



"Accepting the Challenge"

# Facilities/Transportation Committee Minutes

Wednesday, November 9, 2011 – 1:30 p.m.

Board Room, Administration Office

Present: D. Karnes, Chairperson, J. Murray, M. Snelling (exited at 3:15 p.m.),  
P. Bowslaugh (Alternate),  
M. Clark, R. Harkness, G. Barnes, K. Zabowski (exited at 2:30 p.m.)

Guests: M. Sefton, K. Sumner, Mr. J. Burt (exited at 2:00 p.m.)

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## 1. CALL TO ORDER:

D. Karnes, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

## 2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was amended to include the presentation of a parent regarding a bussing concern.

## 3. COMMITTEE GOVERNANCE GOAL ITEMS

NIL

## 4. OTHER COMMITTEE GOVERNANCE MATTERS

### a) Transportation Exception to Policy Request

Mr. Jamie Burt, a parent of a Grade 9 Neelin High School Student enrolled in the IB program attended the meeting to speak to his email request of October 28, 2011 asking for an exception to the transportation policy with respect to high school students. He noted when attending the various high school open houses the policy that high school students are only bussed if they live more the 2.4 kms from the closest high school had not been mentioned. His daughter chose Neelin High School for the IB program. Although his family lives within the 2.4 kms distance to a high school, he asked for an exception to policy so that his daughter could take the bus to Neelin which was less than 2.4 kms from their home in order to participate in the IB program. He noted this program was not offered at the high school closest to their home. Mr. Burt referenced the Public Schools Act which stated students would be bussed if they live further than 1.6 kms from their school and asked why the 2.4 kms had been instituted by the Brandon School Division. He also stated his daughter was in grade 9 and therefore did not drive. He asked if the Committee would give consideration to a non-binding exception to policy until the matter can be resolved properly.

The Trustees discussed Mr. Burt's request in detail. They noted Division policy stated the distance of 1.6 kms referred to K-8 students while the distance of 2.4 kms referred to 9-12 students and was tied into the Province's funding for transportation of students. Questions were asked for clarification regarding space on the bus; the number of students who would require bussing should the distance for 9-12 students be changed from 2.4 kms to 1.6 kms; past practice; the difference between rural routes and city routes; the age of the children; the possible use of City transit; whether or not other students in the neighbourhood were riding the bus to Neelin High School.

Committee members spoke for and against allowing exception to policy. It was noted that the IB Program was only offered at Neelin High School. It was also noted by Trustee Murray that there was no such thing as exception to policy only the establishment of a precedent. The Committee agreed to decline the request for an exception to policy. Mr. Burt stated he was disappointed in the Committee's decision and would be speaking to the Board of Trustees as a delegation at a future Board meeting on the subject. Mr. Burt exited the meeting.

**b) Architect Appointment**

The Secretary-Treasurer spoke to the new PSFB process for appointing architect firms to projects. He reviewed the letters received from the PSFB with respect to the Science Lab Renovations at both Neelin High School and Crocus Plains Regional Secondary School. Mr. Barnes answered questions regarding the size of the two projects and the cost of the two projects. The Committee reviewed the recommendations of the PSFB and agreed to take the recommendations to the Board of Trustees for approval.

**Recommendation:**

That MCM Architects Inc. be appointed Architects for the Neelin High School Science Lab Renovations.

That Samson Engineering Inc. be appointed Architects for the Crocus Plains Regional Secondary High School Science Lab Renovations.

**c) Capital Asset Plan**

The Secretary-Treasurer spoke to the proposal of Ameresco regarding capital asset management. He noted the benefits to the Division with respect to long term planning and budgeting. Mr. Barnes recommended the Division apply to the PSFB as a pilot project in the hopes of recovering some of the costs of the project. The Director of Facilities and Transportation noted he had conducted a number of reference checks. He confirmed the reference checks found the program to be very beneficial for long term funding, asset planning, asset record keeping and management. It was noted the cost of the program was \$38,000 with an additional fee of \$12,000 per year. The funds for the software could be taken from accumulated surplus while the funds set aside for contract services on a yearly basis would cover the cost of \$12,000 per year. Discussions were held regarding how the cost had been determined and the presentation which had been provided to Senior Administration by representatives of Ameresco. It was agreed the Committee would recommend purchasing the proposed services of Ameresco.

**Recommendation:**

That the proposal for a capital asset management plan from Ameresco be approved and that the software in the amount of \$38,000 be funded from accumulated surplus and the yearly contract services in the amount of \$12,000 be funded from the contracted services budget.

**d) Policy Review – Part 9**

The Secretary-Treasurer requested Policy and Procedures 9009 - "Transportation to Other Than Designated Schools be deferred until next meeting. When reviewing the policy the Secretary-Treasurer was asked to consider schools with unique programming and the number of students this would affect. As well consideration was to be given to the fact the Public Schools Act specifies 1.6 kms even though the regulations are different with respect to funding. The Secretary-Treasurer confirmed he would be taking the revised policy and procedures to Senior Administration before bringing it back to the Committee for review.

**e) Meadows School Elevator Project**

The Secretary-Treasurer spoke to the interview process which had taken place with respect to the choosing of an Architect for the Meadows School Elevator project. He noted the interview panel consisted of two representatives from the Public Schools Finance Board, the Director of Facilities and Transportation, and himself. He confirmed that MCM Architects Inc. had been recommended. The Committee discussed the new interview process. It was agreed the recommendation would be brought forward as a late motion to the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees to be held November 14, 2011.

**Recommendation:**

That MCM Architects Inc. be appointed architects for the Meadows School Elevator Project as approved by the Public Schools Finance Board.

**5. OPERATIONS INFORMATION**

- The Report from the Transportation Facilities Assistant regarding the completion of the fall emergency school bus evacuation drills was received as information.
- Trustee Karnes inquired as to why students take the City bus to Home Economic Classes and Industrial Arts Classes instead of the Division bussing them. The Secretary-Treasurer noted it was a cost factor and had been discussed in the past. He confirmed he would find the previous report for the Committee for their next meeting.
- The Secretary Treasurer noted the possibility of purchasing portables for the 2012-2013 school year had been discussed at Senior Administration. Space issues as a result of all-day/every-day kindergarten and class size caps for kindergarten to grade 3 classes were straining school capacity. Special programming needs were finding it difficult to acquire space in the schools. Discussions were held regarding the possibility of acquiring portables for clinicians and ancillary space rather than moving classrooms into the portables. It was agreed members of Senior Administration and representatives of the Facilities and Transportation Committee would travel to another Division to view the use of portables. The Director of Facilities and Transportation was asked to arrange the viewing of portables through the PSFB. The Director of Facilities and Transportation was also asked for information regarding the number of classrooms currently used for ancillary space. Mr. Clark confirmed that information was reflected in the Facilities Report and he would bring the information back to the Committee for their next meeting.
- Trustee Sefton asked the Director of Facilities and Transportation to check the lighting in the gym at Riverheights School as he will it was very dim. Mr. Clark confirmed he would follow-up on the matter.
- Trustee Murray raised a parent concern regarding why a special needs child was allowed to ride the bus but the older child could not. The Supervisor of Transportation confirmed he needed direction for Student Services to transport the child and recommended the parent contract Student Services.
- The Secretary-Treasurer provided a report on the status of the Joint Use Agreement. He confirmed he had met again with representatives of the City and was working on draft #3 of the agreement. The next step would be to take the draft agreement to Senior Administration, then the Division's solicitor before bringing the agreement back to the Committee. Mr. Barnes noted he had several concerns with respect to staffing the event; time of use of the facility; and using high school facilities during the week.
- Discussions were held regarding the Province's Class Size Steering Committee. It was noted the representatives of the Committee were the same people who had sat on the Report Card Committee. As no one from Brandon was on this committee, it was requested that the Minister of Education be advised that a member from the Brandon area would like to be on the Committee.

**6. NEXT REGULAR MEETING: 1:30 p.m., Wednesday, December 7, 2011.**

The meeting adjourned at 3:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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D. Karnes, Chair

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M. Sefton

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M. Snelling

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P. Bowslaugh (Alternate)