AGENDA
SCHOOL FACILITIES INITIATIVE TASK FORCE SPECIAL MEETING
THURSDAY, MAY 9, 2013 – 6:00 P.M.
WEST SIDE MIDDLE SCHOOL, 250 BRANDEGEE AVENUE

I. ROLL CALL

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES of April 25, 2013*

III. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

IV. ITEMS OF BUSINESS

a. Tour of West Side Middle School

(Following the tour of West Side Middle School, the Task Force will recess and reconvene at Cutler Middle School, 160 Fishtown Road, Mystic.)

b. Tour of Cutler Middle School

V. ADJOURNMENT

*Attached

Next Meeting: May 23, 2013

IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND THE MEETING, PLEASE CALL THE TOWN MANAGER'S OFFICE AT 860-441-6630. THANK YOU.

SCHOOL FACILITIES INITIATIVE TASK FORCE SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, APRIL 25, 2013 – 7:00 P.M.
TOWN HALL ANNEX, COMMUNITY ROOM 1

I. ROLL CALL

Present: Ambroise, Beaulieu, Bresnahan (7:08 p.m.), Bryer (7:10 p.m.), DeMatto, Denno, Fiftal, Heller, O'Donnell, Streeter, Trejo
Staff: Robarge, Bresnyan
Consultant: Mike Zuba and Rebecca Augur

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES of March 14, 2013

A motion was made by DeMatto, seconded by Ambroise, to approve the minutes of March 14, 2013 with the deletion of the last line on page 2.

The motion carried 10 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 abstention (Streeter).

III. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS - None

IV. ITEMS OF BUSINESS

Mr. Zuba distributed an updated School Facilities Initiative Task Force Study schedule. He noted the need to align education programmatic plans with the efforts of the Task Force. For the May 9th meeting, Mr. Zuba is proposing a tour of the two middle schools starting at 6:00 p.m. Sometime after that, the group can tour other key elementary schools on a Saturday.

Mr. Zuba explained that the Task Force will meet twice a month in July and August and the meetings are likely to be longer as the group prepares to launch the public survey in September.

Task Force members were supportive of the schedule. The May 9th tour will start at West Side Middle School.

a. Center for Research and Public Policy Overview and Experience
b. Public Survey Methodology
c. Areas of Investigation
d. Discussion on Public Survey

Jerry Lindsley of the Center for Research and Public Policy (CRPP) reviewed a PowerPoint presentation entitled Groton Community Survey. Mr. Lindsley provided background information on CRPP. He stated that the purpose of Groton's survey will be designed to identify reasons for support or opposition to plans for the schools and student redistricting. This will be accomplished through a randomized 400 person survey of registered voters. The target date for the survey is September and CRPP will need two weeks to gather the data to present to the Task Force. CRPP will also take responsibility for the press release on the results.

Mr. Lindsley described some of the uses for survey data and the validity of the sample size. Discussion turned to a May versus November referendum. Mr. Lindsley suggested that a controlled situation is best, which would mean a May referendum.

Discussion followed on the survey question design and Mr. Lindsley fielded suggestions from Task Force members about topics that should be covered. He noted that the survey will be conducted after the Task Force has narrowed the options for discussion. Mr. Zuba explained that the options presented to the public must align with the school and community vision. Discussion followed on the previous school efforts and other potential upcoming bond projects. The consensus of the Task Force was for the survey to reflect moving forward rather than bringing the failed Phase II effort into it.

Mr. Lindsley noted that the draft survey questions will be reviewed with Milone and MacBroom, revised, and then distributed to the Task Force for review. The Task Force's input will be worked into the final draft.

Bryer suggested and Mr. Zuba agreed to establish a Google docs site where Task Force members can post ideas for the survey.

DeMatto asked where the Board of Education is in this process. Rick Norris stated that the Board's Vision Report must be firm. Mr. Zuba stated that his firm is looking at the Board of Education's vision plan with the administration. He suggested inviting the full board to a future meeting.

Other suggestions for "generating buzz" were use of social media (Town Councilor Bruce Flax's Groton Community Government site), conducting open meetings at the library, briefing the Town Council on the Task Force's efforts, and inviting the press to the school tours. Heller noted that he is going to meet with the school principals; going to parent council meetings; meeting with GATE after the RTM budget, and meeting with Mayor Galbraith. He has already met with the teachers' union president. He asked that the Board of Education put a link to the Task Force information on their web site.

Chairman Heller asked Task Force members to stay involved in the budget process and continue to speak with constituents. Ambroise noted that the RTM Annual Budget Meeting begins on April 29th. Also, the Town Council approved $250,000 for the school facilities initiative, but the RTM Finance Committee reduced it to $125,000.

V. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Ambroise, seconded by Denno, to adjourn at 8:42 p.m.

The motion carried unanimously.