

**Green Mountain Unified School District Board
Special Meeting**

Wednesday, November 7, 2018

Superintendent's Office

6:00pm

I. ROLL CALL/CALL TO ORDER:

Board: Joseph Fromberger, Fred Marin, Jeff Hance, Doug McBride, Kathy Muther, Michael Studin, Rick Alexander

Staff: Cheryl Hammond, Lauren Fierman, Katherine Fogg, Jim Spaulding

Public: Chris Meyer, Tricia Parridy

Mr. Fromberger called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. APPROVE AGENDA:

Mr. Alexander **moved** to approve the agenda. Ms. Muther seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

III. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Snow Blowing Bids for GMUHS and CAES

Mr. Spaulding reported that he had asked Mr. Pisha, the town manager if the town could plow both schools and was told politely no. He was sent an email from the town manager and forwarded it to Ms. Hammond. Mr. Fromberger noted that that left them with the bids from Crown Point and M&M Excavating. Ms. Hammond reported that Crown Point's bid is based on the season, not per storm. The bid for GMUHS would be \$13,500 and for CAES it would be \$6000. That covers the entire season regardless of how many times it snows. M&M Excavating's bid was \$425 per plowing and \$400 per sanding application at GMUHS, and \$340 per plowing and \$310 per sanding application at CAES. She reported that over the last 2 winters there have been an average of 20 plowing sessions each winter. When that average is applied to M&M's bid, that would come out to \$16,500 for GMUHS and \$13,000 for CAES. She also reported that that rate is based on storms less than 9 inches. If the snow was more than 9 inches, they would come back and plow again. The board discussed Crown Point's bid being a known price, while M&M's is up in the air. Mr. McBride noted that they would have to have significantly less than 20 storms in the year for the M&M bid to come out better than the Crown Point bid—approximately 16 for GMUHS and about 9 for CAES. There was discussion about the grounds not necessarily needing sanding each time. There was also discussion about the Crown Point bid including salt, but not sand.

Mr. Hance noted that sand is easier on the floors. Mr. Spaulding noted that he often has to salt over the sand because a layer of moisture builds up and it becomes slippery. Mr. Hance noted that his concern with either company is their ability to remove the snow banks when the get to be too high. Mr. Spaulding noted that both companies have the ability to remove the snow. The board discussed the costs for snow bank removal. Ms. Hammond noted that as the snow begins to be plowed, Mr. Spaulding could work with them to let them know the best place for the snow banks to give them the best chance to not need them removed during the year. Mr. Spaulding noted that they had to shovel the roof last year which will require bank removal.

Ms. Parridy questioned what Crown Point's season is. Ms. Hammond explained that the bid says October 1 through April 30 is included. Mr. Studin **moved** to approve the Crown Point bid for a charge of \$13,500 for GMUHS and \$6000 for CAES for the season. Mr. Alexander seconded. Mr. Alexander questioned if the contract included return trips if necessary. Ms. Hammond reported that if a storm was large enough that a return trip was needed it would be billed at \$125 per hour. The motion carried unanimously.

B. CAES Update—Electrical Conduits

There was discussion about Naomi Johnson coming to this meeting, but she sent a letter in her stead. The board members reviewed her letter. Mr. Alexander suggested that Ms. Johnson's role as the project manager is to ensure that both electrical contractors work together to resolve the school's issues. There was discussion about the current electrical conduit. Mr. Alexander reported that the major difference between the copper and aluminum conduit is the life span. He explained that a master electrician would say that there is no difference for the next 20-30 years. However after that time, there can be break-down of the aluminum where the copper wouldn't break-down. Mr. McBride questioned if the copper is essentially "over building" where the aluminum is "proper building". He also noted that it seems like Ms. Johnson's letter indicates that the aluminum is a non-conforming bid. There was discussion about it being helpful if Ms. Johnson were present to explain. Mr. Marin noted that one of the main concerns is heat spreading at junctions. He also noted that copper is more flexible and resilient, whereas the aluminum could fracture with bending or with hot/cold alternations over time.

Mr. Spaulding called Ms. Johnson via speaker phone. Mr. Marin questioned if the standard concerns that exist in residential wiring need to be considered in this application and why she was recommending the copper over the aluminum. Ms. Johnson advised that they had asked for quotes for copper wiring and when the aluminum was what was offered. She noted that the electrical engineer had indicated to her that for this particular application, aluminum is not what is normally used. There was discussion about most of the electrical service work is outside, while most of the electrical conduit work is inside. There is minimal amounts of time that the company doing the electrical service work will need to be in the same place as the one doing the conduit work, and then only for the connections.

Mr. McBride questioned why HB's bid is nearly \$20,000 more than the competing bid. Ms. Johnson noted that they have not done an extensive background check on either company, but has worked occasionally with Wattsup. This is the first time she would be working with HB. There was a concern that the Wattsup contractor would be using the existing conduit. Ms. Johnson noted that she didn't believe that to be the case since the bid specifically asks for 2 4" diameter conduits provided by others. There was discussion about who is installing the 4" conduits. Ms. Johnson indicated that she could not see any reason for the major difference in price. There was discussion about when the maker test would be done again so they can identify any additional possible issues sooner rather than later. There was discussion about whether the insulation in the conduit was decaying prior to the flood and whether or not the conduit replacement might not be covered by the insurance. Mr. Studin suggested that Ms. Johnson be conferenced in when they attempt to negotiate with the insurance company. Ms. Johnson suggested that the electrical engineer should be on the conference call and agreed to help facilitate that with Mr. Spaulding.

There was discussion about why GMP was making the recommendations they were - in order to be upgradable in the future if necessary without having to re-dig since they were already digging a trench for the water main. There was discussion about M&M holding their price from September until now for installing the conduit. Ms. Johnson noted that when they realized that the conduit needed to be installed a certain distance from the water main, they received a price from

M&M for \$20,335. The decision was made at that time to not proceed with the conduit installation at that time. Now that GMP has made that recommendation, M&M is still willing to do that installation for the same price and the work is still within the window of completion before Thanksgiving. Ms. Fierman noted that it has been brought to her attention that some of the work will cut into the neighboring property. She suggested that if that is the case, the board needs to have a discussion with that property owner (which is her) before doing that work into the neighboring property. The GMP representative noted that this work should have been done back in September.

There was a clarifying question about the minutes indicating that the board had approved the bid for \$79,000 that the board had previously approved for the water line and electrical conduit. There was a question about whether the \$79,000 would have been reduced by the \$20,335 since they didn't end up installing the conduit in the same trench. Mr. Spaulding explained that the \$79,000 was for installing the conduit in the same ditch above the water line. What they learned however, was that it couldn't be in the same ditch—it needed to be moved over. Therefore M&M would need to make the ditch bigger—at a cost of \$20,335. The decision was made at that time not to make the trench bigger and install the conduit, since it wasn't thought to be a necessity. There was discussion about when GMP inspected the work and advised that they could not install the conduit over the water main. It was noted that the decision not to do the extra work at that time was not a board decision since the board was not asked about the \$20,335 expense until now.

Ms. Johnson clarified that when the decision was being made about the water line, the water line was the immediate concern. The recommendation at the time to install a conduit for the electrical service was only to save money in the future if they ever decided to upgrade the service since there was already being a trench dug. She noted that there was a design completed for the water main, but not completed for the electrical conduit. They simply asked the contractor for a price to install a conduit. She noted that M&M, because they have worked with GMP in the past, indicated that the conduit might pose a problem, but they were instructed to put a price in their bid for the conduit anyway so the board would have the information. She clarified that the price was based on the conduit being installed in the same trench but it still needed a design before the work could be completed. The original extra \$3000 was credited to the original quote, but alternative pricing was also given with the clarification that a larger trench was needed.

There was discussion about the bid completion date of November 12. Wattsup can't complete the work until 11/30. It was also noted that HB was asked if the price would be any lower if they extended the deadline to 11/30, but it will not reduce the cost. There was discussion about the 11/30 completion date meaning that there are concerns about the water freezing. Mr. Spaulding noted that he would need to rent a generator to run the heat to prevent freezing damage. There was discussion about the cost of the generator and the manpower to ensure that it is filled and running and whether that would be more than the \$18,000 difference in the bids. Mr. Spaulding noted that he did not think it would—the generator rental is about \$900 per week, the fuel costs should be an approximate wash with the fuel being saved, but the cost of the transfer switch installation is about \$2500.

There was a question about whether HB has already purchased some of the materials that the school would effectively be buying a 2nd time if they have Wattsup come in to do that work. Ms. Johnson noted that this work being discussed is not part of the prior scope of work, so if HB did purchase any equipment it was at their own risk. Ms. Fogg noted that she was advocating for getting the work done sooner rather than later.

Mr. McBride noted that step one of this decision making process is to discard the aluminum option. Ms. Johnson reminded the board that the electrical engineer advised that aluminum is not typical for this type of application.

Mr. Studin noted that if they take into account the cost of renting a generator for the 3 weeks difference between the quotes and the cost of the transfer switch installation, then there is effectively only a \$12,000 difference between the quotes. Now the question is, is \$12,000 worth getting the kids into their school sooner? Ms. Johnson noted that the request of the contractors was to complete the work by the week of 11/12, which means as late as 11/16, and the conduit isn't in the ground yet. It was also noted that the weather is already getting cold now and they will likely still need a generator with the earlier completion quote, so either way they will need the transfer switch. They also still need to have the rest of the work completed as well. There was discussion about making sure that the systems are fully tested before the move-in process is begun. Mr. Alexander noted that with a generator and transfer switch they will have heat and can begin looking at the peripherals. He also requested that a GMP representative speak to the difference between the copper and aluminum conduit. Mr. Meyer suggested making the decision after consulting with GMP since it may be that they can't start the work immediately, therefore if they can't, there is no sense choosing the company that can get their work done earlier if the electrical service to the building isn't even installed.

Mr. Studin **moved** to accept the bid from Wattsup Electrical for \$29,480 for the copper conduit installation. Mr. Hance seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. McBride requested that the school board or school administrators begin conversations with the neighboring property owner regarding the possible work that may need to be done on that property. There was discussion about the pole being owned by GMP and since it needs to be replaced, GMP should consider placing the pole completely on the school property. Either way they will need an easement from the property owner to do so. This is yet another possible delay. The GMP representative advised that they would like to get the anchor in the ground ASAP. GMP will draw up the easement, but if the school board would like to verbally advised that they would like the new pole set on the school property, GMP can begin the easement paperwork, as well as the plans for the pole anchor sooner rather than later. There was discussion about sending the easement to the attorney ASAP. The board discussed the language being standard and ordinary for this area.

Mr. Alexander **moved** to approve the easement that will be proposed by GMP pending review and approval by the school district's attorney, and if approved by the attorney, authorize the chair to sign the easement. Mr. Studin seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

There was a question about any concerns about mold from a community member. The board advised that it has already been reviewed and found ok. Mr. Meyer questioned if the board was going to decide about the generator need.

Mr. McBride **moved** to authorize Mr. Spaulding or maintenance personnel to spend the necessary money to heat the building to prevent loss in the building due to freezing, within a reasonable amount not to exceed \$5000. Ms. Muther seconded. Mr. McBride noted that this would allow Mr. Spaulding some flexibility with the generator and transfer switch. The motion carried unanimously. The GMP representative clarified that the generator would be in place until the work was completed.

IV. NEXT MEETING:

The next regular meeting will be on November 15 at CAES. If CAES is not available, the meeting will be at GMUHS.

V. ADJOURNMENT:

Ms. Muther **moved** to adjourn at 7:04pm. Mr. Studin seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amber Wilson
Board Recording Secretary