

Neighborhood Schools Committee
Tuesday, Dec. 15, 2009

The Neighborhood Schools Committee meeting was convened 8:40 a.m. Present were committee members Valerie Harris and Nat White and chairman Tom Hylton. Also present were members of the Executive Team, John Armato, Barry Angstadt and board members Polly Weand and Michele Pargeon.

1. The status of Crabtree Rohrbaugh Architects was requested, as Mr. Hylton was unable to find the record any payment being made to the firm as contemplated in an email exchange last February between Linda Adams and Hal Hart of Crabtree Rohrbaugh. Mrs. Adams said the invoice had been received and paid and she would provide that documentation.
2. The status of bid proposals under the Guaranteed Energy Savings Act was requested. Mr. Krem and Mr. Angstadt reported the bid proposals were put on hold in order to consider an idea by another firm called Energy Education, which proposes energy savings through behavioral and programmatic changes as opposed to simply installing new equipment. Mr. Hylton suggested putting off any further discussion with this firm until the school board addresses item 4 on this agenda.
3. Information regarding space utilization at all grade levels was requested, including the middle school and high school teacher schedules. The committee is not looking for students' names, just the number of students in each class during the school day.

A copy of the professional staff assignments by elementary school building, including classroom numbers, teacher names, and number of students in each class, promulgated by Dr. Sparagana for September 2008, was distributed with the request that the updated version for the 2009-2010 school year be provided to committee members.

4. Mr. Hylton distributed a proposal for a motion to hire Landmark Design Associates of Pittsburgh to do a one-time assessment of Pottstown's five elementary schools as per the firm's letter of Dec. 14, which is attached and made a part of these minutes. Mr. Angstadt indicated that if the board so desired, he would be available during the Christmas break to take an architect through the elementary schools.

The rationale for the motion is as follows: The school district needs an independent architect to assess the physical condition of the schools – one who has no financial interest in whatever renovation work the district might undertake. Landmark Design Associates would not be doing a feasibility study – it would only evaluate the physical condition of the buildings and their mechanical systems as they currently exist. The architect's report would be completed prior to the school board meeting Jan. 7, 2010. Landmark Design Associates recognizes it would do no further work for the district.

Time is of the essence, because the committee hopes it will be possible to begin some work on one or more elementary schools in the summer of 2010. To do that, the board would have to decide on at least a preliminary course of action no later than February of 2010.

The Neighborhood Schools Committee voted unanimously to recommend to the full school board at its Dec. 17 meeting the hiring of Landmark Design Associates to evaluate Pottstown's five elementary schools prior to the Jan. 7, 2010 meeting of the school board. The proposed motion is attached and made part of these minutes.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:30.

Tom Hylton, chairman