

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON JOINT SCHOOL BUILDINGS

October 26, 2004

5:00 PM

Chairman Herbert called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: School Committee Members Herbert, Cote, Kelley
Aldermen Roy, Porter, DeVries, Garrity, Thibault

Absent: School Committee Members Beaudry, Perry

Messrs: Dr. F. Bass, A. Jefferson, K. Cornwell, T. Clougherty

Chairman Herbert addressed Item 4 of the agenda:

Change of Scope –

- a) Central bleachers;
- b) Central intercom system; and
- c) West lockers.

Chairman Herbert stated I'd like to change the agenda. We only have an hour and there is an issue that I'd like to bring to the committee in regards to some additional work at Central and as well at West and in order for the committee to kind of understand our reasons why these are being added to the project, I'd like Assistant Superintendent Frank Bass explain to the committee what the projects are and why they are important.

Dr. Frank Bass, Assistant Superintendent, stated as you'll note in the handout that was given to you, there are three major issues at the secondary level that are of concern to us. The first one is the bleachers at Central High School. As you know a brand new floor is going down at Central High School, the bleachers that are currently there are in great need of repair. It was thought that at this time because we are putting a new floor down that it would be most advantageous to be able to bring in new bleachers. We do have new bleachers already at West High School and at Memorial High School. The ones at Memorial High School are part of the design/build project. I have had several conversations with Mr. Cornwell and others about the status of the bleachers at Central High School. It is very clear that

they are not in a condition to uphold as many as 1,700 – 1,800 kids at Central High School. So it was our recommendation that we look at the possibility of bringing in new bleachers to Central High School to go along with the new floor and that would be obviously a wonderful addition to Central High School gymnasium. The second issue is the issue of lockers at West High School. As you may or may not know, there is at least a locker available per child at Memorial and Central. At West that is not the case. We are short about 800 lockers. Again, after several phone calls with Mr. Cornwell, Mr. Clougherty, Mr. Jefferson, we are able to procure additional at West High School for a cost of about \$95,000, which I believe is in your handout. Lastly, is the intercom system at Central High School. It is outdated, it has got all kinds of issues, it is the strong recommendation of both the Gilbane team as well as the Central office administration that we look to a new intercom system for Central High School and that price is included there for you as well. I should say this, that the total price that you have before you, if all of those numbers came through, it would be \$347,000, which is certainly well under the initial costs that were projected somewhere between \$400,000 and \$500,000. So let me also add that the Gilbane team, including Mr. Clougherty and Mr. Jefferson, feel that this number is a worse case scenario number and the numbers could come in less than what is indicated on the page. They work very carefully and very closely with the vendors to try and get the price down as low as possible. Again, what we are presenting for this committee is an absolute worse case scenario in terms of outfitting those three priority items at the secondary level.

Alderman Roy stated I came up with a total from Allan Jefferson's letter of \$502,000.

Chairman Herbert stated I think it's actually 400 lockers are being purchased at that \$240.00 level.

Alderman Roy asked so that total is not \$239,000?

Dr. Bass stated if I may add Mr. Chairman, what you're looking at is the frames. You'll note in the letter from Mr. Cornwell to Mr. Jefferson, we're talking about 1,000 new frames for 2,000 lockers. Each frame produces two lockers, therefore, to accommodate 800 lockers we only need 400 frames, so the price of \$240.00 per frame, we're looking at approximately \$96,000 again as a worse case scenario.

Tim Clougherty, Deputy Public Works Director, stated the reason the letter is in the amount of \$239,000, it was unclear at the time exactly how many lockers would be necessary to accommodate the needs at West, so we said lets get 2,000. We know that will take care of the population; work from the unit price basis and subsequent to that we got the 800 quantity that would be sufficient.

Alderman Garrity stated I don't know who can answer this question, either Tim or Ken. I'm a little perplexed. How come the scope of the work Central doesn't get new bleachers and wasn't in the bid, but there's new bleachers at Memorial.

Mr. Clougherty replied it basically has to do with the condition of the units at the time that the program was put together. The units at Memorial were in significantly worse state of disrepair than those at Central when the program was put together four years ago. We didn't look at the three high schools and say you're getting new bleachers so the other two should get new bleachers. We looked at them individually.

Alderman Garrity asked the intercom system wasn't included?

Mr. Clougherty answered no it wasn't. The intercom system is old, but it is operational and it could be moved, although with some difficulty and with some additional cost. The cost of the new intercom system is roughly \$26,000. The cost to move that system, roughly \$13,000. So right now we're looking at a scenario where we can pay the differential between the two, the \$13,000, and Gilbane would accommodate that new intercom system.

Alderman Garrity asked Tim was the balance in the account that we're going to draw from?

Mr. Clougherty answered roughly \$4.1 million, \$4.18 [million] I believe it is.

Alderman Garrity asked in dollar amounts Tim, how much is left for the project to be complete? Roughly?

Mr. Clougherty answered about \$30 million.

Alderman DeVries stated the school administration could first answer my question. The new lockers, are they to replace any existing or is it all for new?

Dr. Bass answered there are a few lockers that need to be replace, but the bulk of them is to cover the total number of students at West High School who do not have lockers.

Alderman DeVries asked if Bedford was not to be at West High School three or four years from now, would you still be making this a priority request from administration?

Dr. Bass answered that's a tough question to answer. Bedford obviously was in the mix of when we looked at the issue of lockers at West High School. The

Bedford population right now is about 875 students, so if Bedford should leave, that obviously would decrease the population at West High School. However, that does not mean to say that the total population at West High School would decrease by 800. There would be some shifting from where other students coming from around the City. I'm not so sure that we would put ourselves in a position of reducing that number by 800 in anticipation that Bedford would pull out and we would not be able fulfill the void.

Alderman DeVries stated an additional question if I might and I guess I'll ask Tim Clougherty. Are you comfortable at this point in time with draws...?

Mr. Clougherty answered draws of this magnitude don't concern us at this point in time. I was planning on reporting a little bit later on in the meeting. We approved, I'm sure most of the committee will remember, \$390,000 give or take for the stairwells at Southside and Hillside Middle Schools through negotiations and buyout with Gilbane, we've been able to reduce that number in the neighborhood of \$300,000. So we're going to realize about \$90,000 savings from that change order alone. That will bring us from the \$4.18 million to \$4.28 - \$4.27 [million]. So that will mitigate this \$347,000. I think it's an opportune time to take advantage of this, although be hesitant to dip further into contingency until we get a little further along in the program.

Alderman DeVries asked and when would that be?

Mr. Clougherty answered as we talked about a couple months, we're right now in October, I think probably in the late spring of 2005 would be an advantageous point. We'd be into most of the schools at that point, we'd be 100 percent complete in the design and I think a good part of our exposure would be identified.

Alderman DeVries asked was there a savings in the total figure, the \$347,000, by doing this work today versus waiting until spring of 2005? Is it costing less because of the other work that's currently going on at the facilities?

Mr. Clougherty answered yes in two out of three of the items. I think the lockers could be accommodated in the future. I don't know what's going to happen with material escalation prices, but that's not really impacting us right now. We've got some mobilization that we're going to incur one way or the other. The bleacher repairs, however, or the bleacher replacement, is best to be done now while we've got the new gym floor so that we don't have to pay for repairs to the existing bleachers, so that they don't mar the new gym floor. As far as the intercom system goes, if we don't take advantage of the pricing in front of us, we're going to pay \$13,000 to move this system and then we're going to pay \$26,000 or

\$27,000 down the road to put in a new one. So there is a significant difference there.

Alderman Thibault asked Tim why weren't the lockers at West High School picked up when they made the estimate of what needed to be done in these schools. There are so many things that we've missed it seems like. The bleachers, the lockers, the intercom. The intercom I can understand, but the lockers for instance seems to me should have been something that would have been picked up right away because the school thing was already settled with the surrounding towns.

Mr. Clougherty stated actually the scope of work was identified and the tuition agreement was in the process of being ratified. I don't know that the lockers have been in this state for the past five years. We're talking about a study that was done in the year 2000 that we're working from for these maintenance-related needs. As you can see from the list of change orders that I've provided in the back up, there have been several other maintenance-related items that have come up that we've been able to accommodate within the program, and it's very common that we see small items as such. As far as the lockers go, we worked with school administration in order to identify the scope and either it was not felt at that time by the administration that was in place that there was dire need to replacement of all of those lockers, or they deteriorated over the past five years to a state where it's mandating such a situation where we replace 800 of them.

Alderman Thibault stated I think most of the committee's problem is with this contingency, if we're spending it now and then we end up with a shortfall at the end of this complete project, where do we get that money? If there is a shortfall? This is why I agree with Betsi to find out exactly where we're at with this money before we go and spend any more unless we really have to. Because what if we end up with a shortfall of \$200,000 - \$300,000 at the end if we don't have it. That concerns me and I'm sure it concerns many of the people on this committee.

Chairman Herbert stated can I point out something. I looked at the numbers. We're about 60 percent through the construction phase of you said what a \$98 million...?

Mr. Clougherty responded \$94.9 million.

Chairman Herbert continued when we began we had about \$5.6 million of contingency for the entire \$90 something million, which is about 6 percent. Currently we have \$4.1 to \$4.3 million of contingency for 40 percent of the \$94 [million]. Our percent of contingency now is greater than what it was when we started the project. So we haven't...

Alderman Thibault interjected I just want to be sure that we don't end up with a shortfall.

Chairman Herbert stated I looked at the same numbers, I wanted to know where we were and that is where we are.

Alderman Roy stated Tim, looking at the breakdown in costs, you stated to Alderman DeVries that the Central High School bleachers would save us money by doing it now as well as the communication system at Central would save us money doing it now. If we were to delay the \$96,000 for the lockers and make that a summer of 2005 project, would that reduce any savings by not having... School is in full use right now, so is there any savings by delaying this until June of next year.

Mr. Clougherty stated I defer to Ken [Cornwell]. Ken do you have any idea what kind of schedule we're talking about?

Ken Cornwell, Senior Project Manager of Gilbane, stated let me understand the question. Are you saying if we didn't do this until next summer, would it save any money?

Alderman Roy replied just the lockers?

Mr. Cornwell answered I don't think it's going to cost any more but I would remind you that construction steel in 2004 rose almost 38 percent and nobody knew it was going to go that high, so as Tim had indicated before, actual costs would be acceleration or escalation of the structural steel or the steel itself not structural.

Alderman Roy asked so Ken looking at the \$96,000 if we were to go ahead and purchase now and install them in the summertime, would that produce any savings for you? Right now you've got 2,000 students on your work site.

Mr. Cornwell replied I would have to talk to school administration and Allan [Jefferson] and try to work this out with Dr. Bass because if we do replace the lockers, we'd have to time that out. I would just note that we did install 1,500 lockers at Central, so it's a short-term thing. They are finished lockers when they come in so you could in fact purchase them and install them over spring break or winter break.

Dr. Bass stated two points that I want to bring to the committee. First and foremost you're looking at the situation that not every student has a locker at West High School. So yes it is a matter of financing but it's also a matter of not having

the availability of a locker for all of the children. In terms of purchasing the lockers and when could they be outfitted. Christmas break is coming up relatively shortly. In just a few weeks we'll be on winter vacation. So there is a possibility where that might work.

Alderman Roy asked Tim and Ken, would Christmas break work for employees and staff?

Mr. Clougherty answered that's only about eight weeks away. If the committee felt it prudent to give approval for this, we're not going to make any promises that it's going to happen in the next couple of weeks. You're talking about material that has ten or twelve-week lead-time. So don't be surprised if this work doesn't happen for three to four months.

Alderman Roy asked so we could hypothetically looking at March before we see this work getting done anyway?

Mr. Clougherty answered potentially yes. March is a little bit out there. I would think we'd have it done before March, but it will be... I think the Christmas break is aggressive, probably February break is more realistic. We do have the opportunity to do them at night. There are full crews working at night. So we can minimize the disruption. As Ken pointed out, we continued to install new lockers at Central High School as the school year started.

Alderman Roy stated Tim, the contingency right now standing at \$4.1 [million]. Switching from the contingency to savings on the change orders, where do we stand on potential savings? I know we had some discussion regarding flooring at our last meeting. Is there a number that we've saved so far or are we working against our guaranteed maximum price?

Mr. Clougherty asked are we talking about what the...we've got three change orders that we've executed that have increased our guaranteed maximum price and have come out of contingency. The first being the hazardous materials removal at \$1.083 million, the other two being the stairwells at Hillside and Southside. We're expecting both of those to come in at about \$150,000. As a matter of fact we've finalized those prices just today. So there's going to be about a \$90,000 savings between those two. As far as the \$1.083 million, I hesitate to give any magnitude of savings, but there will be some savings there.

Alderman Roy asked and Tim, just referring to Page 11 of the DMJM report, roughly middle of the page where it lists out change orders, change order 8, 10, and 11 and then the additional, some of that was just funded through the School District?

Mr. Clougherty answered that's correct. Number 11 we talked about last month. That was the unsuitable soils that were uncovered at Hillside Middle School during the excavation. About approximately \$11,000 of that emergency battery unit rewiring, when we got into that school we found some deficiencies with the emergency lighting system. We addressed those immediately through an increase in the guaranteed maximum price and a corresponding change order. The other ones that you mention; the auditorium floor refinishing and the consumer science upgrades that have not yet been executed, there is a funding mechanism in place with the School District where a portion of those funds are coming from the School District, the other portion is coming out of the account that's identified as program fixtures, furniture and equipment. So none of those will be increases to the guaranteed maximum price, therefore, you won't see any reduction in the contingency.

Alderman Roy stated okay, I just want that to be somewhat clear on the record that there are things being spent that do not come out of contingency that are improving this project.

Mr. Clougherty replied most definitely. I'd call your attention to the comprehensive list of change orders that we provided I believe at your urging last month, you'll see that there are significant number of improvements to the program that we've been able to work out over the past 15 to 18 months working with DMJM and Gilbane. There is like I said a significant amount of small changes that have improved the program. We've been able to correct some small maintenance related items and that's about it. I appreciate you bringing that to the committee's attention.

Alderman DeVries stated I guess I'll start with Dr. Bass with this question and then bring over and ask our staff and Gilbane. We've started to hear some lively conversation that I follow with interest in reference to our open classrooms at three elementary schools and that also seems to be targeted as a potential project with our contingency monies. I don't know how far along those discussions are among staff and School Board members, but has anybody started to take a look at while we're talking potential savings, if this is going to be all that is going to be released until June of 2005, are we missing the ability to make some greater savings by addressing those projects while the work is ongoing at those elementary schools.

Dr. Bass replied my understanding, Alderman DeVries, is that the preliminary look at elementary schools without walls, I think we're talking about Parker Varney and Highland Goffs Falls, the cost for those have not yet been determined. But it's just preliminary at this point as to how much the cost would be, when it could be done, and what constraints might be there.

Alderman DeVries stated if I could follow up with you Dr. Bass, because I guess it intrigues me if you had to prioritize those projects over these from the administration standpoint, how would you be looking at that? If it's an either or?

Dr. Bass replied I'm really not in a position to answer that because my area of responsibility is middle and secondary schools. Dr. Aliverdi is responsible for the elementary schools. I'd hate to put him in a position of my bias prioritization of middle and secondary without here to speak for himself in terms of what those priorities are.

Alderman DeVries stated I won't burden our staff because it doesn't sound like the conversation has gone far enough to ask him any details, but maybe just a statement. To me it seems like it might be prudent for us to delay this decision for another month to allow that conversation to go further, maybe come back with some kind of preliminary numbers as well as some judgements from School Board members and staff as to how you wish to prioritize those projects, if you wish to move those to the front burner.

Chairman Herbert stated speaking for the Building and Sites Committee at the School Board point, prioritization has already been made in terms of the open classrooms versus the three projects that have been approved by the School Board already. We've had that conversation in effect and now it appears and we haven't taken a vote on open...we don't have enough information on the open classroom issue, but at this point in time, that decision has already been made on by the School District and these three projects have been prioritized one, two and three and now moving on we're looking at the open classrooms. So there's no conflict on the School District.

Alderman Roy asked Tim, once again referring to Page 11 of the DMJM report, FF&E column there's \$1.6 million reserved for future FF&E. What is that designated for?

Allan Jefferson, DMJM, stated the balance of the FF&E is basically a lot of the classroom furniture. The administrative areas at West, Hillside and Southside, that furniture has already been ordered and is in place. Central's furniture is actually going to be delivered this Thursday and Friday, to administrative areas. That would cover the program administrative areas across the board. The balance of the FF&E is classroom furniture for all of the additions; Hillside and Southside we're currently working on that order. Central will be shortly thereafter. West the final portion of that delivery is expected within two weeks and the last place would be Memorial.

Alderman Roy asked when is Memorial being delivered?

Mr. Jefferson answered I believe that's a January, February or March timeframe.

Alderman Roy asked so pretty much by spring of 2005 that \$1.6 [million] will be diminished?

Mr. Jefferson responded yes.

Mr. Clougherty stated we're comfortable with that \$2 million budget as well.

Alderman Garrity stated Mr. Chairman this is a question for you. Can anybody tell me why the open concept is not a priority over bleachers, intercom systems and lockers when it's well known that open concept is not good for a learning environment?

Chairman Herbert replied the reasoning on our side was that number one we had to do the bleachers because we have a future renovation in the gymnasium to be done. We can't have a new gymnasium with the existing bleachers structure. So that was something that was a physical problem. The intercom system itself isn't functional in one of the buildings, that's just a safety issue, and the West lockers are simply, as everybody knows, the inability to have a place to put all of your materials has been huge problem in all of the schools actually, particularly the high schools. So we felt that because this RFP and \$104 million or whatever was designed for certain things primarily for the secondary schools. That's why we have an elementary school system study now starting, we felt that's where the money should go and we understood also that there is the likelihood that we will have some funds down the road in order to address other issues. So even though this has been primarily a high school project in terms of expansion and renovation with the elementary element to come subsequent, we have already indicated to the administration, the administration's indicated to us, and the committee has indicated back that we would like to seriously consider the open classroom issue as well. So that's where it stood. Now there can be differences of opinion that the open classroom concept is very important and we do consider it very important, but in terms of answering your question, that's why the sequence of events have come forward the way they are.

Alderman Garrity stated I can see doing the intercom system, that's a safety issue. Do I feel bad that students don't have lockers? Sure. But I feel worse the fact that the open concept is not a good learning environment. From a personal level my son can't go to his neighborhood school because he's hearing impaired, so he can not go Highland Goffs Falls school because it's an open concept and that's unfortunate. I think those should be a priority first over lockers and bleachers.

Committee Member Cote stated also understand from our point of view on the School Board that we have tuition students. They want this high school project brought to completion in fullest and these are some issues they brought up with us and we're trying to address them. But we understand the elementary issue and Parker Varney is in my district and it's a very hot issue at Parker Varney right now, but we have an ongoing study coming down the pike and if the funds are available out of this project we may be able to address the open classroom concept, but for sure if an the elementary school project came up we would be sure to take care of that, but we need to get the high schools finished. For once get a project of this scope brought to completion so everybody involved has everything they need to make the school function properly, not be shortchanged by something like lockers.

Alderman DeVries stated since you brought in the tuition students, I wasn't going go here but the additional dollars that might be relegated to the high school projects, can they or can they not be built into the tuition for our sending towns? And anybody can answer that.

Chairman Herbert stated I'm not quite sure what the question is.

Alderman DeVries stated the tuition has already been negotiated based on the percentage of the project. So any additional monies spent on the high schools, can it or can it not be added on to the tuition base that the sending towns are being charged?

Dr. Bass responded I would think that's possible but I'd have to check with Mr. Sanders to be absolutely certain.

Alderman DeVries stated I guess I would ask you an additional question because that's a 20-year tuition agreement. So I guess maybe you could explain to me how you think that might be possible.

Dr. Bass replied the tuition agreement right now generates so much money on the sending towns and how many students they have. The amount of money that's brought in is then leveled across the playing field to cover the cost of construction as well as tuition for each of the students in each of the schools. You're talking about changing the apportionment?

Alderman DeVries answered right.

Dr. Bass continued I don't know the answer to that. I'd have to sit down with Mr. Sanders to discuss. There might be something in the agreement that includes that or have some sort of contingency to it, I just don't know. I don't have the document in front of me to really answer that question.

Alderman DeVries stated I have one final question and then I will let it go. If only the intercom system was addressed tonight, would we be losing the ability specifically with that gym floor to coordinate the projects if this that decision was put off until next month? What is the time schedule specific to the gym floor at Central?

Mr. Clougherty answered I'll let Ken answer that question regarding the timeframe.

Mr. Cornwell stated we are in the process right now, that's because Allan played with it, of putting the final finishes on the gymnasium floor. The bleachers have been reinstalled, they have not rehabilitated, so whatever they did before we put that new floor down, they will do to this new floor. So if the bleachers are going to come out of there...just to remind you, at the time this came up, when Dr. Bass and I first talked about this, this was in June, about trying to replace these bleachers, the idea was to take the old bleachers out. Mr. Rist and Dr. Bass had agreed that they would rather have no bleachers than have those bleachers damage that floor. I guess what I'm reporting is that November 1st we intend to turn that gym back over to the school for their use, those bleachers are there.

Chairman Herbert stated I'm not sure what the Alderman is asking for in terms of delay. Are you making a motion to...?

Alderman DeVries stated I think we're having a discussion on how we feel about that. Until I ask that question, I would have been comfortable only going forward with the intercom system this evening. Knowing that the gym floor is also a decision that ultimately has to be made this evening, I would make a motion that we separate the lockers from the other two items, because that is a decision that could be delayed and we'll just have to hope that the price of steel has stabilized. But I would make that motion that we separate the lockers and go forward with the other two from contingency.

Alderman DeVries moved to approve the Central High School bleachers and the Central High School intercom system and to table the West High School locker discussion and decision until next months meeting. Alderman Roy duly seconded the motion.

Chairman Herbert asked the purpose of the motion is to accomplish what?

Alderman DeVries answered to pass the two and not kill off three this evening.

Chairman Herbert stated my questions is though, if the purpose was to pass two and kill... Which one did you want to kill?

Alderman DeVries answered as I indicated, if you'd like to have the discussion. As I indicated before, I'm not prepared to make that decision and it's not one that we have to make at this point in time. I think it should be tabled quite truthfully. That's my opinion.

Chairman Herbert asked which one?

Alderman DeVries answered the lockers.

Chairman Herbert asked the West High School lockers?

Alderman DeVries stated and that's why I made the motion for the other two items.

Chairman Herbert stated my only problem with that right now is that I'm not sure where we are in terms of the committee's ability to make a motion like that. This committee is to oversee the project; the School Board's responsibility is to define the project. So if this School Board has made the decision that these projects are very important at this point in time, and have decided that they should be done, this committee's responsibility is to oversee that they are done. As opposed to determining that the funding shouldn't be released. I don't think that is this committee's responsibility.

Chairman Herbert called for a five-minute recess.

Chairman Herbert called the meeting back to order.

Chairman Herbert stated there is a motion on the floor by Alderman DeVries, seconded by Alderman Roy to go approve the funding as a change order for the Central High School bleachers and the Central High School intercom system, but to delay for a month approval of funding for the West High School lockers. That's the motion on the table.

Alderman DeVries asked can I correct you? Because I asked to table the third item, the lockers and delay discussion until next month to see if it is ready for us.

Alderman Garrity stated just a comment Mr. Chairman. I would like to see some more details on the open concept fix and dollar amounts and things like that for next month, if that's possible.

Chairman Herbert stated we're making an effort actually to get it to the committee.

Committee Member Kelley stated the West lockers...I have no problem delaying this for a month because if we're looking into not getting the supplies and be able to install them until winter break, which is the first week of March this year, not in February, we're looking at March anyway. So if we delay that I have no problem with that if that's what we're looking at doing it during a vacation. But the bleachers and the intercom system I really hope to go through today. This is something that if we delay on it, we're going to have problems with the installation of the intercom system and possibly really damaging the new floor and that's just a waste of money.

Chairman Herbert stated that brings up an issue. If we approve this motion...did you go through the timeline on when we actually could, if we approved it next month, when we actually could get lockers installed?

Mr. Clougherty answered if we approved it at the end of November, you're talking about receiving units eight to ten weeks out, which is the end of January, beginning of February, probably a month for installation. Do you agree with that Ken? So we're probably still looking at the beginning of March. Late February optimistically, maybe February break.

Alderman Thibault asked what is the reason that we are holding it back? Nobody seems to give me the reason why we're holding it back. We just want to hold back the lockers for West High School. Why? I want to know.

Chairman Herbert stated I think that's probably Alderman DeVries'...

Alderman Thibault stated I'd like an answer as to why. Because the open concept part of what you people were talking about before, we're going to have to handle anyway no matter what. That can be delayed too until we find out if it has to be done. So I just don't understand for holding it back. I'm certainly not in favor of that unless somebody can give me a real reason.

Alderman DeVries stated I think what I would say is that discussion has told us that the lockers at West High School are not time sensitive, that we are not going to pay more if we do not go forward with that change order this evening. So that allows us or allows school administration and School Board members to have a more thorough research of the open concept and to investigate what sort of dollars

that might take. My concern and I think I bumped into this when we were looking to fund the Memorial High School field improvements, our school is maxed out on its ability to bond. They are very uncomfortable going into additional bonding, so we're likely looking at the contingency monies as a good portion of the available monies to accomplish other projects and I would like to know because open concept is an education issue for those three particular elementary schools, it's an education issue. I would like to know more about it before I'm asked to expend this \$96,000. When we get more information if everything falls into place, I'm more comfortable voting, I shall, but I'm just not comfortable with that tonight and it's not time sensitive.

Alderman Thibault stated as I understand many of the kids at West High School right now have got clothes and band equipment all over the hallways. I don't think that's a very good issue, and if I'm not mistaken, I would consider it a major safety issue with all of these clothes in classrooms and in the hallways and band equipment. So this is where I have a problem with it. How is that going to hold back the concept of the open classroom? How is that going to hold that up? If we have to do that, we're going to have to do it regardless, so I just don't see the reason to hold it back. That's all.

Alderman Roy stated with all due respect to my fellow Alderman, the locker situation is going back to when I was on the Joint School Facilities Committee put together by the School Board, the use of lockers in our high schools has been deplorable for many years, and asking for 30 days to delay this, let's us 1) get more information and 2) find out what the highest priority for those contingency dollars are. If this was simply \$100,000 to correct the only problem, I would spend it in a heartbeat, but as we get more high priority items, we need to actually as a board, as a committee, sit down and suggest these are the highest, whether it's kids carrying extra backpacks and band equipment in the hallways, those are very high priorities, we have to look at the educational values of the open concept as well. It seems like in one of the things that I've mentioned in the past that bothers me is every month we get the high priority that gets brought to us, and this project being \$105 million, almost \$106 million, we shouldn't be seeing the newest high priority of the month or the flavor of the month to spend \$300,000 and \$400,000 and \$500,000 at a pop. My concern is that when this project is over, we will not have the contingency to complete it, which is why the contingency is there and my high priorities is delivering a good project, the high school project, to the taxpayers while preserving the educational values for all students of the City. So when you look at the priority, is something that's not time sensitive that the children unfortunately have lived with for many, many years, the highest priority or is it something as the flavor of the month, and that's why I'm supporting the passing of the two items, preserving a brand new floor and not marring it and scratching it and the smaller safety issue of the intercom. And if we have

additional funds through savings next month, then I will be the first to recommend the new lockers as we did...unfortunately in the beginning of the project on two other high schools but not a third, which is an additional problem.

Chairman Herbert stated Alderman Roy, I'm just going to again I think we're running into sort of a fundamental philosophical difference as to what the committee's purpose is, here, this committee. The School District has worked very hard to establish it's priorities. There are no flavors of the month. It takes a lot longer than a month for us to make a decision, so I respectfully disagree with that interpretation of what we recommend. And this committee's job is to oversee the project as defined by the School District and it sounds to me as though you would wish to from this committee's position tell the School District what the important priorities are. And I understand your interest and we definitely pay attention to what the Aldermen believe. It is part of our decision making process, but we aren't doing flavors of the month here. We're bringing up items that are very important, administration has so told us and we have agreed, we are working on the elementary issue and have been for some time and will for continued. So we will come forward with the projects that we've thought through at the time we believe they should be done. So it's disheartening from a School Board member is expected to come through with a priority that the School Board has voted on and then find an Alderman felt it was within his responsibility to basically reorganize what the School Board's priorities are. We do list to you but we did take the vote, we do understand the open concept problem, we are addressing it, and we are hopeful that we will have enough money to deal with it before the timeframe is out. I understand your concern, I hear your concerns, but I'm frankly not inclined to vote for overturning what by School Board has already voted for.

Committee Member Cote called the question.

Clerk Leblond-Kang stated the motion made by Alderman DeVries, seconded by Alderman Roy, is to approve funding for the Central High School bleachers and the Central High School intercom system, and to table the third item, which is the West High School lockers, delay for about month with the provision to come back after further discussion.

Chairman Herbert called for a vote on the motion. Committee Member Cote called for a roll call vote. Aldermen Roy, Porter, DeVries and Garrity voted yea. Committee Members Cote, Kelley and Herbert and Alderman Thibault voted nay. The motion failed.

Alderman Roy moved to approve the Central High School bleachers and intercom system and table discussion on the West High School lockers for a period of ten days to a special meeting to be called by the Chairman for the discussion on that

item only. The motion was duly seconded by Alderman Garrity. The motion carried with Alderman Thibault duly recorded in opposition.

Chairman Herbert addressed Item 3 of the agenda:

Update on the School Facilities Improvement Project.

There was no discussion on this item.

There being no further business to come before the committee, on motion of Alderman Thibault, duly seconded by Alderman Porter, it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

Clerk of Committee