MINUTES OF THE SCHOOL MODERNIZATION COMMITTEE OUT-OF-DISTRICT SITE VISIT SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2020 AT 6:00 P.M. IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM A, HUMISTON SCHOOL, CHESHIRE CT 06410.

Present
Sylvia Nichols, Chair; Anne Harrigan, Rich Gusenburg
Absent: Matthew Bowman
Staff: Supt. of Schools Jeff Solan

1. ROLLCALL
The Clerk called the roll and a quorum was determined to be present.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
The group Pledged Allegiance to the Flag.

3. DISCUSSION RE: SELECTION OF STANDARD QUESTIONS FOR VISITS
Ms. Nichols drafted a letter and list of questions on topics of interest for the out-of-district meetings to define what the SMC is doing and looking for in Cheshire.

The committee reviewed the letter and questions. Supt. Solan’s general list of questions were given to committee members prior to this meeting.

Supt. Solan informed the committee that he has spoken with administrative staff of several school districts. In order to make the visits more efficient and to receive the information being sought, the questions will be sent in advance of the scheduled district meeting.

Topics of Interest for out-of-district visits include -- Overall Plan Development; Financial Information; Educational/Functional; and General.

Overall Plan Development includes the time line for completion of the long term plan; consideration and prioritization of renovation or new build…one school or whole district; did plans include redistricting, consolidation or closing any school; building size based on enrollment figures; project management - Owner’s Rep, In-house manager, Public Building Commission.

Ms. Nichols said these items would set the tone for the basic project.

Supt. Solan has talked with districts that have had diverse experiences. He talked with the school administration of Southington CT which “renovated schools as new” for elementary and middle schools. One of Southington’s elementary schools has a specialized early childhood area. South Windsor CT has similar setup with looking at new builds, ongoing construction, and renovation of schools on the elementary levels. Guilford CT has a new high school; Meriden CT has two high schools “renovated as
new” and one renovated elementary school; North Haven CT has new construction and renovation projects.

The in-depth questions from Ms. Nichols were discussed and liked by the committee. Supt. Solan said they could be a bit overwhelming up front, but a good backup plan if answers are not received during visits. Ms. Nichols said these questions are important for the full SMC to read and expand on what needs to be asked.

4. **DISCUSSION RE: SELECTION AND SCHEDULING OF DISTRICTS AND SCHOOLS FOR SITE VISITS**

Regarding the school visits, Ms. Nichols asked if they are perceived as short conversations before the tour of schools, and noted this would be the place to advance some of the questions.


Introduction of 10-15 minutes; get feedback on generics; do the school tour/visit; debrief for about 20-30 minutes.

Ms. Nichols stated information needs to be prepared with answers for the full SMC questions on the out-of-district visits.

It was noted by Mr. Gusenburg that the Dodd staff asked about the SMC visiting out-of-district school districts, and was pleased to learn these visits were planned.

When the SMC gets to choose the RFPs candidates for approval, Ms. Nichols said the SMC would have information to ask questions of the firms and be better interviewers.

Stating his agreement, Supt. Solan said there would be insight into other district experience with project managers, diversity with project managers, what to ask project managers and evaluate the RFP.

Supt. Solan likes Ms. Nichols’ letter with more generic questions and those on the visit would have a good sense of the depth. The next step is to set up dates for the tours.

_Tentative Dates (to be confirmed by Supt. Solan)_

_Friday, February 21st_ – morning tour/visit, start at 9 A.M.; North Haven CT Middle School

_Monday, February 24th_ – all day tour/visit, start at 9 A.M.; South Windsor CT

_Monday, March 2nd_ – all day tour/visit, start at 9 A.M. – Guilford CT and Meriden CT

_Monday, March 9th_ – 9 A.M. tour/visit, Southington CT.
Supt. Solan will work on confirmation of these locations, dates and times and report back to the committee. These out-of-district tours/visits will include elementary, middle school and high school new construction and renovation projects.

5. **DISCUSSION RE: FORMAT OF PRESENTATION TO FULL COMMITTEE**

The committee briefly discussed the format for presentation of out-of-district tours to the full committee. Ms. Nichols commented on the importance of SMC seeing another consulting firm’s presentation.

Mr. Gusenburg briefly reviewed the Doolittle, Humiston and Dodd Middle School input meetings.

Doolittle – staff focused on low maintenance issues at the school, not much in terms of program issues; staff supports Kindergarten in the elementary schools, and 6-8 grade middle school.

Humiston – staff talked extensively about their unique program, the needs of the program and students.

Dodd - staff talked about storage needs, lockers, pods for team teaching, groups working together; staff supports a 6 to 8 middle school; the need for a real auditorium to support the drama program; Kindergarten in all elementary schools, certified teachers for various teaching disciplines on the 6th grade level; different ways to design a building so 6th and 8th grades have various spaces; enhanced Science standards, options for more technology and drama programs.

6. **SET NEXT MEETING(S) SITE VISIT DATE**

Dates to be confirmed for out-of-district tours; no future committee meeting dates were scheduled.

7. **ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION by Mr. Gusenburg; seconded by Ms. Harrigan

MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

Attest:

Marilyn W. Milton, Clerk