



**Needs Assessment Committee
Minutes
June 19, 2008
8:30 a.m.**

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, June 19, 2008

**Shelby County Administration Building
4th Floor Conference Room**

Committee members present:

Nisha Powers, Chairman	Tomeka Hart, President MCS
Cato Johnson, Vice-Chairman	David Pickler, Chairman SCS
Scott Fleming, Secretary	Commissioner Sidney Chism
Jay Weatherington	Commissioner Mike Ritz
Aubrey Howard	

Others Present:

Grace Hutchinson	Dr. Bobby Webb
Paula Lewis	Maura Sullivan
Sybille Noble	Tom Moss
Denise Sharpe	Stephanie Jones
Brian Shipp	Clay Perry
Craig Willis	

1. Meeting Convened – Nisha Powers

Chairman Nisha Powers called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m. Chairman Powers noted that in light of recent developments, we are entering an era of accountability which applies not only to the school systems, but to the NAC. Chairman Powers indicated that she will need to be in a better position to address the concerns of the commission when asked to come in front of them again.

Chairman Powers recognized that both City and County Schools systems were represented and congratulated the City Schools on the recent hiring of a new superintendent. Chairman Powers stated that with the approval of the \$11m, hiring of the MCS superintendent and other events over the past months, it's a new day and she is encouraged by the spirit of cooperation which has been displayed by school systems.

2. Approval of the Minutes from the April 10, 2008 Meeting – Nisha Powers

Motion: Scott Fleming moved the approval of the minutes. Seconded by Jay Weatherington

Action: Motion Approved.

3. Discussion on Status of RFP – Grace Hutchinson

Grace Hutchinson stated that an RFP had been issued for a consultant to the Needs Assessment Committee and that only one response was received. The response was from DeJong, Inc. who has been the NAC's consultant since 2005. They already have a data base of information on both school systems on file which they can add to and that will be a tremendous benefit.

Scott Fleming suggested that we negotiate their contract to include renewals without going back through the RFP process so frequently. Jay Weatherington agreed and suggested 3 - (1) year renewals.

Motion: Scott Fleming moved to approve recommendation of the one (1) year contract with three one-year renewals included. Seconded by Jay Weatherington

Action: Motion approved.

4. Discussion on Capital Project Submittal Format for NAC Review – Nisha Powers

Chairman Powers stated that part of DeJong's charge will be to help the NAC in formatting submissions. In July of last year the executive committee developed a cost analysis form to be filled out for new construction. Also, Chairman Powers developed a form for capital request submissions and construction costs. These forms are included in today's packet and are also on a CD for your use.

Commissioner Ritz stated that the MCS are putting money into old buildings when it might be cheaper to build new ones – given those circumstances we need to look at what is more feasible. Chairman Powers stated that it is entirely up to the school systems to tell the NAC if the buildings are being underutilized, etc.

Chairman Powers stated that the purpose of these forms is to help track what happens after the project is bid and would answer what the costs per square foot included. She stated that the purview of this Committee has always been that we do not get involved with funding; however, from the County Commission CIP hearings it is clear that we need to have some accountability related to funding.

Motion: Jay Weatherington moved to approve the usage of the 2 charts introduced.

Cato Johnson asked both school systems if these forms would help them or hinder them. Both systems responded that they already have these figures and it would not be a problem to use the forms. Chairman Powers asked that the information for last fiscal year be brought back to the next NAC meeting for submission, and asked if that would be sufficient time for completion. The schools indicated that they track that information and would be able to have that to the NAC in time.

Maura Sullivan asked what is considered an athletic facility – ball fields, gyms? Scott Fleming responded that the intention was for all outdoor athletic fields. Sybille Noble asked if they should include ALL utility costs or just their incurred utility costs?

Chairman Powers responded that we only want the Capital costs that are funded by the County Commission.

Commissioner Ritz stated his concern is in the usage of the school buildings. If the capacity of a school building for example is 740 students but due to the programmatic layout the capacity is less than what it was built for – the cost per student more than doubles. We need to try to find a way to handle this. Everyone needs to understand that what we are told that the school is built for is not always what the school is used for. Remember the basis of DeJong's report is that MCS enrollment is going down and SCS are pretty much flat. Every Commissioner is now asking why we would need to build new schools in this case.

Tomeka Hart stated that the MCS Board is meeting with staff to distinguish what buildings are used for and what the capacity is. The question really is, are we going to bus students from one corner of the city to the other because of lack of capacity in some areas? Cato Johnson stated that if that comes forward as an option everyone should be prepared to engage in the most interesting and controversial racial, political and social discussions that this community has ever had.

Jay Weatherington called for the question on his motion. Second by Cato Johnson

Action: Motion Approved

Chairman Powers added that when DeJong gets on board, utilization will be part of their charge and will try to figure out the buildings' built-out and programmatic use issues. Commissioner Ritz asked that the submittal that was made to the Commission with that information be submittal to the NAC as an Excel spreadsheet. Chairman Powers asked if Sybille Noble could provide that in an email to Paul Lewis and she agreed.

As we think about submittals, now that we are past the \$11M hurdle, we still need to address the \$60M for the 2008-2009 fiscal year. Chairman Powers stated to make clear to both school systems that the projects for the \$60M need to come to the NAC for approval before a Resolution is taken to the County Commission. David Pickler said that all of their 2008-2009 projects had been brought to the NAC and had been approved as part of their 5 Year Plan, and asked for clarification about what was being requested.

Chairman Powers stated that it was made clear at the last meeting that the NAC will never again approve a 5 year plan without being accompanied with an Annual Request and individual project submittals with the Annual Request. She stated that every project will be looked at individually each year.

Maura Sullivan asked whether they should follow the old format for submittals. Chairman Powers asked that the school systems bear with the NAC as they get DeJong back on board to develop the reformatting, and asked that the submittal be made using the old format for this round. Chairman Powers confirmed per their 5 Year Plan that the SCS will be submitting for their portion of the \$60M:

New Southeast Area Elementary School
New Elementary/Middle Arlington/Lakeland Area

Chairman Powers confirmed per their 5 Year Plan that the MCS will be submitting for their portion of the \$60M:

Renovations:
Humes Middle Phase 2
Avon Lenox
Kingsbury Elementary/ADA
Additions: Ross Road Elementary
ADA/Cap Maint: Zone 1-5
Critical Deferred Maintenance

Both City and County schools agreed that this information was accurate, and that they would have all of the information at the next meeting.

Chairman Powers also noted that in 2006, the NAC was charged with prioritizing. She wanted to provide a reminder that going into 2009-2010, the NAC we will need to focus on prioritizing unless we have another Agreement in place. We will be in a position of prioritizing for the school systems if they don't do it. Schools know their priorities much better than we as far as ADA, etc.

David Pickler stated that this organization has no control over funding. That lies with the County Commission. How is prioritization going to work between the 2 systems in deciding whose project is more important? The County Commission is bound by state law in the division of the dollars.

Chairman Powers stated to the Committee what she stated to the Commission which was that the NAC does not address the issue of funding except to deal with accountability, and that NAC will limit its role to gathering and prioritizing capital requests from each school system, but cannot and will not suggest to the Commission which school system's project is of a higher priority. Commissioner Chism stated that this is a recommending body. If recommendations from the NAC are economically feasible, the County Commission will try to fund them.

Chairman Powers asked both school systems if there was any more information or anything else the NAC could do for them at this time. Both stated there wasn't.

Commissioner Ritz stated that he doesn't foresee any multi-year \$60M programs anymore. It's going to be year by year. Mayor Wharton proposed that the \$60M be in the CIP plan for four more years, and that was voted out by the Commission.

Chairman Powers said that the school boards would be contacted to find out the most convenient date for them for the next NAC meeting.

Action: Cato Johnson moved to adjourn. Second by Tomeka Hart

Meeting adjourned at 9:35

Respectfully submitted,

E. Scott Fleming, Secretary

Date