

COMMITTEE ON JOINT SCHOOL BUILDINGS

March 15, 1999

6:00 PM

Chairman Higgins called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen Pinard and Girard, School Committee Members Herbert (late), Healy, and Higgins

Absent: Alderman Klock

Messrs: R. Houle, F. Thomas, F. Marinace, R. Roberts, S. Page, R. MacKenzie, R. O'Shea, C. Annis, E. Hastings, B. Albert

Chairman Higgins stated what we are going to do this evening due to time constraints and the weather, is address Items 5, 6, 8 and 12.

Chairman Higgins addressed Item 5 of the agenda:

Northwest Elementary School --

Mr. Houle stated as everyone is aware of by now, following the sprinkler incident at Northwest School, it was discovered that we had structural problems with the trusses and Barbara of PBS, while I was on vacation, made a couple of inquiries and decided to call on Rich Roberts who was the structural engineer for the City Hall project. He was brought in to evaluate the situation for the City and he has done so.

Mr. Roberts stated I am going to recap, very quickly, what I related to the School Board at the last meeting and then proceed to update that report. I guess the recap is necessary to bring some of you up to speed who were not at that meeting. Following a phone call that we received from Public Building Services, we went out to Northwest where repairs were in progress to fix the damage done from a sprinkler break. Part of those repairs involved installation of a sheetrock ceiling to the underside of the wood roof trusses in three areas or two areas of the building that were damaged – the special education wing and the kindergarten wing. In the course of doing those repairs, it was noted that some of the bottom chords to which the sheetrock was being attached under the ceiling, the bottom chords of the truss is the ceiling joist in that instance, that several of those were apparently

broken and at that point the contractor doing the work advised PBS and we were called in to investigate. We looked at that condition and issued a report identifying four factors which we believe to varying degrees contributed to the conditions that were prevalent out there and with the help of PBS we attempted to catalog the location and the number of deficiencies that were present in the roof truss areas of the building. Those of you who are familiar with the building know that wood roof trusses are used in only three specific areas of that building and most of the building has steel joist construction. The areas in question are the special education wing and kindergarten, both of which are separate free standing single story wings with pitched roofs and there are also wood trusses used in the media room library area on the third floor of the building. The most extensively damaged areas were the low areas, specifically the special education wing and to a lesser extent the kindergarten. In the special education wing, the damage compromised 12 of 19 trusses that form that roof and is by any measure a pretty serious condition. The City took steps, under direction from us, to assure that and initially began repairs based on our initial reaction that we were looking at a lumber gradation problem with the bottom chords of those trusses and this is evidenced by very large knots and growth rings in those members. We needed to clarify and get a handle on some of the other issues, which were also present, that indicated that they might be contributing to the problem. Amongst those issues was the presence of a fire retardant that had been used on the lumber. That was in the project specifications and had been, apparently implemented, although we couldn't find stamps on the trusses that indicated that the lumber used was, in fact, fire retardant treated. In order to fully evaluate that, we called upon Wood Science Specialists of Massachusetts and a Dr. Stephen Smulski who is a Ph.D. in wood science and has had past experience with fire retardant treated materials. Dr. Smulski came out and with the help of the City and Bonnett, Page & Stone, we went through the building and cut representative samples from trusses throughout the building and specifically, most extensively from the special education wing. Those samples were taken to a laboratory and tested. The initial test was are they fire retardant or not. That came back positive. They are fire retardant. Dr. Smulski has had some past experience with fire retardant lumber failures. The locations of the failures and the general nature of the failure were also indicative of fire retardant problems. The samples that were cut from the trusses were then laboratory tested for ultimate strength and flexural which is an indication also of tensile strength of the wood and were looking for a strength reduction in the wood that would have been the result of the fire retardant. Under normal conditions, when the building was designed the building codes called for allowable stresses in the lumber to be reduced by 15% if a fire retardant was to be used and that was done in this design that is documented in the shop drawings that were submitted and approved for the buildings construction. However, what has occurred here, that specific type of fire retardant which by the way is no longer on the market, proved to have a similar unpredictable history in terms of the resulting degradation

of strength in the lumber and the samples that were tested indicate that the ultimate strength of the lumber is reduced by about 45% rather than 15%. So there is a significant additional strength reduction in this lumber beyond what was anticipated by the buildings designers. This has been a problem endemic to this particular type of fire retardant. Just to diverge quickly, this is what we call a second-generation fire retardant treatment for lumber. The first generation product was a salt. It ate the connector plates of this type of trusses and the teeth fell off and the trusses fell apart. That was very quickly taken off the market by the industry and they came out with a second-generation product. This is that second-generation product. The problem with this product is unpredictable and sometimes severe loss of strength, particularly in tension of the wood resulting from this product. It is also not just an initial loss of strength that is associated with this product, but under even moderate temperature conditions such as those found in an attic, that loss of strength is known to be progressive and is known to slowly increase in time. So there is an initial large drop of strength and then a slow deterioration over years, over a longer period of time and that is particularly important when it comes to our recommendations. Although some repairs have been initiated with the belief that the major problem was a lumber grade issue on the bottom chords, this report of the fire retardant clearly establishes that as the primary reason for the problems at Northwest. Other issues that we raised out there, lumber gradation, in the opinion of the wood scientist the bottom chords are gradable for No. 2 Southern Pine which is what they were supposed to have been. He thinks and believes that due to the lower grade of that lumber, it is just more susceptible to damage from the fire retardant so it very much becomes a secondary issue to the fire retardant. Other issues and deficiencies were noted out there but all of these are clearly secondary concerns at best. The primary issue out there is the presence of fire retardant treated lumber. Because all members of all trusses are so treated, repairing them in the nature which was initially conceived, that is sandwiching our adding material to the truss to try to reinforce it, is not a practical solution and replacement of the roof becomes indicated as the only logical and sensible means to restore the integrity of the roof structure. That conclusion is in our report to the City, which was updated on March 10 to reflect that conclusion.

Alderman Girard asked, Mr. Roberts, your report says that this fire retardant was known to have problems. Should those who used this wood or used this retardant at the time known that it was problematic?

Mr. Roberts answered no, not at all. If you had a school built 30 years ago and they hadn't insulated the boilers with asbestos it would have been unusual. It is almost a product liability type case. You would have accused them of being negligent for not having done so and rightfully so. This is a product, which has proven to be a problem only in a period of time since its initial use.

Alderman Girard stated your report also indicates that one of the contributing factors, though perhaps not primary, is that a dividing wall was erroneously constructed in a bearing condition but was not load bearing. How much of a factor would you say that was? It troubles me that walls that are supposed to be load bearing aren't.

Mr. Roberts replied that is one of the factors that was not as per the construction drawings and not as it should have been, but I don't believe that we would be standing here today were it not for the fire retardant. Other deficiencies, where present, are greatly magnified by the reduced strength and become evident because of the reduced strength of the lumber. Yes, that wall should not have been built in a bearing condition. That was a problem, but in our opinion at this point it is a secondary consideration.

Chairman Higgins asked what is the process now. What are we going to do about this?

Mr. Houle answered Frank Thomas and his staff, myself, Frank Marinace and Steve Page and his people have been asked to take a look at that and come back to us with quotes.

Alderman Girard asked why Mr. Page. Are they the company that built the building?

Mr. Houle answered yes. The reason we want to continue with the analysis of the structure is that we think there may be a product liability issue here. Frankly, we are spending about \$19,000 to determine that which is engineering and Wood Science is still looking at it.

Mr. Thomas stated our main concern is to replace the roof and have the facility back in operation by next fall so we are looking at proceeding in what is the most expeditious manner and that is to ask the architect who was involved in the original design of the facility to give us a proposal to do the required engineering. Again, we are not reinventing the wheel; we are using the architect that was involved. Also, we will be asking the contractor who is working in the City on Parkside and who was also obviously involved with the construction of the original building for a proposal to speed up the process. Again, we are not reinventing the wheel. We are going to have a contractor who is familiar with the building. As Dick mentioned, I don't think that is waiving any of the liabilities that may be floating around out there. That will be addressed in due course. Our concern is to get the facility corrected as quickly as possible.

Chairman Higgins asked so, Mr. Marinace, you are doing the specs.

Mr. Marinace answered I am going to give Frank Thomas a proposal for engineering services. I need to get a structural engineer and look at some mechanical work and pull all of those pieces together. I will give him a proposal on what it is going to take to get that in there and done. If he accepts that proposal, then we produce documents to make the corrections and repair.

Chairman Higgins asked what is the timeframe.

Mr. Thomas answered I am waiting for the proposal to be generated and as soon as I receive the proposal and know the dollar value, I am going to have to find the money. I expect to talk to Mr. MacKenzie to see if I can get those funds or find some balances in some of the accounts. As quickly as the design is done, turning that around again I don't know offhand how long it would take. If you got the go ahead for the design, what would the time period be if you had to make a guess right now, Mr. Marinace?

Mr. Marinace replied it would probably take two or three weeks.

Mr. Thomas stated after that we would sit down with the contractor and ask for a proposal. We can't really get in and start the work until school is out.

Chairman Higgins asked so it is going to take two to three weeks to get the proposal to do the design.

Mr. Marinace answered no. The proposal we will have to him this week. Then it is going to take two or three weeks to re-engineer the building. As a side benefit, codes have changed over this period of time so the truss design; the roof design for the new roof will be up to current codes, not designed, as codes were back when that school was built. Codes are now more stringent so the roof will actually be designed stronger than it was when we built the building so it has to be re-engineered. We can't just use the old drawings wholesale.

Alderman Girard asked, Mr. Thomas, are there any procurement code issues here. Is there a provision in the procurement code that allows us to solicit these proposals without a bid process just because they worked on the building before?

Mr. Thomas answered I think we can look at the emergency provisions of the procurement code. Again, time is a factor here.

Alderman Girard stated I will certainly yield to the discretion of Mr. Houle and Mr. Thomas, but I would be remiss if I didn't comment that I have some misgivings about simply going back to the people who did it the first time. That building has been plagued with a history of these pipes bursting in particular places and now we are finding that materials may have been mishandled or damaged and we are finding walls put in place that were supposed to be structural that weren't and now the same group, and we will be addressing this later tonight, is responsible for another building that was also have bunch of problems with. Familiarity is nice but I am not sure that a fresh look at the situation wouldn't be warranted. I have some real misgivings about just using the same old because they are familiar with the building. Something tells me that if things were done right the first time we wouldn't be facing these issues. Given the performance now at the McLaughlin School and I am really upset that I had to read about that in the newspaper and didn't get anything ahead of time, I think it is a very serious issue because we have the same team of people who are responsible for those problems. I think enough is enough to be quite honest. I have no predisposition to work with the folks who have already done the damage.

Alderman Pinard asked who was the clerk of the works on Northwest.

Mr. Houle answered I don't recall his name.

Mr. Marinace stated it was Eugene Todd.

Mr. Houle stated I don't think he completed the project.

Alderman Pinard stated well if we are paying for a clerk to oversee the job and we don't detect a problem until seven or eight years later, there is something wrong with the communication.

Chairman Higgins replied in all fairness we have an engineer here who has told us that there is no way that anybody could have foreseen this and he gave the example of the asbestos so if we didn't have the sprinkler break, we never would have known about the structural problems so out of a bad thing a good thing comes, but I am not blaming the architect or the contractor because fire retardant materials were used which were up to code at the time.

Alderman Pinard stated we can't blame everything on the clerk of the works, but...

Chairman Higgins interjected well it is not an issue of blame. Alderman Girard brings up a point. This is the same team that did that school.

Alderman Girard stated I want to make it clear that it is not the fire retardant wood that I am specifically concerned with. It is the other anomalies that have taken place in this process and that have been discovered as a result of this process. It is the other problems that we have had at that building. It is the other problems that we are having with our brand-new building, all designed in the same way. It seems that every time this City does something, whether it is Hallsville School, Wilson School or anywhere else, we run into these ridiculous issues after the fact and I don't know who did Hallsville or Wilson but I know who did Northwest and McLaughlin and we are having issues with these schools and my entire point is to say a fresh set of eyes might be a good thing here given that the building, Northwest, has had problems since the day it opened. Now you are entirely right that the trusses wouldn't have been discovered without the sprinkler system problem but the fact of the matter is that it is the fourth, fifth or sixth time that a pipe has burst in that building and it is always in the same location. It may not be the exact same pipe, but they are in the same place.

Chairman Higgins stated this is only the second time this has happened.

Alderman Girard stated I have been led to believe that there have been more problems than that. I went to visit the school and the principal seemed to think that that was the fourth or fifth time that a pipe had burst and there were two particular areas of the building that they burst in; that being one of them.

Mr. Thomas stated I think in a way you are going to have a different set of eyes. What the Highway Department will be bringing to this project is a complete engineering staff. We don't have any architects or structural engineers on board per say but we do have civil engineers that can understand what a structural engineer has to say. We can provide a different set of eyes. In a way, I understand what Alderman Girard is saying, that you have to question some of these issues. I would like to think that the issue with the new school will be addressed when it comes up on the agenda, but again I think what we all want to see is to get this particular problem resolved as quickly as possible without us or somebody else sitting around come August or September wondering why the project is not going to be completed.

Alderman Girard stated I agree with that, Mr. Thomas, but by the same token a fresh set of eyes is more liable to be able to tell if there was a defect in the design or construction, they are more likely to tell us than the same set of eyes that got us in this situation and at that point we have recourse to protect the taxpayers which we would not have otherwise. I know we are going after product liability with the wood and that is one issue, however, it just frosts me because these things always seem to happen and it is the taxpayer that gets stuck holding the bag. Maybe it is just a natural byproduct of the lowest bidder bid process that we have to go

through, I don't know, but enough is enough. So, I appreciate that you are going to bring new eyes to it, but that is my concern.

Mr. Houle asked, Frank, who are you planning on bringing in as a structural engineer.

Mr. Marinace answered I was going to talk to Rich Roberts because he knows something about what is there.

Mr. Houle stated well in that aspect, that is a fresh set of eyes. He is the one who uncovered the problem.

Mr. Marinace stated 95% of the work is going to be structural.

School Committee Member Herbert replied I am not sure that I know what that means, Frank.

Mr. Marinace stated 95% of the work that is going to happen is taking off the roof that is there and putting a new roof on that is going to be designed differently.

School Committee Member Herbert asked are we still going to use wood or would it be smart to look at steel or something like that.

Mr. Roberts answered it wouldn't be indicated because of the supporting structure. I think you are probably looking at a wood trusses. One alternative would be cold form steel, but you are probably looking at wood or at least that is my reaction. I am not involved yet.

Mr. Houle stated Frank Thomas, Frank Marinace and I have talked about the fact that we have a school that has to be opened a week or so before Labor Day and the alternatives...I am not sure what the alternatives are for not moving ahead with the emergency provisions that we have now.

Alderman Girard stated if that is a real concern, my objections will stand noted and that is fine. I just wanted to put that out there for everybody to consider and as you go through the emergency process and you bring these people on board, I think you ought to note that the objections have been raised and make sure that as critical an eye can be brought to this process as possible.

Mr. Houle replied I think that Frank Thomas is committed to doing that.

Chairman Higgins stated if this Committee wants to proceed in another way, we certainly have that right.

Alderman Pinard replied I think we have to proceed with the fastest way but be careful in how this is going to be handled.

Chairman Higgins stated then Alderman Girard's concerns are noted.

Alderman Girard stated my objections are on the record and I think that Mr. Houle and Mr. Thomas are aware of the concerns which you have echoed and I am sure that all people here share so I will not seek another alternative because I know that we have to get that school ready.

Alderman Pinard asked are you saying that you want to go out for other bids.

Alderman Girard answered I would like to see it, but from what I understand from the staff it is not practical if we want to get the building done. Do we have time to solicit others?

Mr. Thomas stated I think it would be very, very difficult. We would have to go through a procurement process for the architect.

Alderman Girard replied in using the emergency provisions of the procurement code, can't you solicit three written bids without going through the procurement process.

Mr. Thomas stated well you would have to develop a request for proposal and that would take some time.

Alderman Girard asked what are you giving to Mr. Marinace that you couldn't give to somebody else.

Mr. Thomas answered well first of all; he knows what has to be done because he has been involved with it right from day one. I don't need to ask him too much. He is going to be telling me what needs to be done and the price to do it. If we went with a different contractor, which is possible, again you would have to develop the bidding documents, advertise and whatnot.

Alderman Girard asked are you saying that there is not enough time to do that.

Mr. Thomas answered if you are looking for a third review; you could hire a third consultant to come in and evaluate the design and to give you a report. That would be an additional cost but if that is what you want, it can be done.

Alderman Girard stated I am not worried about the structure that is going to be replacing what is there, I am just more interested in finding out how we got there.

School Committee Member Herbert stated I think Alderman Girard has a point but in this particular case, I think we should get it done as quickly as possible. I think Mr. Marinace and the other gentlemen are very familiar with the situation as it is and probably can deliver exactly what we need. However, having said that I would think that, and you said something about the low bid process and I have made my feelings known on that. I think that the next time we have any kind of time where we are not under the gun like this, the whole issue of how we structure our relationship with vendors should be put on the front burner. I think that is a matter that is very important. I don't think that now is quite the time to do it, but I think it certainly adds to the evidence that maybe we ought to reconsider when we are spending this kind of money, our relationship with our contractors.

Mr. Houle stated the intent at this point in time would be to move forward with the contractor on a construction management basis and he has agreed to a reduced fee.

Chairman Higgins asked does anybody have a ballpark figure for cost.

Mr. Houle answered the only figure that I have was given to me by Bonnett, Page & Stone's principal Steve Page and he guessed between \$200,000 and \$300,000 and that was the basis for some money that has been set aside in the CIP process. I am not sure what that number is rounded out to beyond that statement.

Chairman Higgins asked is that all-inclusive or is that just for replacement. I am talking about architectural, engineering, etc.

Mr. Page answered that was an off the top of my head quick estimate at construction costs, not including engineering.

Mr. Houle stated we have talked about maybe wanting a standing seam metal roof because you can't just take the, especially the roof over the Media Center which is a large room, take it off in sections and put on new pieces. Those details haven't been worked out.

Chairman Higgins stated before they look at a metal roof, we have to talk because they have a metal roof at Wilson, which is very loud. In terms of the time-line, we are talking two to three weeks to get the specs prepared and from there it will go to bid or Bonnett, page & Stone are going to take care of it?

Mr. Thomas stated we would then turn that information over to the contractor and have the contractor prepare a detailed estimate, which we will review to make sure that it is reasonable. Again, we haven't sat down and put a time-line on how long that would take the contractor.

Mr. Page stated maybe if I could back up a little bit as to why I proposed doing it this method. One of the reasons is because time is so critical, if you decided you wanted us to do the work we wouldn't wait until Frank's office had the drawing completed to start running numbers. We should be involved as the design is ongoing so they can get our input into the way they are designing it and maybe save some time and some money. So those numbers, those estimates would be ongoing during the design process and we could probably follow-up with a hard number within a week of the completion of the design.

Alderman Girard asked, Mr. Page, given that the engineer's report cited a wall that was a load bearing wall that shouldn't have been and the poor condition of the truss, the wood that existed and whether or not it should have been fire retardant is not what I am talking about, given that the engineer that reviewed this has found those to be contributing factors, are you inclined to give the City any consideration in the pricing since it was your firm that built the building.

Mr. Page answered I don't agree necessarily about the damaged trusses. I don't think that anybody really knows what the problem is there. The wall that was built was a non-bearing wall but because of the way it was built there were not provisions for that roof to deflect so it was in a bearing condition. In preliminary talks with Mr. Houle and Mr. Thomas, I have offered to do this job at a reduced fee simply because I think it is the cleanest way for all of us. I know that with our knowledge of the building and knowledge of what the problems are, we can do the job more efficiently than anyone else and on a tighter schedule than anyone else can. At the same time, I feel that if another contractor gets in there in a situation like this because I have seen it before and I have been on the other end too when I have gone in to fix someone else's work and a lot of issues come up that aren't necessarily issues so it is an easier way out for me. That is why I have offered the reduced fee.

Alderman Girard stated so you are telling us that your pencil is going to be very sharp.

Mr. Page replied yes and another thing, the method that I am proposing to do this under construction management, the number that we give you or the estimate we give you would be what is called a guaranteed maximum price. The total cost plus a fee would not exceed that price. We would do the work on a cost plus fee basis so if we can save money along the way, that money would come right back to you.

To assure that, any time I do a construction management project on a public project, as far as we are concerned it is an open book policy. If you want some auditors or someone from Frank's office to come look at our books to confirm the costs, you are welcome to do that.

Alderman Girard asked do you have that capability, Mr. Thomas.

Mr. Thomas answered yes we do have the capability of closely monitoring these activities and we could even bring in the Finance Department.

Alderman Girard stated I would like to take them up on that offer, Madame Chair.

Chairman Higgins replied I am more concerned about cutting corners to save money.

Mr. MacKenzie stated I just wanted to comment on the funds because I am not totally comfortable at this point that there will be enough money if we are talking \$200,000 to \$300,000. In working with the Mayor and preparing his CIP budget, we were aware the last day of the approximate price range of what we were talking about but there was not really enough time to adjust what is called the School Capital Improvement Program (SCIP) to where I would be comfortable that we could get the work done. During the next two weeks, the Board will be reviewing that budget and I would perhaps be more comfortable if the Board would consider an amendment to that to make sure that we would have enough money because there are other projects on the plate as well that we want to make sure get done like the heating and ventilation project at West and Central, finishing the fire sprinkling at the Parkside addition, as well as Memorial High School.

Alderman Girard stated I would have no problem making that a separate item within the CIP so that the funds are dedicated. Mr. Page, would you be willing to start work on this prior to the City making an appropriation through its normal budget process because technically as we go through the current budget process we won't have any funds until July 1.

Mr. Page replied with a commitment that I would have money in July, yes absolutely. I think the only way you are going to get this job done so you can open school on time next fall is the materials have to be ordered as soon as they can so that they are sitting there the day after school is out.

Alderman Girard stated I think the Board is going to do this. I don't think we want headlines about children killed in a roof accident at school.

Chairman Higgins asked without damaging anything that the City might be doing, we are pursuing legal action, right.

Mr. Houle answered as soon as the engineer's report comes in; we will turn it over to the City Solicitor's Office.

School Committee Member Healy asked legal action against whom.

Mr. Houle answered the manufacturer of the product.

School Committee Member Healy stated I think that Alderman Girard has a point. Maybe it wouldn't be a bad idea to have a consultant come in to review and take a look at what their report is going to be.

Chairman Higgins replied I have no objection to that and I think it is not a bad idea.

Alderman Pinard asked is that a motion.

School Committee Member Healy answered I was just putting it out there for discussion.

School Committee Member Healy moved to have a consultant come in review the specs and oversee the construction piece of this project. Alderman Girard duly seconded the motion.

Mr. Thomas stated so that I understand this, you want another engineer or architect to come on board to review the design that is going to take place and the proposed method of construction.

Chairman Higgins replied right, and the construction. Is that what Mr. Roberts is going to be doing?

Mr. Thomas answered no; he is going to be working as a sub-consultant to the architect.

Mr. Roberts stated that hasn't been established as of yet. Frank and I have not discussed that yet. I can work either side. I can either continue to work in a review capacity or I can be involved in the redesign.

Chairman Higgins called for a vote on the motion. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

Chairman Higgins addressed Item 6 of the agenda:

Henry J. McLaughlin Jr. Middle School --

Mr. Houle stated I think as we go through the project summary and financial report, the only thing that I would like to point out at this point in time is that on line item 103, PSNH invoiced us for \$768 plus some change more than originally approved by the Joint School Building Committee. We have asked them to take a look at it and we are not paying the bill until that comes through. I am not quite sure why it is that much higher. The only other thing I would like to point out is that there is still \$126,000 of equipment money left. There are a number of warranty items and building problems lists that are being looked at. We know that it is an extensive list and it is something that Frank, the architect, the contractor and I addressed before this meeting. Maybe Frank could summarize it for us.

Chairman Higgins stated before you do that, I just want to make sure that I understand. We set aside and that is why this amount is encumbered, \$7,249 for PSNH and that is why we haven't expended anything because we are withholding that because they sent us a bill for \$8,017.28?

Mr. Houle replied correct, we have not paid the bill yet.

Chairman Higgins stated I think that we do want to go over some of the warranty items.

Alderman Girard stated I did not bring my newspaper with me so I don't have the exact list of things that I read about and was wondering if there was a list available that I could look at.

Chairman Higgins replied yes we did receive a list.

Alderman Girard asked when did we get it.

Chairman Higgins stated I believe the Board of Mayor and Aldermen received it as part of the correspondence they get from the School Department.

Mr. Annis stated they don't all get those updates, just the Mayor.

Alderman Girard stated it would be helpful if the Joint School Building Committee could get those, Mr. Annis, so that we could address these issues without having to get all of the information from the newspaper.

Mr. Annis replied I can talk to the School Department about that.

School Committee Member Healy stated the questions that I have are ones that School Committee Member Gatsas brought up a couple of times and that was with the gym flooring.

Chairman Higgins replied the gym floor, the roof, the skylights, etc. Frank, can you address some of those? Actually what we are talking about and I think you got a copy of that is the memo from Mr. Albert to the Superintendent. I believe some of those things have been addressed. Some of them were door handles and the like but I think our major area of concern is the ceiling leaks. I noticed that there was a front door leak and skylights and the gym floor. Can you tell us a little bit about that?

Mr. Marinace stated first of all we should put things in perspective. When the project is substantially complete, we go through and make a list of things that have to be done and decide how much to withhold from the contractor.

Chairman Higgins stated I made a misstatement. My understanding was when we had the ceremony that the School Department accepted that building and the construction is not closed on that building and that is why it is back in the Joint School Building Committee, well it never left the Joint School Building Committee. I just want to make sure that the Committee members understand that. I misunderstood. I thought it was within the purview of the School Department now and it is not. It is still in this Committee.

Mr. Marinace stated but by contract you did accept the building as substantially complete. What that does is starts the warranty period. Now the warranty period is one year. Things that break or end up on this list, most of these things, are covered by warranty and that is the way it is supposed to be. On a project of this size you are going to have things happen over the course of the year that need attention from the contractor. That is not unusual. Some of the things that sound major really are not. I see the word structural problems and that is completely wrong. There are no structural problems with the building. Anyhow, the things that are happening in that building, lets say roof leaks, that is going to happen. It is going to happen on any project of that size that is built and that is why you have a warranty period. You are going to have a leak here and there. I don't think we are having catastrophic leaks. What we do is we get a notice from Public Building Services or we get a list from Barry and when the building was substantially completed, I requested from Barry and the School Administration that during the period of the warranty, during that year, write things down that you think are wrong, document them and send me a copy. If you don't do that, you won't have a record of things that have been problems. So we know that is going to happen and all we ask is that if something goes wrong and a door doesn't work or a doorknob falls off, write it down and send us a letter. We have been getting these

lists and we have also been getting calls from PBS. What we do then is do a fax to the contractor and say in Room so and so there appears to be a leak. The contractor gets that and dispatches someone to take care of the problem. That is the way it is supposed to work. I believe that is the way it has been working for the most part. Now you are going to have little problems and four months from now there are going to be problems happening, I can tell you right now. It is going to happen. I know that the doorknob is going to fall off. A piece of weather stripping might fall off. A window lock is going to break. It is going to happen. I guarantee it. Given that, some of the major things you are talking about are the roof leaks. The roofing contractor has been back and we had a meeting at the school. The contractor's job is to honor the warranty. If we reported a roof leak and it is not getting attention, we would like to hear about it. I think that so far the roofing contractor has gone back and fixed the leaks. Some of these things are very hard to pin down. You don't just walk up to the roof and say here is the leak, let's fix it. Water travels and you have to figure out what is going on. Is it coming through a pipe? You see a ceiling stain and you don't know what is causing that. There is a lot of detective work involved. The gym floor, I know what is going on there. I read something about water pouring in through skylights. If we had a drip around the skylight, fine. If it is classified as a roof leak it is probably a problem with the flashing and we have to find out what is going on. I read that water is seeping in through the skylights. It is a drip in the gym and it gets addressed. The gym floor does have a little bit of a concern in that the wood seems to be shrinking a little bit. I would rather see that than having the wood expand, but at this time of year it is probably shrinking because of the relative humidity. When the floor was put down, the flooring contractor did a humidity test on the wood and that is on record. They can't really put the floor down until it reaches; I think 8% or 9% moisture. They do that. They check it and the reason for that is you don't want to have moisture over the desired reading because then it will shrink. It could be that this wood that was put down at 9% over the course of the winter might have reduced to 7% or 7.5% so we don't know. I have set-up with the flooring manufacturer to meet me at the school with the floor installer, with the contractor and anybody else who wants to be there to find out what their opinion is as to these cracks that have opened up in the floor boards. It is nothing structural and nothing is falling down. It is the wood opening up 1/16th of an inch or so. I get the feeling that what they are going to tell us is yes, the wood dried out a little bit and we are going to ask them how we can prevent it from happening. The cracks are opening up a little more than I expected but we will get their opinion. We have to get the manufacturer involved first and that meeting will be scheduled in the next week to 10 days and when I have a date I will let Frank Thomas know.

Mr. Thomas stated when these problems came to my attention; I contacted the contractor and the architect right away. I also contacted the principal over there to set-up a direct line of communication with him to me. They had furnished me

with detailed evidence that these problems that are coming up, these warranty items, when they come up they are put on a list and when they are fixed they are dated so that they have a record of when they have been repaired. There is a sizable retainage that is still out on this project that should guarantee that these items are, indeed, taken care of. In addition, before this meeting I met with the contractor again to coordinate lists to make sure that the contractor had the latest list which he didn't which we passed on to him. He is going to add that to this master list. I suggested that the architect meet on a one-to-one basis with the principal over there to explain to the principal in detail what is going on, allow the principal to ask questions to try to open the communication up. I also instructed the architect to follow this up with a memo so that we will have a written record of what has been discussed and what the procedures are that are going to be established. I looked through this list and again for a facility that was in the \$9.5 million range, I didn't think it was that bad. We asked the contractor do you have any explanation why the roof is leaking and he has been involved with the construction of a lot of roofs and what he explained to me made some sense. When the roof was first put on, we experienced a lot of heavy rains and there weren't any problems. However, when you get snow and other debris up there it is pocketing the water and that water starts freezing or thawing and gets into areas. I don't believe that this is the ideal time to put up a permanent repair on some of these areas. If they have been addressed, there is a chance that it wasn't even corrected. Again, I am trying to assure you that now we have a different set of eyes looking at these problems and we feel that the communication must have been lacking or an understanding of how these problems would get addressed. Hopefully, this will be eliminated.

Chairman Higgins asked when did the warranty period start. Was that September or August.

Mr. Marinace answered it started at different times for different parts of the building.

Chairman Higgins asked is there a record of when the warranty period started for...

Mr. Marinace answered you signed a certificate of substantial completion for each part we took over and that starts the warranty period.

Chairman Higgins asked, Mr. Albert, do you believe that everything has been addressed. I want to make sure that we haven't forgotten anything that you may have had some concerns about.

Mr. Albert answered I still have some open items.

Chairman Higgins asked but they are in the process of being taken care of, right.

Mr. Albert answered I would say that they are definitely in the process, yes.

Alderman Pinard stated I was with Mr. Albert last week and we saw a leak in the office. Supposedly he had put in a work order two weeks before that. Has that been addressed?

Mr. Hastings asked which leak.

Alderman Pinard replied the leak in his office.

Mr. Hastings stated they took care of that last week.

Alderman Pinard stated there are 32 items on the list that I received and another list that I was given is down to 9 and now to 8. How many more of these items have you got to go, roughly?

Mr. Hastings answered right now, I find 8 items on my list and some of them have to wait until spring but I don't think that Mr. Albert will argue that we do address these within days and definitely within a week.

Alderman Pinard asked about weather stripping on doors.

Mr. Hastings asked is this in the gymnasium. Frank and I looked at that and the weather-stripping appears fine. We were wondering if the doors were being left open at sometime during the day and snow is blowing in.

Mr. Albert answered absolutely not.

Mr. Hastings stated Frank and I checked those doors, but we will check them again.

Alderman Pinard stated I was in there the other day and I can see right outside in the crack between the two doors.

Mr. Hastings replied that couldn't be the same doors we looked at.

Alderman Pinard stated there is also a sink in the cafeteria that for some reason the faucets were put on upside down. These are minor things, but things that should have been addressed a long time ago.

Mr. Hastings replied that is the first I heard about that.

Mr. Marinace stated that is why I ask for these things in writing. If there is a problem like that or if there is a question, let Barry write it down on a list.

Mr. Albert stated that particular item has not been put on the list, yet.

Alderman Pinard stated I am satisfied as long as I know that they are doing their job.

Alderman Girard stated when you have a \$9.5 million project, certainly you are going to have these little issues but frankly what concerns me is when I read things like large floor to ceiling crack, significant leak in library. Those to me are a little beyond normal and roof leaks, to be honest with you, really trouble me because we have a building in this City called the School of Technology which has been leaking since the day it was built. Now roof leaks are something that, if they exist when they start, they don't ever go away. So the fact that there are some leaks in the roof, and I have to tell you something, I own property and if a roofer ever went up and put a new roof on and came back to me and said well you know you have to expect that when you put on a roof, sometimes it is just going to leak, I don't think I would take that very well. It is a \$9.5 million building. The warranty period is at various stages and approaching done. I just don't want to see a situation where we are going to be pestered with roof leaks here like we have been at the School of Technology for the next 20 years.

Mr. Hastings stated you do have a 10-year warranty on the roof.

Alderman Girard replied good, but I don't want to see the roof leaking for 10 years to exercise it.

Mr. Hastings stated well I just wanted to put your mind at ease that we are not going to disappear after one year and leave you with roof problems.

Alderman Girard asked, Mr. Albert, at one point during the Northwest thing someone had said to me that you had some problems with some pipe freezes over at the school. Is that an accurate statement?

Mr. Albert answered yes. It was two sprinkler heads in the entryway that had frozen and let go. It seems the heating element in the foyer had not been activated.

Alderman Girard stated I am no architect, but it seems strange that we keep building these buildings that need heaters turned on to keep pipes in various areas of the building, either above ceilings or wherever they are, from freezing. I just don't understand that.

Mr. Marinace stated the heater is not for the pipes, the heater is a room heater like this. If you let this room get cold, the pipe in here is going to freeze.

Alderman Girard asked so it is not for the pipes, but we have heaters over at Northwest that are blowing air into the ceiling because it gets cold above the ceiling.

Mr. Houle answered we were doing that during the construction period but that is not an ongoing thing to my knowledge.

Alderman Girard asked how does it get so cold in the building that the pipes freeze.

Mr. Houle answered I cannot give you an explanation of why that froze. Where the pipe froze is on an interior wall and I cannot give you a good rationale as to why that froze. There are a lot of other places that it logically should have frozen first.

Alderman Girard asked could there be a problem with insulation.

Chairman Higgins answered that is what we were told.

School Committee Member Herbert asked do we have a program...I keep getting reports of cold air in this room in this school or it is very hot. It sounds to me like there are a number of areas in various schools throughout the City where they are getting coldness this winter in areas that you wouldn't expect it and that is the sign that if we would have paid attention to it we would have gotten up and found that the insulation had been disturbed as had happened in Northwest. My question is, does anybody get reports or ask the school principals? I know that I have had about five instances where people say this room is very cold and it is cold up on the ceiling in an interior part of the building and I am concerned that there are other areas throughout the schools.

Chairman Higgins replied that is not really something that this Committee can address. That is a good point and I will make a note of it.

Alderman Pinard stated there is a heating problem at McLaughlin School because of the regulators. My question right now is the time of warranty on the roof. The roof has been leaking since last August or September so how does that affect the warranty.

Mr. Marinace replied the whole roof was accepted at one time. The roof isn't broken up into different sections. The warranty on the roof is for 10 years on shipping materials. What we usually see with a complicated roof like that is that we get the bugs out after the first year. Leaks are then caused by workmen going up there and doing something but it should be that after this winter and spring, after the one year warranty of the building is up, that roof should be very tight.

Mr. Hastings asked can we clarify that. The roof has not been leaking since August or September. It was after the first ice and snow storm I think in late December.

Mr. Albert answered it was January 18.

Alderman Girard stated but it is a problem if every time we go through winter we are going to have a leaky roof. To me that is either a defect in the design or it is poor workmanship.

Mr. Hastings replied it has been an unusual winter, too.

Alderman Girard stated there have been a lot of unusual winters lately and frankly I don't care how unusual it has been, the roof should withstand it. With all due respect, these excuses and these explanations do not address the fact that the roof on a brand-new building is leaking. Not in one place, but apparently in several and it needs to be addressed and we don't need people coming back to us next year and the year after and the year after saying well you have a 10 year warranty on the roof or it has been an unusual winter. With all due respect, that is not acceptable.

School Committee Member Healy stated when we first sat at this table, this Committee had a lot of concerns about the type of roof that you were going to use on that school and the architect assured us at that time that we weren't going to have any leaks and that this was a state-of-the-art roof and it is still a flat roof and many of the Committee members expressed concern about the roof. They are leaking and they are not that old and we are back here saying that we have leaks and the building is not even a year old. That bothers me.

Chairman Higgins stated of all the things that we wished hadn't happened, that was the biggest thing.

Mr. Marinace replied roof leaks are sensitive; they are. I can't imagine that the architect would assure you that there wouldn't be any roof leaks because he doesn't build the building. These guys don't even put on the roof. We don't want to see the roof leaks and I am not saying that the roof should be leaking. I am saying there is a break-in period for the building when things are going to break and things are going to happen. I don't think we have a roof that is falling apart. I think it is a good roof and if you get a leak here or there, they have to fix it and that is what happened. It could be that all the leaks are fixed. That doesn't mean that in five years you won't have a leak someplace. I am not assuring you know that there won't be a leak in the next 10 years.

Chairman Higgins asked, Mr. Albert, have you had any leaks recently.

Mr. Albert answered they are not all fixed at this point.

Alderman Girard stated a roof is the type of thing that you can only go and monkey around with and patch so many times before you have to pull it off and redo it. Roofs are funny things and you never quite know where the water is coming from or where it is going, but I do know one thing, the more times you go up and patch it the more present the inevitability of having to replace the thing comes. So here we are, year one, with multiple roof leaks and we are already talking about patching. Let me tell you something. That really stinks! So, I go back to what I said before. It is either a design problem or a construction problem. Either way, there is a deficiency there that needs to be remedied in full.

School Committee Member Healy asked can he answer that, whether it is a design problem or a construction problem because that is important.

Mr. Page answered the problem is the same problem that you have with anything else in the building and it is these two things right here. You have people out there putting these pieces together with their hands and they can't do a perfect job. No one can do a perfect job so some of these things get missed. When a guy is putting the two layers of rubber together, he might have a little spot that he misses getting glue on. It happens. This is not at all unusual. It happens in almost every flat roof building that we see because you can't do it perfect the first time and why we haven't had leaks until this winter is because these roofs all pitch to internal drains and when they lay that rubber down they lay it like you do a shingle with the outside layer lapping over the bottom layers. So when the roof is clear, the water runs down just like it runs off shingles and you don't get any leaks. Now you get some snow and slush and ice and that water can't run freely. It sits there and ponds behind the snow and ice and when it does it finds those little imperfections because the guy who put that roof on wasn't perfect and that is exactly what we are going to do now.

Alderman Girard stated, Madame Chairman, for \$9.5 million I don't expect a roof that leaks and for \$9.5 million I don't expect to be told that minor imperfections are inevitable and leaks and other things are inevitable. This is not a doorknob and a window lock or weather-stripping. It is a roof.

Mr. Page replied that is right. It is a roof and it can't be done perfect the first time and no one here is saying that you need to accept it not perfect. That is what the warranty period is for.

Alderman Girard responded it worries me, Sir, that you are also doing the construction on the Parkside addition and are going to be doing the reconstruction on the roofs at Northwest because I am worried now that I am going to see you back here saying it is a roof, you can't get it perfect the first time.

Mr. Page stated absolutely, I will tell you that.

Alderman Girard stated the School of Technology; I have a building that has been leaking since it was there. The problem is that if you don't get it perfect the first time and you don't get the work done right, it becomes a liability for the existence of the building.

Mr. Page replied not if the items are taken care of in the warranty period.

Alderman Girard asked well who built the School of Technology. Apparently, we have to go back and find out what happened there.

Mr. Page answered we have done a large number of buildings in the City of Manchester.

Alderman Girard stated I am sorry but we just spent \$7.5 million redoing City Hall and if the roofs here start leaking I am going to be pretty irritated about it and I would hope that the architect and the construction people wouldn't come in and say well you spent a lot of money, you have to expect the roof to leak.

Chairman Higgins replied I don't think that is what he was saying.

Mr. Houle stated regarding the School of Technology, when that job got completed, it was discovered, and the architect is on record documenting this, it is a flat roof, standing seam metal roof with peaks coming down. Number one, the metal was not long enough so whenever there is drifting or heavy wind, it goes right under. Within a year, the general contractor went bankrupt, the roofing contractor went bankrupt and the firm who supplied the metal roof went bankrupt. Basically on that one there was no one to stand behind the warranty.

Chairman Higgins stated the point he is trying to make is that these guys aren't going to go away. They did the work 11 years ago and they are going to make good on the work. I understand your concerns, but it is a rubber roof and I think they are fixing it. I am not taking sides here, but the roof is on. What are you expecting that we are going to take that roof off and put another roof on? If they don't fix it then we have some recourse. We have a warranty period and hopefully they will fix it during the warranty period because if they don't, it will be plastered all over the front page of the *Union Leader*, just like they are now. Hopefully it will get fixed to the satisfaction of everyone in this City, but we are six months into the warranty and it is our first winter. I understand the frustration. They are putting a new roof on my house right now so I certainly understand the frustration and the cost.

Alderman Girard stated the point is that beyond the problems that exist, the attitude that I should expect problems of this magnitude doesn't sit well with me and the idea that just because I have a 10 year warranty my mind should be at ease doesn't sit well with me. What I want is the work to be done properly and I want the problems fixed as soon as they can be and I really don't want to have to address roof leaks at McLaughlin School at any time during the warranty period and frankly I don't want to have to do it until the roof has lived its useful life. Right now, I have my concerns and I really take umbrage at the idea that the concerns that have been raised by the principal or other members of this Committee are somehow trivial and should be expected in a \$9.5 million project.

Chairman Higgins replied I am not trying to defend them, what I am trying to say is that in all fairness to them, leaks were turned into deluges and a 1/16" crack was turned into some major earthquake size and that is what I took from what they were saying. I am taking them at their word and they read about it in the paper just like you did and I am sure it is very frustrating to Mr. Albert. I don't know how many new schools you have opened, but I am sure it is extremely frustrating. This is something that we are still holding money on.

Alderman Girard stated I hope we hold on to the money for a long time.

Chairman Higgins replied well if it doesn't get fixed, we will and I think that is the important thing.

Alderman Girard asked am I going to have to wait until next January to know whether or not the roof is fixed because we haven't had ice build-up on it.

Chairman Higgins answered I don't know that.

Alderman Girard replied well there is the problem.

Chairman Higgins stated I don't know anybody else here who does.

Mr. Thomas stated I don't have any answers other than there are still warranty items that have to be addressed and I think if we leave here tonight setting up a line of communication between the principal and the contractor with us overseeing that so that if there are issues that are not being addressed somebody can step in and prod people along.

Mr. Houle replied if I might, I would like to make sure that the principal is talking to the architect. He is getting to the contractor by way of the architect. Currently the thing is broken down. The list gets developed and it doesn't get to the architect and the architect doesn't have an opportunity to do the job with the contractor.

Mr. Thomas responded that is why I want the architect talking directly to the principal and I want copies of everything. That is why I instructed the architect to not only speak verbally with the principal, but to follow it up with written documentation that I can have. I asked Mr. Albert to do the same thing with any list that he develops.

Chairman Higgins stated I think it is important that if Mr. Albert has communication with the architect and with the Superintendent and it gets copied to the members of the School Board then I think the follow-up correspondence should also be copied. We don't want to just get a piece of paper, and the same thing for the members of this Committee, we don't want to just get a piece of paper that says well this is wrong and then we are left with the impression that this is wrong. I think that we need to be part of the process as well.

Mr. Thomas replied I agree. I think that communication has been lacking here. Everybody is busy, but if the principal has a problem it is up to him to follow through with the right person and then on the other side somebody has to make sure that the architect follows up with the contractor to address these things. Mr. Albert stated I think that communication has been a problem, knowing who to go to for what but every time a list is generated, everybody gets it to make sure that there aren't any people left out. I will send it to half of Manchester if I have to. It is important that people know the problems exist. I just need to know who to go to. I will talk to anybody. I am not a building expert. I don't know when things are good, bad or indifferent. I can just tell you what the problem is.

Chairman Higgins stated the members of this Committee need to know what is going on. If only the School Board is getting that communication, that is not helpful. The Committee needs to be copied on everything that is going on so there is no miscommunication and everybody is in the loop.

Alderman Pinard volunteered his services as a liaison between Frank Thomas, Mr. Albert and the architect as an Alderman and a member of this Committee.

Mr. Thomas stated we could talk about it but unfortunately if you get too many people involved, things get dropped and the problem gets more out of shape. I think that the fewer people involved the better. I think that the principal and I do communicate and the principal and the architect. If those are the people who are communicating, that will be fine.

Chairman Higgins addressed Item 8 of the agenda:

Parkside Jr. High School Addition

Mr. Houle stated I want to get to the meat of the matter which has to do with the work that is required in the existing Parkside High School by the Fire Marshall's Office. Mr. Marinace has included a budget for consideration, which I believe we have shared with Mr. MacKenzie.

Mr. Marinace stated the State Fire Marshall has taken an active role in trying to get the building sprinklers brought up to code. This project, which was an addition, didn't include taking that whole existing building and bringing it up to all the current codes. That is a big project. The State Fire Marshall, upon reviewing the plans for the addition, sought to take the whole existing building and bring it up to current codes. We have been negotiating with the State Fire Marshall and as it turns out, they have an awful lot of power. They would like to see the existing building sprinkled because it does not, standing on its own, meet current codes.

Alderman Girard asked how did the Fire Marshall get involved.

Mr. Marinace answered by law. There is a law that says that the State Fire Marshall has to review and approve plans for all public buildings. It has been a law for 30 years; they just haven't done it before four or five years ago. So, obviously the State Fire Marshall talks to your Fire Department and it is rare to have a Fire Department disagree with the State Fire Marshall. In any event, the State Fire Marshall is pretty much mandating sprinkling that building to bring it up to code. It does not meet current codes. In order to do that, we have to remove the asbestos tiles. As part of the addition project, you did approve bringing the fire alarm system in the building up-to-date. We gave that sort of as a negotiating

point saying that we would do that but don't make us sprinkle the whole building. We tried but they said thank you very much now you still have to sprinkle the whole building. It is hard to argue with these guys because they are right. The building doesn't meet codes and whether you want to go back to an old building and bring it up to current codes, the State Fire Marshall doesn't really have much mercy in that. They would like to see buildings meet current codes, especially when this building greatly exceeds the area allowed without sprinklers. We hadn't anticipated that. We are bringing the fire alarm system up-to-date and up to code in the cost of the project, but we can't afford, and also in the cost of the project we are going to sprinkle the addition. That was the other part of the deal. When I brought the bids to you, two alternates were to sprinkle the addition, which we agreed to do and to bring the fire alarm system in the old building up-to-date. We thought that by doing those two things we would have a good negotiating point and show a good faith effort and we wouldn't have to sprinkle the whole building. As it is, we are putting in a new sprinkler entrance big enough for the whole building. All we have to do now is put sprinklers in the old building and replace the ceiling tiles. That is where we stand and they are holding it over our heads for approval from the State Fire Marshall's Office.

School Committee Member Herbert stated this is non-negotiable so it is almost like FYI.

Mr. Marinace replied we have been negotiating and that is why we put the new fire alarm system in the old building and that is why we sprinkled the addition.

Alderman Girard asked where are we getting the pot of gold for this.

Mr. MacKenzie answered this was a surprise, but it is now included in the Mayor's proposed CIP budget for \$750,000 which would allow this estimate plus a little bit of contingency. We are hoping that the asbestos doesn't cost that much, but you don't know until you get in there and get a contract and get going. That money, we are hoping to expedite several of the projects this year and that would be one of the projects on the expedited list that we are hoping to have final Board of Mayor and Aldermen approval by April 20. Clearly it is a tight time frame to get everything done. Obviously the addition would not open, per the State Fire Marshall, unless this other work is done.

Chairman Higgins asked do we need a motion.

Mr. Houle answered not now. Frank Thomas has asked Mr. Marinace to provide him with a proposal for additional services and I think at the next meeting hopefully we will bring in an action for your consideration.

Chairman Higgins asked so the preliminary budget that you have given us is nothing that we have to vote on.

Mr. Houle answered no.

Mr. Marinace stated on loose equipment, we have come up with a list that has been approved by the principal of the school and I was wondering was as a way of expediting things and saving a few bucks was allow me to negotiate with the same suppliers who bid on the McLaughlin loose equipment because the equipment is similar and see if they will provide the equipment at the same price they bid on at McLaughlin School. If they will do that, would you allow me to do that and not put it out for open bid again?

Chairman Higgins stated I personally have no objection to that.

Alderman Girard asked did we get exceptional prices for McLaughlin.

Mr. Marinace answered they were good prices.

Alderman Girard asked do we have any reason to believe that they are still competitive.

Mr. Marinace answered well I will be surprised if they honor those prices to tell you the truth, but at least let me try.

Chairman Higgins asked Mr. Albert about the quality of the equipment.

Mr. Albert answered it is excellent.

On motion of Alderman Pinard, duly seconded by Alderman Girard, it was voted to allow Mr. Marinace to negotiate with the company that provided the loose equipment to the Henry J. McLaughlin, Jr. Middle School to see if they will honor their prices in providing the equipment for the Parkside addition.

Mr. Marinace stated just one other thing on Parkside. We originally designed that addition and you approved the design for all regular classrooms. The Administration wants to take one of the rooms in that addition which is a regular classroom and turn it into a computer lab. Now to turn it into a computer lab, you need a couple of things. You need electricity in excess of what is ordinarily done in regular classrooms, which we don't have. We have all regular classrooms. You would also need computer furniture and you may need air conditioning, which we don't have in the project at all. I have given you a breakdown of what it would cost to turn that room into a computer room.

Chairman Higgins asked so for about \$18,000 do we want to change. I am not inclined to vote for this at this stage of the game because they have been involved right along.

School Committee Member Herbert asked the school administration wants to do this.

Alderman Girard asked why is this coming up now. Can anyone answer that?

Mr. Marinace answered it was brought up a few weeks ago at the job meeting. I don't know but they said they are going to move the computer lab into Room 214B. I guess they have it in a closet now or something. I don't know. That was just a request.

Alderman Girard moved that the request be denied.

School Committee Member Healy stated it might be a valid request. I mean I think we should hear, if there is time, to hear from the principal and find out why he is asking for that and maybe he should have been asked to come this evening. While they are doing the construction, now would be the time to do it if there is a need and justification.

Alderman Girard stated well I am sure you can come up with whatever justification you can while you are in the process of doing something, but the fact remains that the building administration and the school administration have been involved in the design of this since before Day 1 and to now through an \$18,000 change order in, something as substantial as a computer lab doesn't seem to me to be something that you just kind of say oh we forgot about it and we have to do something about it. I will move to table it if you want and have Mr. Wade come in, but they have been involved in this since Day 1 and it seems to be inexcusable that we have a change order of this magnitude for something that should have been addressed at the very beginning. That they want to now move their computer room into the addition sounds more like something that would be nice.

Chairman Higgins asked in the process, what is this going to do if we table this. I would rather, at this point, say yes or no if it is going to be a problem and hold up construction.

Mr. Marinace answered you don't have to decide this right now but if we go beyond a month from now, the price will probably go up for the air conditioning.

Chairman Higgins asked so we can table this for the next meeting.

School Committee Member Herbert stated I can see where he would take the opportunity to get a real lab because I am sure the school wasn't designed with one.

Alderman Girard stated they probably have the same thing as Hillside and Southside have.

School Committee Member Herbert replied I just think I would like to hear him explain it.

Chairman Higgins stated we will we have Mr. Wade come to the next meeting.

Chairman Higgins addressed Item 12 of the agenda:

NORESCO Performance Contract

Mr. Houle asked everyone to go to Page 12b. Two things, earlier this evening a presentation was made to the Mayor for \$20,000. Basically, yesterday they awarded the City \$102,000 in grants with Mr. MacKenzie's assistance and the Board of Mayor and Aldermen, this \$102,000 is being placed in a cash account that is going to be used to supplement the security system which we all know is under-funded. Basically, on the security system we met to develop standards for security. We met with three principals from high school, junior high and elementary and they are generally in agreement with the standards but felt that this should be presented to all of the principals. Frankly, this is holding up the project. If we don't move on this, this means that you will be continuing to pay an outside source upwards of \$80,000 to monitor the security alarms. I would like to recommend that the Joint School Building Committee consider requesting the School Administration to appoint Richard O'Shea to represent the School Department in the development of these standards. What I would like to do is bring the standards back to this Committee in April for your blessing or your consideration and this way we can move on that and have this in place by the time school opens.

On motion of Alderman Girard, duly seconded by Alderman Pinard, it was voted to appoint Richard O'Shea to represent the School Department in the development of standards for the security system.

Chairman Higgins asked, Mr. O'Shea, do you have a problem with that.

Mr. O'Shea answered only that what has been the policy of this Administration has been to involve principals in the decision-making relative to their own schools. I am caught short by this and I was wondering if the intent was that I would take over and do it without the commitment and involvement of each one of the principals of the respective schools.

Mr. Houle stated it is for the standards, the conceptual framework by which we can move forward because once there is an agreement we have the standards and we have the work prioritized and I believe that is necessary so that we can get started and go as far as the money will take us and get everybody the same level of protection as quickly as possible. Once the standards are established, then the engineers will work with each individual principal. I think people tend to want to get bogged down with the specifics of where I need a motion detector or what doors I need to be protected and that is what is bogging us down and really slowing us down and later one we are going to say it is not our fault. I apologize for not bringing this to your attention earlier, but I sit here just frustrated and I have to tie this up within the next month and I see no alternative. You have the background and expertise and I know you can get it done. To try to make 22 or 23 principals happy is pretty much impossible.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, on motion of Alderman Girard, duly seconded by Alderman Pinard, it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

Clerk of Committee