

School Construction Project Priority List Review Committee

MINUTES

Thursday, January 29, 2009

2:30 PM in Room 1D of the LOB

The following committee members were present:

Senators: Thomas Gaffey, Dan Debicella, Andrew Roraback

Representatives: Andrew Fleischmann, Marilyn Giuliano, Tom Reynolds

Absent were:

Senators: John Fonfara

Representatives: Livvy Floren

I. CONVENE MEETING

The meeting was called to order at 2:45 PM by Chairman Fleischmann.

II. REMARKS BY THE CHAIRS

Representative Fleischmann and Senator Gaffey welcomed the committee and Department of Education Commissioner Mark McQuillan and Bureau Chief for School Facilities, David Wedge.

III. REVIEW OF 2008/2009 SCHOOL BUILDING PROJECT PRIORITY LIST

Senator Gaffey observed that the list appeared to be leaner, reflecting the current fiscal crisis. He questioned some of the project costs considering the depreciating costs of commodities. He questioned how the listed projects align with the Scheff agreement regions.

Commissioner McQuillan stated that the list is smaller and leaner than last year, thus reflecting a trend that has been developing over the past three to four years. He stated that some of the factors affecting the changes include declining population and the

current economic down-turn. He is not sure how the federal economic stimulus package will impact the various projects. There was also discussion on whether the stimulus monies would be sent directly to the municipalities or to the state.

Rep. Fleischmann questioned the huge increase in costs for some of the projects, considering the current times. David Wedge explained that some of the increases may reflect unexpected costs, such as asbestos removal, etc.

There was a discussion on the possibility that some of the projects may actually cost less than estimated and whether the municipalities would return any unused portion of their allotment if that were the case. Senator Gaffey suggested possible legislative language to allow the Commissioner stronger oversight to assure that bids and professional service contracts reflect current market prices.

There was discussion on the Waterbury Allied Health and Mechanical Arts project. The Department of Education feels that the project would be a replication of existing programs within the city.

Senator Gaffey wondered if any of the solar panel projects will receive funding from the Clean Energy Fund. Mr. Wedge stated that any funding is based on the net cost after the grant funds are deducted from the total.

IV. VOTE TO APPROVE PRIORITY LIST

A motion was made by Senator Gaffey, seconded by Representative Giuliano to approve the list. The motion passed by roll call, 5 yea, 3 absent or not voting.

Rep. Fleischmann announced that the next meeting will be held on Monday, February 9, 2009, at 2:00 PM in Room 1E.

V. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:45 PM.

Dianne Slopak
Assistant Clerk

John Friis
Committee Clerk