

**SOUTH PORTLAND SCHOOL DEPARTMENT
SECONDARY SCHOOLS FACILITIES COMMITTEE**

November 8, 2007

MEETING NOTES

These notes were prepared by Polly Ward to the best of her understanding. If you find any inaccuracies, please contact the Superintendent of Schools Office at 871-0555 within one week after receiving the notes.

Present: Jake Viola, Carrie Hall-Indorf, Ralph Cabana, Dan Cecil, Ralph Baxter, Sr., Scott Pakulski, Suzanne Godin, Ellen Benson, Steve Bailey, Megan Welter, Kathy Germani, Jeanne Crocker, Dave Brochu, Craig Roberts, Ralph Baxter, Jr. and Polly Ward.

1. Welcome
2. Approval of minutes from October 25, 2007
 - Approved
3. The “vote”... what you heard... time to vent
 - Ralph Cabana – what we heard from the vote and from people communicating
 - Major Concerns
 - Money
 - State Funding
 - Artificial Turf
 - Second Gym
 - This is not a vote against the education of our kids
 - Need to improve how we get the word out
 - Jake – more than the price – not convinced that we will do what we say based on how the City has done so far
 - Ralph Baxter Sr. – We have done what we said on Wainwright and are in fact on track with plans for Wainwright
 - Ellen – People she works with are still uneducated about the project
 - Craig – apathy on the part of people with children in the schools
 - Lack of knowledge about the project
 - Plan was visionary – lack of vision of the people of South Portland
 - Ralph Cabana – vindictiveness of the people who say things anonymously
 - Carrie – Not so sure that it isn’t about education – if people really cared about education, they owe it to our kids to educate themselves about the project before they vote.
 - Ralph Cabana – It comes back to getting the word out
 - Megan – Problem to get out all the information to people – does not know how to meet the educational needs of students and keep the price low
 - Dave – thinks that it’s a timing thing

4. ...And celebrate a job thoughtfully completed... what's next?

- Carrie – Would like to know how much time the Community Center will permit the high school to use the facilities during the school day – get in writing and get in writing when Field Hockey fields at Wainwright will be ready
- State Funding – The Department of Education now estimates that it will accept applications in Spring 2009 – rating would then be available summer of 2010 - Not even sure if they will be taking new applications at that time
- Cost to fix the required (code, etc) \$23 Million in construction, \$30 Million total cost – much more expensive to do this in parts
- Would need about 40 trailers for two years to do this repair work
- Carrie – suggest that the DEP issues be turned over to the City
- Suzanne – Auditorium is a City building – may be the City's responsibility to respond to the water issue and the mechanical systems
- Dave – Prioritization of the high school needs - Superintendent, Dave and Business Manager to meet with the Board to decide what needs to be done now.
- Ralph Cabana – Need to get an idea of the affect that the current status of the building will have on accreditation. Wants to know how long some of the grandfathered situations will be permitted to remain grandfathered.
- Suzanne – concern about the impact of the regionalization law impact on our capacity to carry out too many major projects
- Ellen – questions about whether we plan to have an opportunity to invite the community to talk with us about what they are thinking and what the problems are with the school
- Kathy – surprised to hear from Rob Coombs that the project would have a negative impact on the City's bond rating – What is the plan that the City has for the next ten years. Coordinate their projects and ours.
- Suzanne – would advocate that we put ourselves in a holding pattern for a few months – until March/April; also wants to look at the membership of the committee to broaden it; need to have representation from the Board of Education and the Council
- Ralph Cabana – in the interim would like to see the committee get broadened and get the City and Board together
- Jake – suggested talking to Democracy Now about the work they do
- Ralph Baxter Sr. – More elementary parents
- Ralph Baxter Jr. – Lack of school spirit now in this town – this is a good time to get some input
- Suzanne – hearing that the Committee would like to tap into and get feedback now, then have a hiatus until next spring before we begin forming next steps
- Recommendation to hold a Public Forum to gather feedback from the Board, the City Council and the public. Suzanne will find a place that will hold people and enable us to televise. Will publicize

5. Other

- Public Comments

- Dick Campbell – all the trouble boils down to the School Department. This was the biggest farce/boondoggle - too much money – new gym – turf fields – handicapped ramps – entranceway was a huge waste of money.
 - Paul Connolly – too much money – the Committee did a fine job but was beaten by the cost. How can we break the plan down so that it can get passed – job of the Board of Education and the City Council.
 - Fred Bowring – Committee did a good job – cost was an issue- rising property taxes are an issue – questions of people who voted no need to be asked on a one-to-one basis
 - Richard Jones – Committee made a strategic recommendation in a tactical environment. Need to come up with a marketing and sales plan at a lesser price – get it back on the ballot quickly.
 - Dave Goudreau – thankless job – it is up to the Board of Education and the City Council to get the support for it. Price is too high – Need to do the essentials
 - Renee Salafia – supported the project – learned from the tours – had trouble getting the public to understand the issues – Needs support from the Board of Education and the City Council
 - Roger Allen – principal and interest combined too high; there are too many projects coming forward, 2 middle schools, City Hall. School Department and City Council have not put money in the budget for maintenance – didn't see anything that said that by doing this we are going to improve the education of the students by increasing SAT scores or etc. – what will it do – took tour and found out about the maintenance items
 - Susan Adams – Moving forward – Dec 6 meeting sounds great – need to get support of the Board of Education and City Council for whatever goes forward. Online poll to get people to say why they voted however they did
- Next Plans
 - Dec 6 – meeting to get public input
 - Carrie volunteered to analyze responses to an internet poll
 - Ellen suggested that may need to consider print media as well
 - Suzanne asked Susan Adams to develop the questions for the poll