

MEMORANDUM

Date: November 12, 2013

To: Members of the Board of Education

From: Bond Accountability Committee (BAC)

Subject: 3rd BAC Report to the Board

Background

In the November 2012 election, voters approved a \$482M capital improvement bond for Portland Public Schools. The PPS Board appointed a Citizen Bond Accountability Committee to monitor the planning and progress of the bond program relative to voter-approved work scope, schedule and budget objectives.

Recent Activities

The BAC met on October 16 at Wilson High School. As is the case with all meetings, it was publicly noticed and was open to the public. PPS staff has continued to be very helpful and supportive of the process, and demonstrates a consistent commitment to transparency and clarity in all dealings with the BAC.

As the Board is fully aware, implementation of the bond program is intense on several fronts. Construction work on the Summer 2013 projects is complete, under budget and with timely openings at all schools. A high bar has been set for Summer 2014 work, and we were pleased to hear that staff undertook a “lessons learned” process to help future implementation. Three design teams are working on 12 schools set for Summer 2014, which will be bid next spring.

The design teams for Roosevelt and Franklin High Schools have been very active, although still in the Master Planning stage. Seven or eight Design Advisory Group (DAG) meetings have been held plus a couple of public Open Houses for each school with more scheduled. A similar process has started for Faubion. The DAG and public meetings that committee members have observed have exhibited interest and engagement, and seem to have provided valuable input to the design teams.

Since our committee meeting, the RFP process for selection of a Construction Manager/General Contractor for each of the two high schools has commenced. We are looking forward to having them join the teams and provide critical advice on costs, schedules, and phasing of the work.

We have also provided input to the performance auditors as they develop their work plan, and are looking forward to working closely with them over the coming months and years.

Current Issues

Budget. We had previously expressed concern over the reporting format of the program budget in that we thought it confusing and lacking in transparency. We are now very satisfied with the revised presentation of the budget by OSM and appreciate staff's efforts in that regard.

Schedule. At this point, we believe that the program is generally on schedule. We have asked, and staff has agreed to provide, more detail on schedule changes going forward. There is some concern about possible negative schedule effects of several processes on the high schools. The EdSpecs product has still to be approved; the high school size question must be resolved; public engagement continues; Master Plans must be completed and approved by the Board. Each of these activities has the ability to derail the design/construction schedule, and the BAC will be tracking this closely.

Equity. As expected, the Summer 13 work fell well short of the 18% aspirational goal for Minority/Women-Owned/Emerging Small Business (MWESB). The latest data we have seen shows 8.2%. While we do appreciate that this likely exceeds the District's experience with building contracts in the past, it is nevertheless a failure. The high schools provide more flexibility in this area, and the BAC looks forward to seeing creative and successful strategies on those projects.

The Balanced Scorecard shows green for the student participation criteria, and it is true that consultants and contractors have registered as required on BizConnect. However, while we have not seen specific data on how many students have become engaged in the process, we fear that an opportunity is being missed. We believe that contractors and consultants are more than willing to work on this issue, but it seems we need somehow need a better connection with the District's education staff.

Communications. The BAC is pleased that the communication staffing is now complete, and commends the District on the scope and scale of its public information processes. This is much improved over the early days of the program.

Summary

The BAC continues to be impressed with the caliber and professionalism of OSM and other staff, and thanks the Board for this opportunity to serve and play a part in what we all expect will be a very successful bond program.