

CONTOOCCOOK VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT
Office of the Superintendent of Schools
106 Hancock Road, Peterborough, NH 03458

Strategic Organization Committee (SOC)

Thursday, April 13, 2023

6:00 PM

SAU Boardroom

Minutes

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Alan Edelkind
Elizabeth Swan
Richard Dunning
Thomas Burgess
Dan Harper

Present: Alan Edelkind, Liz Swan, Dick Dunning, Tom Burgess, Dan Harper, Dr. Ann Forrest

Alan Edelkind called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

1. Welcome and briefing/orientation of new committee member

Alan Edelkind shared that one of the vendors, Bill Lupini, is a group that has a lot of depth but is not an organization. The RFP says that the people that we need to have in the organization that is contracted with does not have to be employees. It could be a combination of employees and consultants or other. The perception of the community is important relative to who is conducting this work. The vendor would be subcontractors to the person we subcontracted with. Bill Lupini took this information to the Collins Center and asked if they would be the overarching organization; they initially agreed but then declined. This work is not something that the Collins Center has ever done.

Alan Edelkind would like to contact Bill Lupini to inform him that an organization should be formed; e.g. LLC or other. He has identified in the RFI who would be working with him to conduct the work.

Alan Edelkind said that he would like the committee to consider Bill forming a corporation himself and have the individuals report to him. Since we are not allowed to talk to these people directly now. The board are decision makers and must not talk to people responding to the RFP. Alan would ask Kimberly to reach out to Bill.

Tom Burgess said that he was comfortable with Alan reaching out to Kimberly. As he reads the correspondence, it does not appear that Bill cannot do the work.

Alan Edelkind shared information in Section 8 of the RFI related to "Approach to Project" and related expectations. None of it says what Alan thinks Bill is thinking. Section 7 may have been missed.

Alan would like to let Bill know that any group of consultants Bill chooses is okay and that a corporation must be formed.

Liz Swan shared concern that the comprehension was not initially correct. Unsure why we want to encourage someone to form an S Corp and rally players to execute.

Alan said that he looks at it as a miscommunication.

Dick Dunning said that it is okay to say take another shot at this. He may be in over his head and decline. If he can pull this off in time it is a feather in his cap.

Tom Burgess shared that Bill Lupini made the initial cut. What do we have to lose?

Alan said that he would like to do due diligence.

Dan Harper asked if there is a requirement as to how many RFP's needs to be reviewed.

Alan Edelkind said that fourteen (14) companies were contacted and seven responded. From those, three were chosen to get the RFP.

Dan Harper asked if would be acceptable to reach out to one that was not initially selected?

Alan did not recommend. We may have to start over.

Dick Dunning moved to send a letter through Kimberly to clarify things with Bill and see how he responds.

Tom Burgess seconded. Unanimous.

Dick Dunning said that the board has been struggling for years in this area. An objective opinion is needed. What the financial and educational impacts are is needed and a recommendation to bring forward as a warrant article, or the recommendation to do nothing at all. We need to do something because of the cost of education and lack of funding coupled with some small numbers in schools. We need someone to do this work.

Alan said that we are not just looking at the elementary schools. We need to look at the middle schools as well. If we are looking at elementary schools we would need the work done by December to get on the warrant in March. It would require a two-thirds vote to pass. The biggest thing that this is, is communication. The communities need to know that we are here and transparent. Town forums will be important. Any work done here is only a recommendation.

Dan Harper said that he was on the committee to build schools and we wanted the option to add classrooms. He said that he does not think that the population is going to come back.

Alan Edelkind said that it would be difficult to bring a school with 35 students to the capacity of 120 students.

Dan Harper added that it is good that an outside firm is looking at this. It is a good approach.

Dick Dunning said that the demographics are different than other times that this was considered. The funding is different and the population is different.

Dan said that people already have stopped him to discuss inequities in schools. The mindset seems to be changing.

Alan Edelkind said that if we approach this as a financial focus only it will not make it. It needs to focus on so much more.

2. Discuss conference call with vendors

Dick Dunning shared that two companies called in and asked clarifying questions. Nothing in great depth.

3. Next steps after receipt of returned RFP's and timelines

The RFP's are supposed to come back by the 19th. How will we analyze these? Alan said that he has used a checklist in the past in other areas of work but he finds it not as helpful.

Alan Edelkind suggested that this committee knows what they are looking for. We are looking for a company with certain criteria. Identifying what was seen in each submittal would be shared around the table. He suggested giving a week after the 19th to review and another meeting thereafter to develop a recommendation to the board.

Being present in the communities to hear what people's concerns are is valuable. The taxpayers need to see the impact educationally on the kids and financially for the taxpayers.

Alan suggested the 27th for the first meeting after receipt of the RFP's.

Dan Harper asked if those hired will present in the towns. Alan said that they would along with the committee/board.

Dick said that it is important for teachers to know they aren't going to lose their job. They know that this is better for kids.

4. Election of Committee Chair

Dick Dunning moved to elect Alan Edelkind as Chairman of this committee. Liz Swan seconded. Unanimous.

5. Other

Options were discussed such as moving fifth grade back or combining the middle schools.

Ann Forrest shared that there is research that shows that students learn as much from their peers as their teachers.

6. Adjourn

Dick Dunning moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:43 p.m. Tom Burgess seconded. Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Marschok