

York Catholic District School Board

MINUTES CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE (Public Session)

A meeting of the regular session of the Corporate Services Committee was held in the Boardroom at the Catholic Education Centre at 320 Bloomington Road West, Aurora, Ontario and via Google Meet, on Tuesday, October 20, 2020, commencing at 6:30 p.m.

PRESENT:

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

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

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

Recording: K. Errett*

Presiding: M. Iafrate, Committee Vice-Chair

[indicates attendance via Google Meets]*

1. CALL TO ORDER AND PRAYER

D. Mazzotta, Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m., led the Committee in the Opening Prayer and recited the York Catholic District School Board Land Acknowledgement.

[Committee Vice Chair M. Iafrate presiding]

2. APPROVAL OF NEW MATERIAL: Nil

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Motion: Mazzotta/Wigston

THAT the Agenda be approved as presented.

— MOTION CARRIED —

4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Trustee Crowe requested an update from T. Pechkovsky, Coordinating Manager, of Planning and Operations, on the suitability of Block 60 for a designation of a secondary school site as an alternative to Copper Creek. It was advised that after having met with the developer and the City and other parties interested in that land, the site has been determined to be unsuitable for a secondary school site, for a number of reasons. However, the site is still being considered for designation as an elementary school site. A report will be presented to the Board for that direction.

Motion: Mazzotta/Ecker

THAT the Minutes of the May 19, 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 December 8, 2020.

6. BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: Nil

7. DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST - PREVIOUS MEETINGS: Nil

8. OUTSIDE PRESENTATION(S): Nil

9. STAFF PRESENTATIONS:**a) Stouffville Multi-Use Facility Update**

T. Pechkovsky, Coordinating Manager of Planning and Operations, and J. McLoughlin, Controller J. McLoughlin, Controller of Plant and Accommodation Services, provided an update on the Stouffville Multi-Use Facility. A PowerPoint presentation was provided.

T. Pechkovsky reviewed the events and timelines of the site acquisition stating that the process had been lengthy and a number of challenges had been faced in arriving at the completion of the Purchase and Sale Agreement. At this time, developers are in the process of finalizing the site prep work which is required as part of the agreement. As previously reported, the Board's Consultant has been working diligently to minimize any lag time and to ensure staff are well-informed of items to be incorporated in the design stage.

Internal servicing of the site is currently complete and while there is some external servicing on-going, it is expected that the services will be ready by the time of occupancy. The final grading will be done prior to site acquisition which is targeted for January/February 2021. The developer is very close to getting to the Plan Registration Phase. They're currently in the process of clearing the conditions that are required of them and finalizing their agreement with the Town.

A brief timeline of the Ministry approvals to-date was provided: The Capital Priorities Approval was granted in November 2016 and the Ministry's space template approval was granted in September 2020 after a number of iterations and changes made by the Ministry. The Cost Consultant's Report was submitted in September 2020. The next step, Approval to Proceed, is an application to the Ministry identifying all the costs, e.g. construction site, contingencies, furniture, etc. and identifying the funding sources and the gap analysis. It is anticipated that submission of the Approval to Proceed will shortly be made to the Ministry and the development of procurement documents will begin in November 2020. The possibility of "draft" approval for Site Plan Application and Permit being received by Christmas is conditional on ownership of land.

J. McLoughlin added that the Design Status is approximately 90% complete and the Class B cost estimate, now complete, reflects a significant over budget estimate of approximately \$7-8 million. Further cost savings options are being reviewed by staff. Staff will be engaging in preliminary discussions with Ministry as well as looking at other funding possibilities.

At the Municipal level, approvals for the Site Plan Application is well underway staff is finalizing comments received from the various levels of municipal government. The Building Permit Application is expected to be provided by end of October, 2020.

J. McLoughlin thanked Superintendents of Education, Mr. Pivato, Ms. Sawicky and their staff for their time and assistance with the project design and for creating a great process.

J. McLoughlin commented that the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville has been excellent to work with, allowing for some processes to commence, under the provision that it won't be granted until we take ownership of the land and prior to receipt of the Site Plan approval, i.e. building permit, letter of credit and insurance. It is expected that all permits will be in place prior to receiving the Site Plan Approval

Trustee Crowe expressed relief on having started the approvals processes early given how lengthy the approval process has been, noting for example the receipt of the Ministry's space template approval exceeding one year. Staff agreed and stated concern with having to seek cost savings to reduce the budget overage given that the approved design is modest and includes no "expensive options" (e.g. auto shop, etc.). It was commented that past experience has taught that cheaper options sometimes end up costing more overall (e.g. shorter life/earlier replacement of steel staircases or linoleum on main floors). The selection of finishes should be based on those that have been proven to last and in the long term will save the board money.

Further, Trustee Crowe commented that capital funding received from the Ministry (approximately \$33M) in 2016 does not equate to today's costing.

J. McLoughlin stated that discussions held with the Ministry's Capital Planning Branch were positive and felt that alternate funding sources such as Proceeds of Disposition may be permitted to be used as well as remaining capital funds.

T. Pechkovsky noted that the Ministry is cognizant of the challenges ahead. Staff are working on the Approval to Proceed submission including a supporting "package" to provide evidence of the steps that have been made in attempting to meet the Ministry benchmark and suggestions for what would have to be further removed in order to meet the benchmark which are felt to be unreasonable. Further, evidence in the Cost Consultant report and Property Appraisal report may support the claim that the funding and estimates are based on dated information. Staff has already reviewed the space template closely with the Ministry and believe it is evident that cost reductions regarding the design have been maximized. Staff is hopeful that the Ministry will approve us to go ahead to tender.

E. Crowe offered to put forward a Board Motion, write a letter and to seek other support from local MPPs.

Staff will report back to the Board when further information is available.

a) Ministry Broadband Project and RFP Award

D. Clapham, Chief Information Officer, provided an update on the Ministry Broadband Project (MBP) per the Provincial 2016 announcement of broadband access for all students. This student-focused initiative includes parameters to achieve adequate broadband infrastructure to publicly funded Ontario school boards at a minimum of 1 Mb per second (Mbps) per student as mandated by the Ministry. D. Clapham noted that all secondary schools will be completed before/during the first week in November and elementary schools will start being connected in early November. The team originally projected that all elementary schools would be completed before the end of December, however, due to COVID-19 restrictions and limited access after 4 pm to access schools per the York Region Public Health direction, all elementary will be completed in the new year.

The Ministry's stringent technical requirements are being followed to connect every school district in Ontario via firewall to their own broadband connection. In order to leverage buying power, York Catholic DSB partnered with both Toronto DSB and Toronto Catholic DSB in July 2020 on an RFP for three-year contracts with an additional five-year option to telecom providers Rogers Communications and Beanfield Metro Connect for the fibre installation at each YCDSB school. Boards were permitted to select a vendor which met its own requirements for budget and strategic vision. York Catholic DSB met the requirements through an RFP based on school student enrolment.

D. Clapham thanked the members of the IT team, the Finance team, the Purchasing teams for their hard work, support and expertise throughout this entire project. The project is a great collaboration between Ministry, Departments, Schools, Senior team and Trustees, overseen by the Ministry of Education with very stringent technical specification, timelines and reporting.

D. Clapham further explained what the initiative would bring to York Catholic DSB and the benefits of moving schools to fibre for our hybrid teaching and learning models. Strong internet speeds and bandwidth support both traditional in person teaching/learning or the hybrid remote teaching/learning model. Fibre, being the best broadband option currently on the market (vs. cable) allows for "symmetrical download and upload speeds" that is really needed in order to provide synchronous learning. Fibre also provides the best opportunity to shape our bandwidth to ensure that we're meeting the Ministry requirements and it also fits with our Board Multi-Year Strategic Plan. The project will be completed on time, as per Ministry mandate of March 31, 2021. Staff will continue to provide

updates on the progress of the project.

Trustee Mazzotta asked whether the fibre installation will provide a guarantee that connectivity and reception is uninterrupted. D. Clapham explained that the school network and local area network is made up of wireless access points, routers and switches as well as the fibre which is connected to the internet. While fibre, unlike cable, provides the symmetrical download and upload speeds, which is the best broadband that could be provided from a technical perspective, the can never be guarantees that nothing will go wrong as each component can impact another. The telecom companies are providing tools via a website, to monitor the bandwidth so staff is aware if the bandwidth are meeting the levels allocated to York Catholic.

Trustee Giuliani asked for verification whether YCDSB was exceeding 25% of existing bandwidth during peak times and whether the fibre service is dedicated lines. D. Clapham explained that with the arrival of teaching remote students via Google Meet, there is an impact on bandwidth of approximately 75% usage with the current system. In the past, YCDSB has gone over 100% capacity but the optimum usage is between 75-90%. D. Clapham stated that it will be interesting to compare the usage once every school connected to their own broadband connection. Staff will use the tools provided from the vendors to provide reports to Trustees. It was further confirmed that the fibre provides a dedicated copper-free line to each school.

Trustee Giuliani questioned accessibility in terms of how staff deals with “dead zones” in schools caused from block walls, catch points, etc. resulting in low bandwidth in an area. D. Clapham noted that with approximately 85% of our schools being fully pervasive wireless, i.e. having a wireless access point at every single classroom, issues are likely caused by an access point needing to be restarted or replaced. An issue tracker ticket submitted by a teacher or principal, alerts the learning technician monitoring tickets in the IT Department’s Call Centre of a technical issue at a school. A learning tech is deployed to the location to assess, diagnose, and replace, repair or restart the access point. IT relies on stakeholders and partners (i.e. teachers, principals and administrators) to submit the tickets to alert the team of an issue.

Further, schools do not have authority to reset hardware in the school when it is part of our infrastructure (i.e. a switch, router, access point or cable). A skilled learning technician attends to the school to access the LAN Room, a mini data centre located at a school. Skilled learning technicians are the only staff who have access to the LAN Room. However, if a computer or device needs to be restarted, end-users who have access to the device and who are very knowledgeable are permitted to restart. Most end-users wouldn’t know what to restart /disconnect or reconnect the infrastructure without being trained and experienced. It was also noted that many times, IT staff are able to log into the system and attend to issues remotely.

In response to clarification requested from Trustee Ecker regarding system flexibility during down times, D. Clapham explained that the plan is to maintain a direct line from schools to the CEC and to the internet in order to build in redundancy not obtainable in the past. The current four gigabyte central pipe that that services 100 schools in the past, will be throttled down to approximately one gigabyte so if there is a school down (e.g. due to a fibre cut) the computer traffic could be moved to the Board’s central pipe to allow immediate internet access. Further, Trustee Ecker questioned what plans for the future have been formulated in order to stave off deterioration of today’s state-of-the-art model, to ensure longevity for the next five to ten years. D. Clapham suggested that at the end of the current three-year contract with our cable providers perhaps a move to LTE will take place or a better option available at that time.

Trustee Iafrate acknowledged the deadline for completion of March 31, 2021, and asked whether, in the event of another full closure, whether progress on the initiative would continue. D. Clapham advised that although currently the York Region Public Health rules, disallow vendors from accessing schools until after 4:00 p.m. If schools are once again shut down, the project could be expedited with

full-day access to the facilities.

10. ACTION ITEM(S): Nil

11. SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS: Nil

12. DISCUSSION ITEM(S): Nil

13. INFORMATION ITEMS:

a) Surplus Property Disposition – York Region

T. Pechkovsky, Coordinating Manager of Planning and Operations provided a report for information purposes, identifying a circulated surplus property from the Region of York at 432 and 438-442 Davis Drive in Newmarket. As the area is currently being served by St. Paul CES, Administration has deemed the property is not required by the Board and will respond to the Region as such.

b) Winter Maintenance Update

J. McLoughlin, Controller of Plant & Accommodation Services, provided an update on the Winter Maintenance Contracts awarded under RFP 2020-91-P, Snowplowing & Salting – All Board Locations which closed on August 26, 2020 and issued on bidsandtenders.ca.

As previously reported, the contracts are based on a “Per Event” model which provides a balance between safety and financial risk. The 22 areas awarded to the five most responsive proponents were outlined in the report as an appendix reflecting the contractors responsible for each school location.

Trustee Ecker requested clarification regarding snow removal requirements for extended closures during winter months and potential savings. J. McLoughlin added that the secondary services that are paused as in the previous winter, would include areas other than required fire safety routes and access for staff i.e. the playgrounds which resulted in a savings to the Board.

c) Procurement Activity Report

A. Yeung, Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer of the Board, provided the Purchasing Bid Activity Report for the period April 15, 2020 – October 20, 2020 was provided for information purposes. There were no exceptions in this reporting period.

Chair Marchese asked for clarification regarding the need for the Board to purchase hand sanitizer as it was communicated by the government that it would provide PPE to schools. A. Yeung explained that the Board is procuring hand sanitizer separately to address delayed shipment to schools by the government to ensure safe reopening of schools. Also, other programs, e.g. the Special Education Transition program that was run during the summer was prior to receiving the Ministry supplies. J. McLoughlin added that it was lucky that the sanitizer had been procured, as the original Ministry shipment did not include pumps or methods to dispense the hand sanitizer.

Trustee Ecker suggested in future adding another “quantity” column to the “Bids Awarded” sheet to provide clarity where possible (not for services).

Trustee Iafrate asked for further information to be provided with regard to the lighting retrofit completion and grants provided. J. McLoughlin noted that the Board is on target to receive incentives prior to the deadline of December 31, 2020. Trustee Crowe suggested a separate report be provided to show which expenditures were funded by grants/rebates and a status update report on the LED program be provided for the Corp Services Committee.

Trustee Iafrate asked for a status update on the completion of the gym mats. J. McLoughlin advised that all purchase orders have been placed but due to COVID the material supplies used for the gym mats were delayed which delayed the installation process. Trustee Cantisano noted that the gym mats

were included as part of the Trustees' investments of \$2.3M approved during the summer and questioned the budget implication as a result of the delay in installation. A. Yeung noted that purchase orders have been created for the gym mats and would be able to use the budget approved by the Trustees.

Trustee Iafrate asked whether schools are encouraged to apply for grants from TD Bank. J. McLoughlin explained that Mr. Shadwick, Assistant Manager, Environmental Services in the Plant Department, works with the schools re school yard greening and outdoor classrooms through the TD Evergreen Grant.

d) Insurance Reports: Property Claims/Theft and Damage

A. Yeung, Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer of the Board, advised that there are three property insurance matters in progress at Our Lady of the Lake CA and previously reported due to flooding/water damage at St. James CES and St. Maximilian Kolbe CHS. A. Yeung explained that the new claim which had been added to the report, at Our Lady of the Lake, was in regard to vandalism and fire in a locker which was estimated at \$18,000.

Trustee Crowe asked for clarification regarding the St. Maximilian Kolbe CHS claim which has been reported for over two years since the initial event and clarification regarding the OSBIE deductible amount. A. Yeung will bring clarification on these questions in the next Corporate Services report.

Chair Marchese asked for how the information was reported to Trustees in budget development. A. Yeung explained that there is a budget line to reflect Insurance Claim Expenditures.

Chair Marchese requested that a report be provided for a future public session Corporate Services meeting to inform the Board on how capital projects or other school requests are prioritized by administration.

Trustee Cotton noted that excellent reports have been done by Plant Department in the on the work order process and how it works which would be helpful to demonstrate to the community the whole process and as the priority setting process.

14. NOTICE(S) OF MOTION: Nil

15. FUTURE ITEM(S):

- a) Work Order Report (M. Marchese)
- b) OSBIE deductible (E. Crowe)

Adjournment: 8:37 P.M.

On Motion: Crowe/Ecker and CARRIED