

**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE 21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS BOND ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES – August 25, 2014**

The 21st Century Schools Bond Advisory Committee (Committee) met on August 25, 2014 in Conference Room 916 of the School Board Administration Building. Chairman Martinez called the meeting to order at 3:12 p.m.

Committee Members

Mr. Roberto Martinez
Mr. Cecil T. Daniels
Dr. Jaap Donath
Dr. Sean Foreman
Mr. Samuel Lee Gilmore Jr

Mr. François Illas
Ms. Gepsie Metellus
Rev. Guillermo Revuelta
Mr. Paul Wallace

**Ex-Officio Non-Voting
Members**

Mr. Jose Montes de Oca
Mr. Jaime G. Torrens

Miami-Dade County Public School Attendees

Dr. Lawrence S. Feldman,
Board Member
Mr. Alberto M. Carvalho
Mr. Walter J. Harvey
Mr. Joseph Gebara
Mr. Terry Murphy
Mr. Jose L. Dotres
Mrs. Judith M. Marte
Ms. Iraida Mendez-Cartaya
Ms. Daisy Gonzalez-Diego
Ms. Tabitha Fazzino
Ms. Ana Rijo-Conde

Mr. Raul F. Perez
Mr. Brian Williams
Mr. Tom Knigge
Ms. Maria T. Rojas
Mr. Rick Yanez
Ms. Arlene Stanek
Mr. Leo Fernandez
Ms. Melody Thelwell
Ms. Ana M. Rasco
Mr. Alexis L. Martinez
Ms. Mary Cagle

Other Attendees

Mr. Glen White
Ms. Cristina Veiga

Recording Secretary

Ms. Erika Duarte

Mr. Martinez called the meeting to order and stated that there would not be any voting taking place. He acknowledged that the meeting was specifically called to discuss the draft of the First Annual Report distributed at the prior meeting for review and input from the Committee. Mr. Martinez further noted that the item would be discussed in full at the following meeting to be held on September 9th, as there was no quorum.

Mr. Martinez then took the opportunity to discuss the notes provided to the oversight committee by Mr. Samuel Gilmore Jr. on behalf of the NAACP, his appointing organization. He requested that Mr. Gilmore summarize the comments provided on the handout. Mr. Gilmore stated that the NAACP would like to communicate that there are certain portions of the Report that should be clarified and others that need to be substantiated. One pivotal topic being the budget, whether it can be adhered to, and whether sufficient funds will be available to complete the overall Bond program. Mr. Martinez suggested that Mr. Gilmore meet with Mr. Torrens and his staff to discuss these questions in greater depth, and assured Mr. Gilmore that the handout would be taken into account and discussed in the following meeting.

Mr. Harvey inquired as to when the handout provided by Mr. Gilmore on behalf of the NAACP was received, and if it was public record. Mr. Martinez replied that he had received the handout at the beginning of the meeting, and advised that it would have to be distributed to the Committee. In light of the lack of a quorum, Ms. Metellus inquired if it was feasible to turn the meeting into a workshop where the Committee could go through the Report, ask questions and offer feedback. Mr. Martinez asked Mr. Harvey if this was permissible. Mr. Harvey pointed out that while such was not specifically on the agenda, it would be the Chair's decision as to how to proceed. Mr. Martinez agreed to proceed with discussion of the report with the understanding that no action could be taken due to lack of a quorum.

Ms. Metellus expressed that in her opinion, while the First Annual Report was comprehensive, it needed additional information and clarity in certain areas. She suggested that a matrix detailing earnings, expenditures and line items would strengthen the document. Mr. Torrens pointed out that financials could be found on page twenty-three along with a summary graph on the following page. Specifically, total expenditures through March of 2014 totaled \$23.9 million. Bond projects in Year 1 were also individually identified beginning on page thirty-four with the appropriation for each project noted. Mr. Torrens added that expenditures by project and program wide could be found at any given time on the public Dashboard.

Mr. Martinez summarized that at the end of the first year, i.e. March of 2014, the School Board had issued \$300 million in bonds, \$23.9 million of which was expended, and that the Dashboard would reflect funds expended for each school. Ms. Metellus pointed out that the information reflects the expended amount, not the budgeted amount, and asked if Mr. Torrens would demonstrate to the Committee how to navigate the Dashboard. Mr. Torrens proceeded to do so.

Ms. Metellus stated that at one of the Outreach Committee meetings it was recommended that there be signage at every school detailing not only Board Member information, but also the budgeted amount, a scope summary and possibly a target date for completion. Ms. Metellus indicated she did not remember seeing one for Edison Park K-8. Mr. Torrens noted that all Year-1 and Year-2 schools currently have a construction sign on site, although noted that those details were available on the Bond website. Mr. Torrens also indicated he would confirm the sign at Edison Park K-8 is visible. Ms. Metellus stressed the importance of the signage and keeping the community informed.

Mr. Martinez confirmed that the everyone on the Committee had received a copy of the handout provided by Mr. Gilmore on behalf of the NAACP at the beginning of the meeting, and acknowledged that Dr. Feldman and the Superintendent had joined the Committee moments earlier.

Mr. Carvalho greeted the Committee noting that the 2014-2015 school year opening was extremely successful, especially due to the launching of numerous programs and innovations. He emphasized that the First Annual report is comprehensive and that the Bond program has been successfully accelerated in certain areas. Mr. Carvalho used the early completion of the technology roll out as an example of one of the Bond program's accomplishments. The installations were delivered ahead of time with all three hundred plus schools equipped with Wifi, ten thousand Promethium Boards installed prior to the commencement of the school year and server upgrades implemented. In addition to fulfilling the technology initiative, many students received devices, an initiative outside of the promises made in the Bond.

Mr. Carvalho detailed a recent visit to Sabal Palm Elementary to inspect the effects of the Bond in a dated school. This project, now close to complete, is yielding outstanding results. Mr. Carvalho stated that the District continued to deliver on its promise to open new doors of economic opportunity, by simultaneously engaging in massive policy revisions to assure fairness and equity in the business field. Mr. Carvalho then excused himself as he needed to return to a conference call in progress.

Prior to Mr. Carvalho leaving, Mr. Martinez asked the Committee if they had any questions for the Superintendent. Dr. Foreman asked if there are any plans to renovate the School Board Administration Building. Mr. Carvalho indicated that the building and surrounding real estate assets are under review.

Mr. Murphy commended the Superintendent for the opportunities being provided to minority business owners and others in the community. He referred to a previous conversation with Mr. Carvalho regarding wage policies and a way of potentially creating an incentive for the use of apprenticeship programs, learning trades and careers in the construction industry. Mr. Murphy inquired if this policy was under consideration. Mr. Carvalho affirmed that anything brought to the Committee is automatically taken into consideration, and that the matter would be explored. He reminded the Committee of the importance of the promise made for transparency, honesty and best practices for the duration of the Bond. Mr. Carvalho pointed out that there are three different entities involved in this effort: an independent Chief Auditor, the Inspector General, and a third entity with investigative power.

Mr. Wallace expressed that he would have liked to have seen the handout provided by Mr. Gilmore prior to the meeting so that the Committee could get a better understanding of the concerns being voiced on behalf of the NAACP. He added that some serious concerns are detailed in the document and that he believes they should not be dealt with privately as suggested earlier in the meeting. Mr. Martinez stated that out of respect to Mr. Gilmore and the NAACP, he would like the Committee to review the comments and be prepared to discuss the handout at the following Committee meeting. Mr. Wallace emphasized the importance of addressing this handout as soon as possible to avoid any uncertainty from our community.

Mr. Gilmore stated that in his opinion the Dashboard information should be broken down further to reflect both gender and race of the firms working on each project. He felt that this would help answer questions often presented to him, and stated that he had made this request at a previous Committee meeting. Mr. Torrens stated that Mr. Gilmore's request would be taken into account, and added that Year-1 projects did not have requirements for Small Business participation or Minority/Women Business participation .

Mr. Martinez asked if there were any other items that needed to be discussed. Mr. Gilmore brought up the M.A.S.T. Academy project, and stated that he was advised by a few companies that they submitted a bid to Pirtle and never received a response. He suggested that M-DCPS should be able to see which companies submitted bids and why they did not win the bid. Mr. Torrens explained that contractors and CM's have their own pre-qualification process for sub-contractors. Working in conjunction with the Office of Economic Opportunity, Mr. Torrens advised that a common pre-qualification process is being developed, even though the process cannot be imposed on any firm. This would help alleviate the process for smaller firms because once pre-qualified by a larger firm, it would carry over to the other firms. Mr. Gilmore inquired as to why the District allowed prime firms to use their own process, and stated he believed this to be a flaw in the system. Mr. Torrens specified that the District cannot get involved in the contractors' means and methods but rather only guide them. Additionally, the District cannot dictate to a prime which sub-contractor to use.

Mr. Williams clarified that the OEO is currently in the process of analyzing the pre-qualification processes of General Contractors to compare them not only to the the District's process, but also other processes in the tri-county area for purposes of creating uniformity. The OEO is also examining whether preference could be awarded to firms who choose to utilize the District's pre-qualification process. Mr. Williams pointed out that there a number of inaccurate rumors in the public with respect to the process. He addressed the compliance comment on the handout and assured that there is a compliance person in the OEO, and another will be hired to work in conjunction with both Facilities and the Audit Department. Numbers would be released with regard to Year-1 projects but he emphasized the importance of ensuring the information is validated prior to being released to the community. Mr. Williams added that he believes that it would be premature to label a firm non-compliant prior to project completion, however should a firm be found non-compliant it could expect to receive a Non-Compliance letter. He emphasized that the comments on Mr. Gilmore's handout are also of importance to M-DCPS, and offered to sit down with Mr. Gilmore and Mr. Torrens to discuss them in greater detail.

Mr. Murphy suggested that a mechanism be put in place where contractors are encouraged to utilize young workers through apprenticeship programs in trades like carpentry, plumbing and electrical work. The incentive would be a discount in the required wages built into the M-DCPS policy for contractors doing work for the school system. Mr. Murphy expressed that he felt opportunities could be maximized. Mr. Martinez asked Mr. Torrens if it was feasible to consider Mr. Murphy's recommendation and Mr. Torrens indicated that presently students are directed to apply at these firms and encouraged to attend job fairs where contractors are present. Mr. Martinez announced that Mr. Carvalho had returned to the meeting and asked Mr. Murphy to repeat his proposal. Mr. Murphy added that national studies indicate mechanisms such as apprenticeship programs are not only successful in but more cost effective. Mr. Carvalho indicated that this initiative does not fall within the Bond promise, but stated that there is value in examining the policy.

Mr. Gilmore recommended that a formal review panel be created to meet monthly and discuss issues with firms who have not been paid in a timely fashion, and made reference to a firm who had called him stating they had not been paid in eight years. Mr. Torrens stated that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss issues pertaining to the Bond program.

Dr. Foreman asked where the Annual Report would be disseminated and the intended audience. Mr. Martinez indicated the Report would be transmitted to the School Board and also made public via the bond website.

Ms. Metellus expressed that she was pleased with the fact that the District would be going back to Year-1 projects on the Dashboard to detail the gender and race of the contractors. Dr. Donaath suggested that for the following meeting the steps taken to remedy any issues which have arisen be detailed.

Mr. Martinez noted to the Committee that in the future, when there is a report disseminated ahead of time which requires a vote, to please forward any issues or comments to District staff at least a week in advance to give the Committee a fair chance to discuss any points that may need to be addressed. Mr. Martinez encouraged the Committee to express any and concerns to the Chair whether it be issues or a request to add an item to the agenda. He encouraged Mr. Gilmore again to meet with Mr. Torrens to discuss the handout brought by him to the meeting.

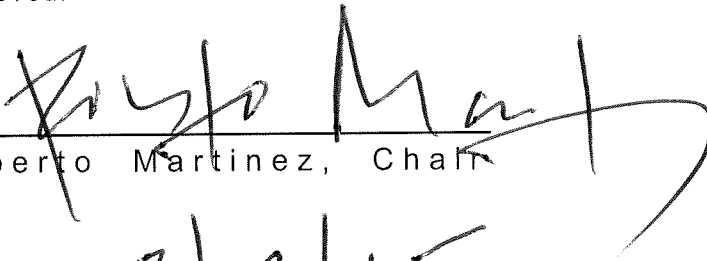
Mr. Wallace asked when the next meeting will take place and Mr. Martinez indicated the meeting would be held on September 9, at 3:00 pm. He also wanted the record to reflect that Board Member Susie V. Castillo was being represented by Ms. Maria Teresa Rojas.

Dr. Feldman expressed the importance of this Committee's duties, and hoped that the Report would be reviewed in detail. He stated that as a Board Member, he relies on the Committee's recommendations and trusts that all concerns would be fairly addressed.

Mr. Harvey requested that the record reflect that during the course of this discussion a quorum had been formed. Mr. Martinez concluded by advising that the Report would need to be acted on at the next meeting.

There being no further business to discuss, Mr. Martinez adjourned the meeting at 4:17 p.m.

Approved:



Roberto Martinez, Chair

Date:

3/9/15