. So that bid will be open on the 3rd.
19 Following that time line will be the request for proposals
20 for the design proposal services for the high school addition
21 and auditorium. That, the difference between the request for
22 qualifications and request for proposals is because the
23 design build, the contract prime will be the contractor, and
24 that is different from professional architectural engineering
25 services. In the State of Rhode Island you cannot request

1 proposals for the professional architectural engineering
2 services, that has to be qualification based. So just, if
3 you hear me say RQ, RP, there is a specific difference as to
4 why I'm saying that. And the time line for the RP will match
5 that of the RQ, so by March 3rd we will have bids open for
6 both services. Let's, next item is the estimate discussion.
7 So as some of you know, through the past few months, we've
8 gone through an estimate process. Part of the stage of
9 submission was to provide a cost overview. Studio JAED had
10 an independent cost estimator include an estimate on the
11 project. We advised, Left Field advised that a second
12 independent cost estimator be brought on. Both have provided
13 their numbers to us, and I can, I will go through what we
14 received so far. So keep in mind with these numbers, they
15 are inflated because of the status of the design. We are at
16 schematic design, there are still a lot of unknowns. You
17 will typically see higher estimates at schematic design just
18 because the design isn't fully vetted out yet. And just for,
19 for example, on the mechanical, electrical and plumbing side,
20 the drawings were not complete. There's an MEP narrative
21 which is basically a summary of the work to be completed, and
22 that's appropriate for this time period. So the PMC, which
23 was the Left Field independent estimator, came in, this is
24 for hard costs only, so construction only, not architectural
25 services, not engineering, not OPM services, not FF&E, not

1 technology, this is really what the contractor is going to
2 put in place. They came in at 132 million for the 3 high
3 schools -- I'm sorry, 3 elementary schools and the high
4 school. And Miyakoda, which was Studio JAED's estimator,
5 came in at 112 million. So I know we are kind of throwing
6 these numbers out to you, it's a big write, so I will try to
7 go into the details of what those numbers mean to the overall
8 \$125 million budget that we are working within. If you were
9 to look at the RIDE hard costs, RIDE specifies between hard
10 and soft costs. Eighty percent of the project has to be hard
11 costs, 20 percent has to be soft costs. You have to fall
12 within those parameters. RIDE's hard cost number for these
13 projects is at 101 million. So that's 80 percent of 125
14 million. If you compare the 132 million and 112 million and
15 the 101 million, you're getting close to apples to apples.
16 The, again, those cost estimates are from the market and
17 they're based on schematic design level of effort. The RIDE
18 costs are based on full fledged construction document. So
19 the numbers that the estimators provided will come down
20 because the contingencies that are held within each line item
21 will decrease. You go in with higher contingencies because
22 there are so many unknowns at this time. I completed a
23 pricing exercise to see where we could end up with the
24 current market pricing based on the estimates received. And
25 for the 3 elementary schools, the high school addition and

1 the high school auditorium, we get to the numbers that RIDE
2 will hopefully approve, which is the 101 million for hard
3 costs and the 23, 24 million for the soft costs, to be within
4 the 125 million, so to not go over that \$125 million value.
5 And that yields, at that current stage of design, the 3
6 elementary schools can still increase by about 27 percent in
7 size. So square footage of the existing elementary schools
8 can increase based on how you want to allocate the money,
9 with an average of 27 percent. You can go higher in one,
10 lower in another depending on how you want to, how you want
11 to approach that. And that also gives you the size that was
12 originally in Studio Jaed's design for the high school
13 addition and then the auditorium as well. So I know that's
14 lot of information all at once. Yes, sir?

15 MR. MARTONE: If I remember correctly --

16 THE CHAIRMAN: State your name.

17 MR. MARTONE: Oh, Mario Martone, council. If I
18 remember at one point at one of the previous meetings, that
19 the estimators have to be within so many percentage points of
20 each other, or did I miss --

21 MR. MCBURNIE: That's not a requirement, but
22 that's a best practice. So --

23 MR. MARTONE: That's a pretty big difference.

24 MR. MCBURNIE: That is a big difference. There
25 is a, we did have a reconciliation meeting with the

1 estimators and we see where the difference was, it was in the
2 site work. So we reconciled those numbers and that was part
3 of my pricing exercise. So there's not a legal requirement
4 to share that, it's just best practice to kind of bring them
5 in line with each other.

6 MR. MARTONE: Got it, okay, thank you.

7 MR. MCBURNIE: And actually this process will
8 take place again at design development level of drawings and
9 then construction documents. So this is kind of a first
10 pass, and again, with a very vague design, that schematic
11 design. So yes, so that is a lot of information, but it's
12 good to know that at the current market pricing, which is
13 very much inflated from what RIDE considers allowable, just
14 to throw it out there, RIDE considers \$529 per square foot to
15 be allowable under their guidelines. The numbers that were
16 coming in were around the \$800 per square foot. That's not
17 going to happen, it is schematic design, there's a lot of
18 contingency in that. Those numbers will absolutely come
19 down, and what we're seeing in the market for other active
20 projects going on now is closer down to the \$550 to \$600 per
21 square foot number. So those numbers will come down to the
22 real numbers, but at this time I have to stress that they,
23 there are so many contingencies within each line item just
24 because you don't know exactly what the design is going to
25 be. So the numbers seem scary for us, but it's all part of

1 the process and they are in line where they would be at
2 schematic design. Any questions on that, as I go through?

3 (BRIEF PAUSE)

4 MR. MCBURNIE: No? Okay. So the pricing
5 exercise is going to be included in the stage 2 submission,
6 so we have that part of the stage 2 submission complete. And
7 as RIDE starts to review stage 2, we will be working with the
8 designer that comes on as part of the design services RQ to
9 see where we align in items and where we need to come down.
10 Now, the biggest way to come down in budget or come down in
11 costs would be to decrease square footage, understanding the
12 design right now as it stands is for, on average, 46 thousand
13 square feet per elementary school. That is high, that's more
14 than, than what would be needed. The RIDE numbers were, the
15 RIDE numbers will bring that down to what is truly needed
16 based on enrollment. So within the 27 percent that I
17 mentioned earlier, that brings you up to a higher enrollment
18 number than you currently have, so you gain space. So that
19 if your enrollment numbers do increase, you'll have it. But
20 RIDE will push back most likely on the high, the high square
21 footage based on actual enrollment and the forecast of
22 enrollment. Okay, and bringing that to the next item, the
23 RIDE submission, so as of today the school building
24 committee, school committee and town council approval to
25 submit RIDE stage 2 have been obtained. Everything is on

1 track for Studio JAED to complete stage 2 submission and
2 submit by February 15, which is the RIDE deadline. Thank you
3 all for taking part in getting us to this point because
4 without submitting on February 15, we would have to wait
5 until September 15 and you would lose out on the potential 80
6 percent reimbursement. So these dates have been key to hit.
7 We have hit them, and now the last one is just the hit the
8 submit button on the 15th and we'll be good to go with their
9 review to begin. Now from what I understand, their review
10 process, there is a back and forth. So they will obtain all
11 the information, they will send out memos of what is needed,
12 some of the information that is needed. So we will be
13 working closely with RIDE as they review the package to make
14 sure that come May, they are able to provide the updated
15 award amount for each school and what reimbursement we'll
16 have. Yes, sir?

17 MR. PITASSI: Steve Pitassi, just a couple of
18 questions. What do you see with inflation, hopefully looks
19 like starting to decrease, so costs coming down, and
20 availability of materials? Do you see that as a problem?

21 MR. MCBURNIE: So I'll start with the materials.
22 I don't see the availability of materials being a problem,
23 outside of electrical gear. Electrical switch gears has a
24 very long lead time right now. For a major piece of switch
25 gear, 80 to 90 weeks is where you, is what you're looking at.

1 As far as structural steel, which would be our most pressing
2 item on the path of the schedule, I am hearing that
3 structural steel is becoming more readily available. So the
4 materials that we need initially to enable the work, those
5 are available. The ones that you need closer towards the
6 second half the of the project and getting everything live,
7 those have the lead times. But within our current schedule,
8 those lead times are working.

9 MR. PITASSI: Thank you.

10 MR. MCBURNIE: And then the question on
11 inflation, I don't see it decreasing, but I don't see it
12 increasing over the next couple of years. There are numbers
13 for escalation in these estimates, we are right around 5 to 6
14 percent for escalation.

15 MR. PITASSI: That was my other question, okay,
16 that's what I want to know.

17 MR. MCBURNIE: So that's covered within those
18 numbers. But yes, I don't see a major decrease, but I don't
19 see a major increase either. And that's what we are seeing
20 with projects kind of across the board right now.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: Before we ask any other
22 questions, Mayor, one second, I have been advised by counsel
23 that we have to take a roll call so this becomes an official
24 meeting. So I'm going to read off the name, the names of the
25 committee. Some might not be committee members, but just as

1 I read them off, just take it, Sue, okay? Dino Autiello?
2 Donna Hanley? Lisa Casinelli?

3 MS. CASINELLI: Here.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: Frank Pallotta?

5 DR. PALLOTTA: Here.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: Richard Fossa, here. Jennifer
7 Quattrochi? Jim Fuoroli?

8 MR. FUOROLI: Here.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: Joe Goho?

10 MR. GOHO: Here.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: Sue Fitzpatrick, are you here.

12 THE REPORTER: I'm here.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Joseph Nickerson? Maria Vallee?
14 She's unfortunately, Maria Vallee's father passed away, for
15 your information. Mario Martone?

16 MR. MARTONE: Here.

17 THE CHAIRMAN: Mayor Charles Lombardi?

18 MAYOR LOMBARDI: Here.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Bob O'Brien?

20 MR. O'BRIEN: Here.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: Ron Baccala?

22 MR. BACCALA: Here.

23 THE CHAIRMAN: Steve Pitassi?

24 MR. PITASSI: Here.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Tom Norato?

1 MR. NORATO: Here.

2 THE CHAIRMAN: So we have a quorum, so we can
3 continue.

4 MR. POLLOCK: Chief, my name was left off again.

5 MAYOR LOMBARDI: Well, excuse me, I want to just
6 check that again, I want to straighten that out, but your
7 name was never on the original committee. So I'm going to,
8 we will straighten that out for you. Just to let know, I'm
9 sure that's the reason why your name -- I meant to mention
10 this a couple of times, but we will take care of that.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: All right, and you were going to
12 ask a question, Mayor?

13 MAYOR LOMBARDI: Oh no, you mentioned about the
14 finance Director's dad, that's the reason why she's not here.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: Any other questions? Any other
16 questions? Counselor, do you have anything?

17 MR. RUGGERIO: I have a question, Mr. McBurnie.
18 Charles Ruggiero. Just in terms of the inflationary costs
19 that are kind of built in and expected, does that impact the
20 RIDE reimbursement rate at all?

21 MR. MCBURNIE: No.

22 MR. RUGGERIO: No. That will impact, the
23 impact, you'll see that in the overall budget of the project,
24 so it doesn't impact the RIDE process, no.

25 MR. MCBURNIE: Yes, sir?

1 MR. GOHO: I have a question, any impact on the
2 project regarding the continued, or hopefully they stop,
3 interest rate hikes?

4 MR. MCBURNIE: We're not seeing any from the
5 estimates. They have those percentages baked into their
6 numbers, so we're not seeing an issue with that, no. Also,
7 you have, there is, I'll call it float, but there is room
8 within these numbers based on the size that we are trying to
9 increase to. So we're trying to get up to 27 percent based
10 on these numbers. If there were some unknowns and you were
11 to increase that, you are still at least getting higher than
12 what's currently there. And again, those, the numbers that
13 we're seeing now are really protected with contingencies, so.

14 MAYOR LOMBARDI: I think you mentioned this, I
15 want to just clarify this. So the square footage of the
16 buildings and the size of the buildings, we're not locked
17 into that square footage, correct?

18 MR. MCBURNIE: No, as of right now where the
19 design stands, it's schematic design and the RIDE stage 2
20 submission. You are not locked into anything. RIDE will
21 receive the drawings and they will have many comments to
22 them. If you wanted to make a small change, a large change,
23 you are free to do it at this time, and through stage 2. So
24 we're walking into design development, which is the next
25 stage of the design process, and that is the real time where

1 these designs will be, these designs will be figured out
2 based on what the town needs, what the kids need in the
3 schools, what the systems are needed. So there is no lock,
4 you are not locked into anything that we are submitting to
5 RIDE now. But the key thing is to get it into RIDE so that
6 the review process can begin.

7 MR. GOHO: One other question I had, I know the
8 pricing includes demolition and site reconfiguration of the
9 school sites. So is anything built into the design of the
10 bond regarding the administration building, demolishing that
11 building and paving it, is any of that in there?

12 MR. MCBURNIE: At this time, no.

13 MR. GOHO: Excuse me?

14 MR. MCBURNIE: At this time, no.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: Any other questions?

16 MR. MARTONE: I have one more question. So as
17 far as going forward a little bit, we're going to go out to
18 RQ and then eventually RP, and then the company that is hired
19 will design the building. And then does this committee have
20 final approval? How does that, like how does that work, they
21 show us here it is and we have to say okay? Or I'm just not
22 sure how that process works.

23 MR. MCBURNIE: So I'll speak to the design side
24 of it. I'm not sure definitely how you as a committee will
25 decide who is to say yes or no to it. But yes, it will

1 follow that suit, whichever design firm, design team, is
2 awarded, they will begin the design. Now, if it, I believe
3 Studio JAED will be bidding on it. If they bid on it and are
4 successful, they will continue with the design. If a
5 separate design team comes in and they win the bid, then they
6 will most likely restart. And once they restart, it's not a
7 bad thing, it's, the level of drawings, level of completeness
8 of the drawings now will allow for that process to take
9 place. And really, truly, any design team that comes in will
10 not take another design team's, you know, baseline and try to
11 build on it. So whichever design team is successful, yes,
12 they will come in, it will start with design charrette, which
13 is basically an open discussion of what's needed, what's
14 desired, what doesn't work, what does work. Once you see
15 past that, you want to begin and then they will start
16 designing it and we will have periodic design updates where
17 they will present design at its current state and get beyond
18 on certain items. So that process will be very much back and
19 forth where you are informing them exactly what you want.
20 And that's why I do want to stress this design development
21 phase that we're walking into is pretty much for the owner
22 the most important stage of the project because this is
23 really where you tell them what you want. And it's the most
24 critical to your desired end result.

25 DR. PALLOTTA: So the time line right now, May,

1 the Board of Education will get the recommendation from RIDE
2 for approval, and then the legislative approval, where does
3 that fit in?

4 MAYOR LOMBARDI: I think that, if I may, Frank,
5 I think that, I read that that's going to be decided any day.

6 DR. PALLOTTA: What was that?

7 MAYOR LOMBARDI: They will be deciding that any
8 day.

9 DR. PALLOTTA: Okay.

10 MAYOR LOMBARDI: In talking with the leaders
11 there, we'll all set with that.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: I have one other thing. The
13 other night those of you who might have been at the council
14 meeting, we had a lot of questions. And my question for Matt
15 that night is the same question I am going to ask him now.
16 The other night we were looking for a vote of approval, which
17 we got from the council because we need, we had needed to
18 meet a deadline. What's our next deadline, if any?

19 MR. MCBURNIE: So the next deadline is for
20 Studio JAED to complete and submit stage 2 to RIDE, and that
21 will be February 15. And as I said earlier, they are on
22 track to do that, I do not see any issues with what they have
23 right now as a package to submit.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: So we don't have any concerns
25 with that at this point, we will make that dead line?

1 MR. MCBURNIE: We will make that deadline.

2 THE CHAIRMAN: Because like as I said the other
3 night, we can make changes to the design and stuff, but we
4 can't change deadlines. We don't want to miss a deadline and
5 be late a year, you know, with the building. Am I correct on
6 that?

7 MR. MCBURNIE: Yes, yes.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: Counsel?

9 MR. MARTONE: I guess more of a comment to the
10 group, I would assume that we are in a relatively unique,
11 advantageous position in that we have had 2, this is maybe a
12 bad way to say it, but test runs on McGuire and Stephen
13 Olney, so we should be in a great position, I would think, to
14 know what we need, what didn't work, what, I don't know, I
15 mean I guess Joe, is that right?

16 MR. GOHO: Yeah, absolutely.

17 MR. MCBURNIE: And just to add to that, as part
18 of our, as part of the Left Field team, Jay Faxon, our MEP
19 expert, over February vacation, he and I will be visiting
20 with Jim to those 2 schools, Olney and McGuire, to tour the
21 building, take a look at some of the issues that you have
22 been having, take a look at what you, what works really well
23 so that when the design team comes on, we have that
24 information for them.

25 MR. MARTONE: That sounds great.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: Counsel, have you got any legal
2 advice for us there?

3 MR. RUGGERIO: No, I think you adhered to all of
4 it.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: All right. Any other questions?

6 (BRIEF PAUSE)

7 THE CHAIRMAN: Hearing none, motion to adjourn?

8 MR. GOHO: So moved.

9 DR. PALLOTTA: Second.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: Motion was made to adjourn, I
11 think by Frank and Joe Goho, so all in favor?

12 (ALL WERE IN FAVOR)

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Opposed? The ayes have it.
14 Thank you for coming out.

15 (ADJOURNED AT 9:30 A.M.)
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C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Susan V. Fitzpatrick, a Notary Public in and for the State of Rhode Island, hereby certify that the foregoing are a true and accurate record of my stenographic notes that were reduced to print through computer-aided transcription.

In witness whereof, I hereunto set my hand this 29th day of March, 2023.

SUSAN V. FITZPATRICK
CERTIFIED SHORTHAND REPORTER
NOTARY PUBLIC, STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

My Commission expires 07/19/26