



BEX /BTA Oversight Committee

February 9, 2024, 2023, 8:30 – 10:30 AM

JSCEE Board Auditorium

Minutes

1. Call to Order

- a. Janet Donelson called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m.
- b. Roll call:
 - i. Committee members present: Janet Donelson, Duncan Griffin, Luis Adan, Warren Johnson, Michelle Moore, Steve Tatge, Jennifer DuHamel
 - ii. Committee members participating online:
 - iii. Committee members absent: Robynne Thaxton, Monty Anderson, Sherry Edquid, Lavina Sadhwani
 - iv. Capital Projects Staff present: Richard Best, Becky Asencio, Vince Gonzales, Tom Gut, Melissa Coan, Jen Lincoln
- c. The meeting agenda: Warren Johnson made a motion to approve the agenda. Luis Adan seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- d. Meeting Minutes Discussion: The committee discussed the appropriate level of granularity for meeting minutes. The committee agreed that minutes should be a summary, in general, but also call out germane details, especially when members share differing views on a subject based on their professional expertise. Members agreed to note if the minutes missed an important detail.
- e. The minutes from January 12, 2023: Steve Tatge made a motion to approve the January 12, 2024, meeting minutes. Warren Johnson seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Board Member Update

Mr. Best conveyed that Directors Vivian Song and Lisa Rivera had resigned from the School Board. He indicated that the Board President would make new appointments to the BEX/BTA Oversight Committee after the two seats were filled. He noted that the process could take several months.

3. Budget Update BEX V and BTA V Capital Levies

Ms. Coan reported on the BEX V Capital Levy Program through December 31, 2023. She conveyed that it was 51% spent, which aligned with projections for this period. She highlighted one variance in the form of a \$1.7M budget transfer from program underspend to Asa Mercer

International Middle project. She noted that the Program Contingency was \$303,000 and noted that it was expected to grow as projects closed out and savings realized.

The committee and staff discussed the risks associated with acquiring Street Improvement Permits (SIP). Mr. Best confirmed that he meets monthly with leads at the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) and Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections (SDCI) to address Seattle Public Schools (SPS) projects. He acknowledged that while the SIP process was recently improved it remained challenging. Mr. Gonzales provided an example of mitigating the cost and timeline of a street improvement project by establishing it as a separate project. Ms. Donelson acknowledged the benefits of using a General Contractor/Construction Management (GCCM) process to address SIP issues early in the project. Mr. Griffin suggested treating site improvements as their own project, separate from building construction.

Ms. Coan reported on the BTA V Capital Levy Program through December 31, 2023. She reminded the committee that this is the youngest program in the SPS portfolio and only 9% spent. She highlighted several of the Major Projects in the program. Mr. Best clarified that the Spokane Street Warehouse was a surplus warehouse established to replace the surplus warehouse that exists under the Memorial Stadium bleachers. He added that the negotiations toward a partnership agreement with the City of Seattle and One Roof Stadium Partnership continue, citing recent participation in negotiations regarding the Student Community Workforce Agreement (SCWA).

4. Project Status Reports Update

Mr. Best and Senior Project Managers Vince Gonzales and Tom Gut provided an update on the progress of the Major Projects, across the portfolio of levy programs.

The committee and staff discussed the Alki Elementary School Project. Mr. Gonzales updated the committee on the City's review of the Parking Departure. Mr. Best addressed the financial costs of the delay. He confirmed that he is in conversations with a land use planner at the City to address the impacts of the current Land Use Codes on school sites. Ms. Donelson suggested encouraging Alki parents to attend the Departures hearing.

The committee and staff discussed the Mercer Middle School project and the status of conversations with the Veterans Administration Hospital adjacent to that site. Mr. Best addressed the financial costs of changing the project's design and the outstanding negotiations for an easement. Mr. Best and Mr. Gonzales acknowledged the cooperation between both parties to help work towards a solution that resolves the matter. Mr. Gonzales conveyed that the Mercer Middle School project team includes the same architect, general contractor, and building envelope consultant as the Van Asselt project. Mr. Griffin highlighted the significance of the provenance of the timber and Mr. Best confirmed that the specifications require the source be a certified forest. Mr. Best followed up on Mr. Johnson's question about the cost of tenting at the site and indicated that the project team continues to monitor this item.

5. Board Action Report (BAR) Discussion

Mr. Best reminded the committee that Board Action Reports (BARs) had been reviewed at meetings at the request of Director Song. He conveyed that, with her resignation, staff would prefer to end this practice. Committee members briefly discussed their role in the process. Ms. Donelson concluded that the committee's input is relevant earlier in the projects and by the time BARs come for review there is no opportunity for action.

6. John Muir Early Learning Classroom Addition Design

(Vince Gonzales, Matisia Hollingsworth – Seattle Public Schools; Anjali Grant – Anjali Grant Design; Mike McCanna – Absher Construction)

Mr Best introduced the design team (listed above). Ms. Grant opened the presentation with an introduction to the roles of Race and Equity in preschool. She highlighted ways the design team had engaged with the John Muir school community to learn how to represent its languages, values, and needs in the design of the early learning addition. She also conveyed aspects of the new building's passive design, sustainability features, and biophilic elements.

Mr. McCanna presented the project's schedule and logistics. He highlighted that since the project did not reach the financial threshold for Electrical Contractor/Construction Manager (ECCM) his team purchased the switchgear directly to reduce risk to the project. He outlined the timeframe for major activities like bidding, demolition, and a renovation to part of the existing building.

The committee and design team discussed how the project would be brought back into budget. The team clarified that scope that was added to the original levy approved project had to be removed. Ms. Grant confirmed that SPS would receive a memo from the team about those opportunities to improve the building.

Mr. Tatge shared how his team at the University of Washington reviews projects, prior to a full design process, to achieve reasonable confidence that the design will meet the needs and the budget. In this way, they reduce the risk of design revisions and scope reduction later in the process. Mr. Best clarified that the scope was reviewed as part of a conceptual plan, but the district did not receive all of the state funds necessary to complete that scope. Ms. Asencio added that one of the lessons learned from this project was to engage SPS Facilities staff with greater detail during the conceptual planning to have a more complete view of a buildings needs. Another lesson learned, from previous projects, was to employ GCCM for the value it brings and the risks it mitigates.

Ms. Moore inquired about the relationship between unconscious bias and the design. Ms. Grant shared the work of the Alki Elementary School project team who conducted research in this area. From that work, Ms. Grant learned about the significance of microaffirmations, such as including the school communities many languages in signage. She also described the challenge to be imaginative and move away from the John Muir Elementary School's original logo and legacy toward a new image with students' home languages.

Mr. Best reported that all the BEX V projects were addressing exclusionary practices and seeking ways to incorporate quiet spaces, in classrooms, to support students learning to self-regulate and remain in the classroom. He acknowledged that exclusionary practices are disproportionately applied to Black males and that it was an issue of racial equity in the classroom. He praised Deborah Northern's work keeping design teams mindful of this practice during project development. Ms. Grant noted that this practice starts in preschool when families are told not to bring their students to school.

7. Adjourn

Ms. Donelson adjourned the meeting at 10:30 a.m.