

BOND REIMBURSEMENT & GRANT REVIEW COMMITTEE

Monday, February 28, 2022

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

Committee Members Present

Heidi Teshner, Chair
Randy Williams
Dale Smythe
Jim Estes
Kevin Lyon
David Kingsland
Branzon Anania

Staff

Tim Mearig
Lori Weed
Sharol Roys
Wayne Norlund

Additional Participants

Dana Menendez, Anchorage SD
Larry Morris, Anchorage SD
Lon Garrison, Assoc. of AK School
Boards
Clay Anderson, Fairbanks Boro.
Randall Finkenbinder, Southwest
Region SD
Gary Eckenweiler, Bering Strait SD
Janet Smith, Fairbanks Boro.
Jonathan Shambare, Fairbanks Boro.
Damian Hill, Lake & Pen. Boro. SD
Chris Giron, SERRC
Carolyn Hamp for Rep. Ortiz

February 28, 2022

CALL TO ORDER and ROLL CALL

Chair Heidi Teshner called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m. Roll call was taken, and a quorum was established to conduct business. Sen. Roger Holland and Rep. Dan Ortiz were excused.

CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS

Chair Teshner welcomed all of the guests and said it was good to see all the members again since it's been some time since she had chaired the meeting.

AGENDA REVIEW/APPROVAL

Tim Mearig requested that the item titled "Approve for Public Comment" under Design Ratio Review be removed.

Dale Smythe **MOVED** to approve the agenda as amended, **SECONDED** by Branzon Anania. Hearing no opposition, the motion **PASSED**.

PAST MEETING MINUTES REVIEW/APPROVAL – December 2021

Randy Williams **MOVED** to approve the minutes from the December meeting, **SECONDED** by Dale Smythe. Hearing no opposition, the motion **PASSED**.

PUBLIC COMMENT

A public comment period was offered, and no public testimony was provided.

FY2024 CIP APPLICATION REVIEW

Sec. 4 Code/Life Safety/Protection of Structure Condition Matrix

Tim Mearig discussed the Life Safety Matrix paper, explaining that the first review strategy was a point-centric view that compared identical point values for certain conditions to adjacent scoring within a point of the current value. The purpose was to try to demonstrate a measurable difference in how those conditions should be scored. He identified nine conditions for review: Siding failure, age <25 yr; Elevator code deficiency; Sewage lagoon failure/exposure; Building egress; Intercom issues, WO >3/yr; HazMat (all) Mod exposures; Siding material, age >25yr; Fire alarm non-op > floors; and Roof leaks, avg WO >3/yr.

The second strategy was a system-centric view that examined the points available for each of eight systems categories as compared to total points available, and results were: Arch/Interior/ADA - 8.6%; Electrical - 13.4%; Fire Alarm/Sprinkler - 9.9%; Mechanical - 14.3%; Roof/Envelope - 15.4%; Site - 16.1%; Structural - 14.3%; and UST/AST/HazMat - 7.9%.

Randy Williams wondered if some of the point categories within each system could be moved or given new categories so there would not be over- or under-representation of points. After some discussion, he commented that, overall, the categories were fairly well distributed and made sense the way it was set up under this strategy.

The third strategy analyzed bonus points awarded for conditions identified by a licensed professional. Dale Smythe asked if the intent was to give more confidence in a deficiency if it had been submitted by a professional, and Tim said that was correct.

Branzon Anania expressed concern about the cost of hiring experts for small districts and wondered if there was a way to offset that cost for the smaller districts. Lori Weed said that a capable person could do a condition survey and submit a report and photographs to a professional who could substantiate the code deficiency.

Dale Smythe agreed that hiring a licensed professional is both difficult and expensive, and pointed out that unlicensed professionals in certain fields can provide expert opinions about code deficiencies at a fraction of the cost. Gary Eckenweiler agreed and provided an example of an expert who is a building leveler who has been the point person for engineers because he is so knowledgeable, but he is not a licensed professional. Tim Mearig noted that the place where the largest point difference between having a professional engineer or not is the structural category.

The fourth strategy concerns the analysis of single condition projects. Tim pointed out that the single condition projects can easily be outscored by projects with multiple minor conditions, and then a weighting factor adjustment is in order.

Tim noted that the purpose of this life safety matrix paper is to open the discussion. He said the matrix has worked well in the past and nothing stands out as being egregiously wrong. He wants to be sure that it is applied in a way that is consistent, helpful, and accurate.

Randy Williams asked if single condition projects were common. Lori Weed replied that roof projects are the most common, and right now they have about a dozen of those. Some of those

projects scored near the top because they were affecting space, in particular educational space. If a district repairs a leaky roof at its own expense, they typically get full design and get reimbursed. Wayne Norlund noted that there are various types of single condition projects other than roofs, such as elevator code compliance upgrade and foundation repair.

Sec. 9 Preventive Maintenance Matrices

Tim Mearig explained that the maintenance narratives set out the scoring criteria for each of five areas of maintenance and facility management and identifies areas where there was a problem with clarity or the requirements being provided accurately, or at all.

Tim outlined three options going forward:

1. Recognize and accept that the new matrix will influence scoring, but make adjustments to ensure attainable targets.
2. Focus more on narratives, and remove or reduce supporting documents.
3. Keep the matrix as is for the next rating period.

Randy Williams was in favor of option 1, which he interpreted as keeping it mostly the same but trying to tackle some of the more obvious disparities. Dale Smythe wanted more discussion before deciding in order to make sure that the less advantaged and smaller districts are not at a disadvantage. Branzon Anania said that energy reporting is difficult to assess monthly mostly because of lack of manpower, but said option 1 looked good to him. Kevin Lyon agreed that energy reporting is challenging, as is dealing with getting meters installed and then tying them into the building automation system. He also thought option 1 was the way to go. Gary Eckenweiler also favored option 1 over the other two stating that there is no reason to go with option 3, and getting the narratives for option 2 could be difficult.

Tim Mearig reviewed the 3-point requirements of the energy scoring criteria and noted that if a district does not have a standalone energy management guide or manual that has been updated in the last five years, they are excluded from getting the 3 points. He asked for feedback regarding how important a solid written program is for demonstrating energy management.

Gary Eckenweiler reported that Bering Strait has all the components but never compiled it and made a program. Dale Smythe predicted that the smaller districts have almost no one on staff that recognizes the importance of this or how to communicate a policy. Tim Mearig acknowledged that the larger the district, the more likely it was that some description of an energy program was going to include a policy, program structure, and roles. Lon Garrison said there are two model board policies regarding energy: policy 3510 speaks to maintenance, and policy 3511 regards energy conservation.

Tim Mearig clarified that the purpose of looking at these five areas is to assess the administrative load, which is significant even at level 3. Lori Weed asked Kevin Lyon to address the paperwork challenges for the application. Kevin replied that not all the reports that were requested were available. Also, the reports that were available with Utility Direct software were not available with the upgraded Energy Manager.

Branzon Anania looked at his district's energy policies, and both of them are very basic and were written in 1998, so need to be updated. He noted it would be nice if there was an easy way to put the package together.

Dale Smythe asked if there are practices that would facilitate reduction of paperwork. Tim Mearig replied that the department looks at every submittal to evaluate eligibility.

Branzon Anania **MOVED** to recognize and accept that the new matrix will influence scoring but work to adjust and ensure that there are fair targets established that are attainable, something like every district should be able to score a 3 with reasonable effort, or they can just call it option 1, **SECONDED** by Kevin Lyon. Hearing no objection, the motion **PASSED**.

DESIGN RATIO REVIEW

Chair Teshner noted that this position paper is not in the packet but was e-mailed to the members before the meeting. It is also available on the website.

Tim Mearig said that this paper was to provide the status of the design ratios and to assess whether the design ratios would be suitable for placement in Alaska Administrative Code. In order to be included in the regulations, the ratios need to be adequate, able to be defined, durable, and applicable across all project types.

Tim discussed the Building Volume to Exterior Surface Area (V:ES) ratio with respect to different building designs. If the building is elevated and has floor exposed to the ambient air, it makes a big difference in the ratio of the total surface area of the enclosure. Also, a two-story design exposes a lesser portion of the envelope to the environment. One solution would be to exclude the footprint area of the building so only the vertical walls [and roof] would contribute to the ratio since all schools have exterior walls and roofs, but not all schools have exposed floors.

Tim Mearig would like to have the design ratios have a public comment period before they are sent to the State Board of Education. Dale Smythe agreed and said that the subcommittee has two of the three ratios ready, and the V:ES could be ready. It was decided that the subcommittee will have the final ratios for the April meeting.

PUBLICATIONS

Capital Project Administration Handbook

Tim Mearig stated that this is the third edition of the publication, and some rearranging and additions have been made. Lori Weed briefly explained some of the changes as follows:

- Made the publication more applicable to both grant and debt projects;
- Added a section about the project agreement and identified some of the clauses; and
- Payments schedule for the grant was moved to an appendix.

Chair Teshner asked if this publication will be put out for public comment and if the committee will see it again in April. Lori Weed replied that was the plan.

Dale Smythe asked if the results of the validation survey were new. Lori said yes, it was a new survey as of December 2021 but in the same format as seen before.

Kevin Lyon **MOVED** that the Bond Reimbursement and Grant Review Committee approve the initial draft of the *Capital Project Administration Handbook* publication as presented and recommend that the department open a period of public comment, **SECONDED** by David Kingsland. Hearing no objections, the motion **PASSED**.

Alaska School Design & Construction Standards

Chair Teshner stated she was impressed with the number of individual comments that were received on this.

Tim Mearig introduced the four documents in the packet: cover memo, list of 67 items that the subcommittee considered, tally of 1100 individual comments from the initial document review, and an edited version of the handbook based on comment review.

Tim would like the committee to take two actions today. First, review and agree that the proposed responses are what the committee would like to see go back out to the commentors. Second, that the revised handbook be submitted for a second comment period.

Kevin Lyon thanked the subcommittee and everyone else who put in time and hard work in the preparation of this revised document.

Tim asked for comments in general but particularly on the following:

- Security cameras in classrooms.

Tim suggested the installation of security cameras in classrooms as a provisional item. The department had it listed as a premium item, not provisional. Branzon Anania asked if that could happen with teacher contracts and stated that cameras in hallways and other common areas are pretty common, but in the classroom, cameras might be a contract question. Also, Sharol Roys wondered if cameras in classrooms might be a HIPAA [FERPA] violation because anyone could look at the children. Tim stated that it would be left as a premium item.

- Accepted/appropriate classroom technologies and wired network support.

The question of classroom technologies and wired versus wireless was discussed. Tim referred to a comment that indicated wired structures are not needed because most schools have WiFi routers now. Dale Smythe disagreed and said there is still a place for hard data in schools, and he did not think it was going away and should not be excluded. Randy Williams asked if there were any security risks with WiFi as opposed to wired networks.

Tim read from the general use classroom as follows: Special systems in a general use classroom, phone/intercom, synchronized clock, interactive display, wireless Internet, duplex data ports approximately one per four students plus a teaching station. There were no offers or suggestions to rewrite or give a different opinion, so there were no changes to that section.

- Full operable partitions vs. communicating hinged double doors.

Tim noted that there were a couple of comments regarding the use of full height operable partitions allowing opportunity for flexible uses. Some comment responses indicate that this could be handled through the section that speaks to innovative design practices. Wants to provide

an opportunity for supporting of counter views. Operable partitions do not seem to have been very durable in use or function in Alaska schools, but that is not a fully vetted position.

Gary Eckenweiler agreed; they had an architect who wanted a bunch of flexible rooms with dividers that roll across. The few they've had over the years were taken out and made solid walls; partitions lack in durability and sound control.

Dale Smythe stated that he can't argue with the durability and maintenance issues; however, if designed correctly with the right support, backing, and product, which is not cheap, they can perform, and you do get double use from the space. Dale offered that partitions are not appropriate for classrooms, but there are two areas they work well. The first is separating a stage area from a multipurpose room or gym, so that it can be used as a music or other classroom when the stage is not in use. The second is in a small school with a home economic-style classroom adjacent to the gym, and the partition allowed it to function as a cafeteria. That partition was a motor-operated, vertically folding partition, not cheap but within budget, and it has performed well.

Branzon Anania said that Southeast Island School District has two schools with these that don't get a lot of use but have held up well. It is a neat option for smaller schools. An effective use is off their library, and the space doubles as an office. But where he's seen it used to divide general classrooms it gets beat up a lot more.

Lori Weed summarized that people have agreed for general classroom use it should remain premium, but it works better in support spaces. Tim Mearig observed that it may be challenging to put it into certain categories of where it's not possible. He hadn't considered an upward acting vertical door. One reason that the partitions may not have worked well in some buildings, is the amount of movement, particularly for buildings on piles.

- Headbolt heaters.

Headbolt heaters are listed as provisional in climates 8 and 9 and 50 percent of staff in Zone 7. No one gets a headbolt heater in Zone 6 as a state-funded item. Gary Eckenweiler said that in the Bering Straits, that's more than adequate, especially since there are not a lot of cars and trucks in the villages. Clay Anderson reported that Fairbanks has headbolt heaters in both the staff and student parking lots, and they cycle on and off automatically every 15 minutes.

- Support of renewable or combined-heat-power energy systems.

Currently anything that a district chooses to do with alternative renewable energy is treated as a premium item at district expense. Tim explained that much of the renewable energy is still experimental in Alaska, even in the area of wood fired boilers, which the department has not funded in the past.

Dale Smythe imagined that the department's position is to have both the school's first cost and operational cost be as low as possible, and he questioned what the difference would be between that ultra-efficient boiler versus a standard boiler. He also pointed out that a wind turbine would be difficult for a school to maintain, but a wood fired boiler might make a lot of sense.

Branzon Anania said it would be nice if there was something that said if you have an existing experimental system and you build a new building, being able to tie that into your new building would be helpful.

Dale Smythe stated that if the project can afford it, that should not be limited. Tim Mearig stated that these determinations are not based on whether or not the project can afford it. The question is, is this an element of cost-effective school construction?

Randy Williams asked why this language is proposed to be added, because the premium section already speaks to alternative energy and renewable energy. Tim thought the earlier design background information might have addressed that. He asked Randy what his reaction was to the specific comment about making provisions for electrical equipment to include renewable energy systems or combined heat power systems as a provisional factor. Randy replied that it's the cost of providing that intertie after it's already been built that becomes a problem, but he thought that it was established that the state does not want to be funding that.

Tim said that there are a few schools where plate heat exchangers were installed in advance of them hooking up to an alternative renewable energy source, and the state has funded that piece of equipment on a life cycle cost basis.

Randy Williams pointed out that High Performance Building, Premium item 19 lists, "On-site harvesting of renewable energy such as wind and solar," so the state would not participate in that funding.

Randy Williams **MOVED** that BR&GR approve the proposed review comments as revised for distribution, **SECONDED** by Dale Smythe. Hearing no objections, the motion **PASSED**.

Kevin Lyon **MOVED** that the Bond Reimbursement and Grant Review Committee approve the updated draft of the school design and construction documents as edited for a second period of public comment, **SECONDED** by Dale Smythe. Hearing no objections, the motion **PASSED**.

COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS

- Branzon Anania thanked and appreciated everybody's hard work on everything they got through today.
- Kevin Lyon thanked everyone and asked for smaller packets if possible.
- James Estes thanked the department and subcommittee for their expertise and for a lot of tedious work. The committee is educational and fun to be a part of.
- Dale Smythe also thanked everyone and mentioned the 357-page packet, which was a lot of work. He thanked all the volunteers and stated he's proud to be a part of it.
- Randy Williams liked everyone's comments thus far, and said he was glad to be a member.
- Chair Teshner thanked all the members and non-members for all their work and made the following announcements:
 - The Annual School Capital Project Funding report was transmitted to the legislature today, so that should be posted on the Facilities website soon.

- Tomorrow and Wednesday the State Board of Education will meet and will review and hopefully approve the school construction and major maintenance grant fund list.
- Hopefully the State Board will put out for public comment an amendment to the School Facility Planning and Construction regulations to be adopted through regulation at June's meeting. The three publications were:
 - *Guidelines to School Equipment Purchases;*
 - *Swimming Pool Guidelines for Educational Facilities;*
 - *Site Selection Criteria and Evaluation Handbook.*

Chair Teshner further commented and appreciated that the committee has been supported through this meeting the Facilities staff of Tim Mearig, Lori Weed, Sharol Roys, and Wayne Norlund, as well as Wayne Marquis who is absent today.

The next meeting is scheduled for April 19th and 20th in Juneau.

MEETING ADJOURNED

Chair Teshner adjourned the meeting at 4:17 p.m.