

York Catholic District School Board
MINUTES
CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE
(Public Session)

A meeting of the regular session of the Corporate Services Committee was and via Google Meet, on Tuesday, February 9, 2021, commencing at 6:30 p.m.

PRESENT:

Committee Members: R. Cantisano, C. Cotton, E. Crowe, J. Ecker, D. Giuliani, M. Iafrate, M. Marchese, T. McNicol, D Mazzotta, J. Wigston

Administration: M. Battista, N. Di Nardo, A. Yeung, J. McLoughlin, T. Pechkovsky, M. Gray, D. Clapham, N. Jugnundan

Absent with Notice: Student Trustees A. Casbarro and T. Siby

Recording: K. Errett

Presiding: M. Iafrate, Committee Chair

1. CALL TO ORDER AND PRAYER

M. Iafrate, Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m., led the Committee in the Opening Prayer. A. Yeung, Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer of the Board, recited the York Catholic District School Board Land Acknowledgement.

2. APPROVAL OF NEW MATERIAL

Motion: Wigston/Ecker

THAT new material included in the revised Agenda be approved for inclusion.

— MOTION CARRIED —

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Motion: McNicol/Cantisano

THAT the revised Agenda be approved with the inclusion of Information Items 14 e) Holy Cross Indoor Artificial Turf Facility - Update and 14 h) St. Theresa of Lisieux CHS - Cafeteria Expansion Project Update.

— MOTION CARRIED —

4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Motion: Mazzotta/Cantisano

THAT the Minutes of the December 8, 2020 Corporate Services Committee meeting be approved as presented.

— MOTION CARRIED —

5. FUTURE MEETING DATES

The next meeting of the Corporate Services Committee is scheduled for April 13, 2021.

6. BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: Nil

7. DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST: Nil

8. OUTSIDE PRESENTATION(S): Nil

9. STAFF PRESENTATIONS: Nil

10. ACTION ITEM(S): Nil

11. SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS: Nil

12. DISCUSSION ITEM(S): Nil**13. INFORMATION ITEMS:****a) Semi-Annual Development Update**

T. Pechkovsky, Coordinating Manager of Planning and Operations presented the Semi-Annual Development Circulation Report for the period of June 2020 to January 2021 with additional reporting included to ensure Trustees are aware of the development activity taking place in the Region. A new process for staff, included in the report, is information regarding Minister's Zoning Orders (MZO). A significant number of MZO's have impacted the education sector's ability to designate school sites. Staff are monitoring the situation closely and following up with municipalities and the Minister when developments are approved, in order to provide comments.

The report highlights 32 development applications within York Region, including both low/medium and high density applications. Specific information included a Development Application with a school site in East Gwillimbury, i.e. 19T-20301 pertaining to the Phase 2 Subdivision of the Green Lane Secondary Plan which includes one Catholic elementary school site.

Trustee Iafrate inquired as to the reason why some new large developments in the Region were not included on the list, e.g. David Dunlop Developments, which would generate enrolment at nearby YCDSB schools. T. Pechkovsky responded that some developments would be included in Secondary Plan development applications or where there has been no activity during the time of reporting (i.e. June 2020 – January 2021), or the developments may be provided on a past/upcoming report. T. Pechkovsky assured that staff has been actively involved in the process and that ongoing communication continues to take place with municipalities to identify the Board's needs. T. Pechkovsky to ensure the developments mentioned are included in the semi-annual report in June 2021.

b) Stouffville Multi-Use Facility Update

T. Pechkovsky, Coordinating Manager of Planning and Operations, presented an update on the site acquisition and development of the Stouffville Multi-Use site. It was advised that Administration continues to work with the architect and Municipality of Whitchurch-Stouffville to obtain Site Plan approval and with the landowner to finalize the Purchase and Sale Agreement. Due to some issues encountered, the closing date has been postponed to February 18, 2021 which translates to a May or June 2021 construction start.

Staff have been working with the Ministry of Education, with support from Trustee Crowe and Chair Mazzotta, MPP Calandra and area Catholic School Council representatives, to expedite and finalize the Ministry's Approval to Proceed application which, as acknowledged by the Ministry has been problematic, however, all parties are committed to reaching a solution that will enable the Board to release a Tender. A recent meeting of Board staff and Whitchurch-Stouffville MPP Paul Calandra, provided reassurance of his support for the project, acknowledgment of the importance of timing for the project and a commitment to follow-up with the Minister of Education to highlight to the provincial government the need for this project to receive the Approval to Proceed as soon as possible.

The site plan approval will be completed following the closing of the purchase; issuance of the building permit would follow.

Trustee Iafrate inquired about bussing eligibility for the Grades 7 and 8 students to be attending the new Stouffville Multi-Use Facility and future eligibility upon entering Grade 9 as high school students. T. Pechkovsky stated that bussing would be in accordance with the Transportation Policy, i.e. depending on whether students meet the distance requirement in the Transportation Policy and further noted that the distance requirement changes for students leaving Grade 8 going into Grade 9. For students choosing to attend Saint Maximilian Kolbe CHS or St. Brother Andre CHS, e.g. perhaps if an older sibling attends that school, the same transportation distance requirements must be met.

c) Community Planning and Partnership

T. Pechkovsky, Coordinating Manager of Planning and Operations provided an update on two active applications received pertaining to the Community Planning and Partnership Program for parties interested in a sport dome at St. Jean de Brebeuf CHS/Vellore Village Community Centre which, as previously reported, is currently in preliminary discussions with the City of Vaughan and, secondly, a new application for a sports field and dome at St. Jean de Brebeuf CHS or, alternatively at Father Bressani CHS by Vaughan Sportsplex II.

Meetings will be taking place over the coming weeks and months with the proponents and the City of Vaughan to discuss the complexities of the zoning/site requirements and required approvals of each location as they are both embedded within residential areas. Administration will continue to report on these applications as progression is made.

Trustee Crowe requested Interim Director Battista to provide a future staff report to summarize other types of partnerships and perhaps include a presentation to the Board of Trustees, as done in the past, from colleges, universities and towns (e.g. Seneca, George Brown re courses for EAs etc.) that deal with student achievement, curriculum etc. and to consider which committee would receive the report/presentation as a regularly occurring public agenda item for either Corporate Services Committee, Student Success and Pathways or Board meeting in order to showcase the various activities and opportunities that YCDSB is proud to share with all Trustees and with the public.

d) Copper Creek LPAT Update

T. Pechkovsky, Coordinating Manager of Planning and Operations provided an update to the December 8, 2020 report. It was stated that a written decision has not yet been received following the two-day hearing in December 2020 with the Local Planning Appeals Tribunal (LPAT) for the Copper Creek lands regarding the OPA for the City of Vaughan 15-acre secondary school site. Staff expect that the next step will be the applicant's submission of a Draft Plan reflecting the fabric of the neighborhood including the school site. Staff will provide further updates as they come available.

There were no questions.

e) Holy Cross Indoor Artificial Turf Facility Update

T. Pechkovsky, Coordinating Manager of Planning and Operations provided an update on the Holy Cross CHS artificial turf sports dome facility being developed in conjunction with Woodbridge Sports Dome (WSD) in the City of Vaughan. At this time, WSD has submitted the final Site Plan Application (February 1, 2021) and is awaiting a decision by the Committee of the Whole on April 13, 2021, which, if approved, would initiate an application to the Committee of Adjustment. It is expected that major construction is possible in the spring in time for a summer 2021 opening or in the event of delays due to COVID-19, a September 2021 opening.

It was noted that the partner, WSD, highlighted that the COVID-19 pandemic had created challenges in terms of timing/processing applications and availability of materials due to slowdowns in production and manufacturing. As well, the City of Vaughan had experienced staffing changes which resulted in complicating the processing of applications.

f) International Students Tuition Fees

M. Gray, Superintendent of Human Resources and International Education and T. Pechkovsky, Coordinating Manager of Planning and Operations provided an information update report regarding the increased International Student tuition fees which will take effect September 1, 2021. It was stated that a significant negative financial impact has been experienced due to COVID-19 related to decreased enrolment of international education students affected by travel restrictions and delays in the government issuance of study permits.

Despite the challenges, the continued interest in international studies in Canada has cemented the efforts of staff to increase programming options and increase development in business partnerships and contacts. Taking into account the current investment in the program to-date, the Ministry of Education's new International Student Recovery Amount and the 2021-2022 tuition rates of the other GTA school boards, Administration has applied an increase of \$700 to the elementary and secondary international student tuition fees for the 2021/2022 school year which equates to an increase of 5% or from \$13,800 to \$14,500 (elementary) and 4.6% or from \$15,300 to \$16,000 (secondary) allowing YCDSB to fully recover program delivery costs while remaining competitive with other Greater Toronto Area boards.

M. Gray thanked Trustees for their support throughout the last budget year and into the school year.

T. Pechkovsky stated that, as done every year, staff undertakes a jurisdictional scan of other school boards to ensure that YCDSB meets cost recovery mandates. There were no questions on this item.

g) Winter Maintenance Update

J. McLoughlin, Controller of Plant & Accommodation Services, provided a report on winter maintenance costs to-date for the 2020-2021 school year. A five-year comparison was provided for both year-to-date and full year expenditures. Although the snow removal invoices have not yet been fully received or processed, the year-to-date actual expenditures of \$600,903 (2020-2021 Budget is \$3,275,000) vs. \$1,049,021 (2019-2020 Budget \$3,183,537) over the previous year are reflective of the lack of snow that has been experienced. However, as cautioned, the remainder of the winter may revert to more wintry conditions in the Region. It was noted that the estimated costs incurred to-date are low and, taking into consideration the delay in receipt of contractor invoices, the actual expenditure is expected to be slightly higher than reported at this point.

To Trustee Ecker's request for clarification on whether the per event pricing is consistent for each of the five years presented, for comparison purposes, J. McLoughlin explained that in 2016-17 the Board was not clearing, for at least part of the winter, the back school yards, parking lots and driveways. At that time, the front areas were a per season contract and the backs, when the Board reverted to plowing the back areas, were contracted at a per event rate. Currently, the contract is a per event contract.

h) St. Theresa of Lisieux CHS Cafeteria Expansion Project Update

J. McLoughlin, Controller of Plant & Accommodation Services, provided an update on the cafeteria expansion project at St. Theresa of Lisieux CHS which received Approval to Proceed from the Ministry on March 30, 2020, and under a Confidentiality Order, approved a budget of \$370,000 based on Ministry benchmarks. In July 2020, the Board was permitted to lift the confidentiality order and the project proceeded. In October 2020 the school's original architectural firm, CS&P Architects, was retained to provide a design and budget which was estimated at \$1M. Due to the difference in budget vs. estimated cost, staff reached out to the Ministry and are currently awaiting direction on next steps. Further updates will be provided at future meetings. J. McLoughlin added that other considerations adding to the cost variance may be resulting from the amount of contingency included by the architect and perhaps higher labor costs and material delivery costs being experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic driving up prices.

Trustee Mazzotta commented on the lengthy process that endured for the St. Theresa of Lisieux CHS cafeteria expansion project (about six years) and questioned the rationale for the Architect's cost estimate which exceeded the Ministry benchmark (approximately \$220/sq. ft. per the Ministry benchmark vs. approximately \$600/sq. ft. per Architect). J. McLoughlin stressed the complicated structural work of an outward expansion into the west parking lot requiring removal of the wall and roof support. It was highlighted that an addition is more expensive than a new structure as an addition, is considered a small project for a commercial or institutional building, loses economies of scale; the foundation, structural elements and roof still have to be constructed for the small area, but costs are the same in terms of the design, permits, application fees, contingency and equipment etc. It was agreed that an accurate costing will fall between the Ministry benchmark and the Architect's estimate.

J. McLoughlin provided an explanation of the capital approvals process in response to Trustee Ecker's comments that the process was confusing. J. McLoughlin explained that the Ministry's process is both interesting, challenging and lengthy for both new construction and additions, e.g. the new Stouffville Multi-Use facility is also proving to be very challenging in meeting the Ministry's benchmarks, and the process has also been lengthy. The process begins with the completion of a template which generates a cost and then a submission is made. Boards are not technically supposed to hire an architect until after the template-generated submission is approved, however, as reminded, staff brought forward a Board report seeking approval to retain the architect prior to the template being approved. The process seems a bit backwards that the architect is hired to do preliminary work when actually the Ministry doesn't want any work up front or architect selection until they approve the project budget.

It was added that for the small cafeteria addition there may not be a requirement for using the formal template, however, the benchmarks still have to be followed by using a template requiring the number of classrooms, grades and programs required. The Ministry reviews the request and determines that 100% of the template should not be used because the benchmark dollars won't be sufficient, therefore, the floor area must be reduced to 90%. With the Stouffville Multi-Use facility, there are still budget issues being addressed which have been re-submitted to the Ministry. The process is both challenging and frustrating.

T. Pechkovsky, having experience with the Ministry's templates and approvals processes, reinforced that there are a number of templates as identified. The first template is in our Capital priority submission and there is no ability to assign a cost but simply generates the proposed square footage. The March 2020 notification received from the Ministry was the system-generated cost for the addition. The Board's next step would be to either complete a space template or approval to proceed at which time we would identify that that cost that was originally provided to us is not sufficient given the estimates from the architect. As Mr. McLoughlin explained, currently the application is a number of steps away from final approval but that explains the large cost differential, and highlighted that the benchmark calculation from Administration's experience is low as well.

Trustee Crowe provided comments recognizing that during the six-year period since the cafeteria issue was tabled, staff commenced a process to request the Ministry for permission to use Proceeds of Disposition and retained an Architect to provide drawings and a costing for the addition, therefore, it is expected that the same Architect would use those same completed drawings at this juncture and information was requested that year the activity occurred and the cost which was included in the request for use of POD. Trustee Crowe requested an explanation as to the lack of updates since March 2020 and commented that it was believed that more progress had been made. Lastly, the costly estimated expense was questioned for a basic structure requiring only removal of the (mainly glazing and columns) and structurally, if preserving the existing in its original location only foundations and heavier joists to withstand snow load would be required.

J. McLoughlin clarified that, not having been involved in the project application from the commencement, it was understood that approval was not granted initially. That being said, the commencement of the project was actually end of March or beginning of April 2020. Statements in the report were reiterated, regarding the information embargo ending in July 2020 preventing the project, including any preliminary work, from commencing. While notice was received from the Ministry releasing the confidentiality condition at the end of July 2020, staff were extremely busy through August and into September with preparing schools for reopening during the COVID-19 pandemic. Only in September were staff able to turn attention to the retention of the Architect. Further, it is supposed that any previous drawings would be very preliminary as the Board would not have wanted to spend money for a complete design. J. McLoughlin to provide the initial letter to the Ministry requesting use of POD via email to Trustees.

Trustee Giuliani agreed that, in his own experience, it has been found that small additions do indeed get very expensive and the Architect's estimated costs seem to be in line with costs although exceeding what is perhaps expected. It was suggested that perhaps quotations from smaller contractors not currently on our list would provide a costing more in line with the Ministry's budget.

Trustee Cotton acknowledged that there is a "perennial" issue with the Ministry template and benchmark producing estimates far below the current actual cost of materials and labour. The Ministry needs to update the templates and increase their proportions to produce a larger budget, albeit, by the time changes could be instituted, the costs will likely immediately be three or four years behind. It was stated that this is a problem that has been at the forefront for school boards for decades and the Ministry is very aware of it.

Finally, J. McLoughlin produced the POD letter to be forwarded to Trustees and Senior staff after the meeting, which indicated that the letter was sent to the Ministry on June 23, 2014 requesting an addition of 161 square meters and a budget of \$750,000. E. Crowe thanked J. McLoughlin for the letter and was satiated knowing that the Architects estimate of \$1M was much more reasonable given the fact that the costs included in the letter are now six years old. J. McLoughlin will report to the Committee following discussion with medium size contractors as suggested.

i) Ministry Approval on Use of Proceeds of Disposition (POD)

A. Yeung, Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer of the Board, was very pleased to provide an update on the September 4, 2020 correspondence requesting the Minister of Education's approval to use \$9M of the Board's \$73M Proceeds of Disposition (POD) funds to supplement the \$21M in new investments to support the safe reopening of schools including the addition of teachers (\$8.54M), additional lunch time supervisors to support health and safety (\$2M), increased Transportation costs (\$1.5M), additional capacity to support remote learning (\$1.8M), improved ventilation (\$2.7M), additional custodians to increase cleaning (\$1.3M) and other (special education, mental health, technology devices, PPE etc.) (\$3M). It was reminded that \$12M was funded by Ministry funding announced at that time and an additional budget of \$9M was provided by the Board through the use of accumulated surplus.

On January 25, 2021, Administration received the approval for the use of \$9M of the POD funds as requested, to help support the costs incurred by the Board to support the safe reopening of schools.

A. Yeung stated that with this very positive news for the Board, the deficit as presented in the Revised Estimates during the December 2020 Board meeting will decrease. A comparison will be provided between the POD funds and the amount of special one-time funding, as requested by Trustee Cotton. A. Yeung noted that further clarification is expected from the Ministry pertaining to spending parameters for the new funding and impact on the calculations for the budget. Also, clarification is expected from the Ministry regarding its recent memo which allows school boards to use up to 15% of the uncommitted POD balance to support the opening of schools, i.e. for YCDSB whether the \$9M falls within that 15%; if so, there will be a further \$2M benefit and if not then the benefit will be greater (i.e., the Board could access 15% of POD as well as the \$9M approved).

A. Yeung thanked the Board of Trustees for their support in making the POD request to the Ministry and noted that an update will be presented at the upcoming Board or Committee meeting.

Trustees Ecker and Wigston thanked A. Yeung and Trustee Ecker noted that he was very pleased with the response from the Ministry and complimented those who wrote the letter for the compelling argument which permitted the 15% POD use for all school boards. A. Yeung thanked Trustee Ecker for the compliment and stated that there were several people involved in drafting the letter and, in turn, thanked those individuals.

There were no further more questions or comments.

j) New Ministry Announcement Re Second Phase Federal Funding

A. Yeung, Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer of the Board, provided a second good news report regarding the Phase 2 Federal Safe Return to Class Funding announced in August 2020, whereby the federal government announced \$2B of new funding to support all schools across the country with an allocation of \$763 for Ontario school boards which was divided into two tranches resulting in approximately \$381 million dollars provincially for each of the first and second tranche. York Catholic DSB received approximately \$5.3M in the first installment received which was used towards hiring additional teachers, purchasing additional custodial technology devices and purchase of ventilation and technology devices and to support remote learning and transportation. After much anticipation, the announcement for the second installment received on February 1, 2020, announced an additional \$4.8 million dollars in new funding for the Board. There are, however, some items such as the student nutrition program, summer learning opportunities, equity initiatives, and mental health support, which are still pending information in terms of support through this funding allocation.

As previously mentioned, further discussions with the Ministry will determine whether the Board will be approved to allocate some of the funding against investments that were previously approved by Trustees in the fall 2020, e.g. additional technology devices for students. The pending decision will have an impact on the Board's deficit and a future report will be provided once the information is received.

Trustee Wigston asked Interim Director Batista to provide comment on the provision for the provincial student reservation system for on-line learning and how separate school students can be assured that courses identified Catholic will be provided by Catholic teachers teaching content with the Catholic lens. It was stated that OCSTA was working diligently to ensure that this issue would be addressed. Interim Director Battista agreed, stating that when the courses are released, the Board and the Curriculum Department will be seeking those assurances. Trustee Cotton thanked Trustee Wigston for voicing those concerns which should be front and center at every Catholic Board meeting around the province. Trustee Cotton assured that she and the colleagues at OCSTA are actively involved with this issue and that recently a political advocacy meeting was held that was devoted to that subject entirely. The OCSTA President and OCSTA staff are meeting continuously with various representatives of the government to ensure those three pillars; Catholic content taught by Catholic teachers to Catholic students, are upheld and hopefully does not go astray.

There were no further questions.

k) Procurement Activity Report

A. Yeung, Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer of the Board, provided a report which captures the purchasing activities from October to present through the Bid Management System.

Trustee Iafrate asked for clarification on the LED lighting retrofit project. J. McLoughlin clarified that the program is a government/industry incentive program. As reported earlier, the requirement for all the applications for incentives to be submitted by December 31, 2020, was successful. In order to comply or to qualify for the incentives, the work must be completed by December 31, 2021. Plant Department staff are well underway and making good progress towards reaching this goal. The work is being funded from the Capital Renewal Program which will be offset by incentives received in part from the government and partly from the utility companies.

Trustee Iafrate also asked about the refurbishment of the of computers and the number of units being refurbished. D. Clapham, Chief Information Officer, confirmed that the refurbished computers were originally purchase for schools a year or two ago and will be used to supplement devices required to support learning in the schools/students on the waiting list for a device.

D. Mazzotta commented that the cost of a refurbished laptops/mobile devices, budgeted at approximately \$1,000 per unit is so close in price to a brand new unit purchased at \$1,200 and that it would be better value to purchase only brand new units.

Trustee Iafrate asked whether the Board is obligated to continue paying international student visa insurance, contracted at \$100K annually, while the program is not receiving new international student due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A. Yeung explained that the insurance for international visa students is a service procured on behalf of the students, therefore, there is no actual cost to the Board as the funds are reimbursed. M. Gray, Superintendent of Human Resources and International Education Students concurred, noting that the insurance, paid by the students' funds, flows through to the third party service provider.

M. Iafrate asked whether classroom paper, contracted for \$1.6M (\$400K/year) will be reduced due to the reduced usage due to COVID-19. A. Yeung responded that the amount is an approximation of the values and the expense will be reduced accordingly if usage decreased.

l) Insurance Reports: Property Claims/Theft and Damage

A. Yeung, Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer of the Board, provided a report in the agenda to inform the Board that the two ongoing property-related claims previously reported, for which remediation is complete, adjusters are continuing to address in terms determining the cost for repairs at St. Maximilian Kolbe CHS valued at up to \$192,200 (flooding incident due to a damaged eye-wash station that damaged a dance studio below and six classrooms) and a flooding claim at St. Brigid valued at \$27,500.

The insurance policy is a \$10,000 deductible for these claims therefore costs exceeding that amount will be paid by OSBIE, the Board's insurer.

Trustee Ecker inquired whether there are early warning systems in schools which would perhaps avert a major catastrophe. J. McLoughlin responded that the Board is starting to monitor the water meters in real time, however, it is undetermined whether there is an algorithm able to detect a small flood. However, it was agreed that a system would have detected a large flooding incident such as the one that occurred at St. Maximilian Kolby CHS. Disadvantages were stated regarding the typical school layout which is flat and spread out which makes the flooding seep further and as well the difficulty in detecting issues on a monitor when the schools are not used heavily at night and on weekends, therefore, water is being used by the community so flow detection would be from midnight to 6:00 am. Monitoring of water is starting and custodians are now required to check the water flow upon arrival. J. McLoughlin to check with staff to determine whether this level of flooding would be picked up.

J. McLoughlin, responding to a question from Trustee Wigston, confirmed that repairs were made immediately to the school and operations were not impacted. However, in the case of St. Maximilian Kolbe CHS, the insurance company is pursuing legal action against the eye wash station manufacturer which explains why the claim is still open and why it will remain open until the entire matter is resolved. The payment will be received from OSBIE once the claim has been finalized. A. Yeung to work with OSBIE to determine the expected timeline for completion.

There were no further questions or comments.

14. NOTICE(S) OF MOTION: Nil

15. FUTURE ITEM(S):

- a) Board/Committee Report Re Internal Student Initiative Relating to the Multi-Year Strategic Plan (Trustee Marchese) *(Ref 16 a) International Student Visa Update and January 26, 2021 Board discussion item.*

Adjournment: 7:57 P.M.

On Motion: Cotton/Ecker and CARRIED