

## Minutes – Strategic Growth Task Force Meeting February 2, 2015

### **Attendees:**

Rick Nelson  
Jason Ulbrich  
April Grabanski  
Randy Vetsch  
Ann Watanabe  
Pete Larson  
Amanda Weidner  
Melanie Baier  
Karen Conner  
Janice Gerheart  
Kirsten Walker  
Martha Duclos  
Kate Williams  
Manisha Datye  
John Schwirtz  
Jeff Mein

### **Agenda**

1. Discuss the facility selection process , Jason
2. Discuss the facility criteria, , Jason
3. Review the properties that we researched and visited, Rick
4. Use facility criteria to determine if the Bren Road and/or Lincoln properties meet our needs, Jason
5. Advise board chair and ABC chair on purchase agreement, Ann & Randy
6. Community Engagement Committee, Jason
7. Architect Selection, Randy

A copy of the minutes from the July 28, 2014 SGTF meeting was provided as a handout for reference.

**Item 1: Facility Selection Process:** J Ulbrich provided a handout detailing the ERA facility process. The SGTF determined the site criteria. The SGTF provided the site and search criteria to the broker. The search committee consist of J Ulbrich, R Vetsch, A Weidener, and K Conner. The Board approved a Purchase Agreement Template. The purchase agreement offer will be made; this will start the due diligence process. SGTF will present their findings to The Board who then consider final approval.

**Item 2: Discuss Facility Criteria:** A handout highlighting the facility criteria was provided by J Ulbrich, the location criteria was organized into three subgroups at the July 28<sup>th</sup> meeting. The subgroups are as follows: proximity, Market, and Neighborhood. It was determined that a minimum of 170 thousand square feet was needed for a one site campus as well as sufficient land for green space and parking. Site criteria information was gathered from a survey of the current ERA community including staff as well as the families on the waitlist for the 2014-15 school year. Site and search criteria was provide to the broker.

**Item 3: Review Properties That We Researched and Visited:** A Handout highlighting the suspect properties was provided by R Nelson. 5 sites were visited by the site search committee. Of the 5 sites, 3 met the facility criteria determined by the SGTF. J Ulbrich and the broker contacted Chanhassen, Mtka, and Edina; the cities in which the sites are located. A favorable response was received from Edina and Mtka. There is a possible tenant for the Lincoln site and the owners are not open to negotiation until April 1, 2015. It was asked that a price for the Chanhassen site is secured and attempted engagement with the city is continued.

**Item 4: Use facility Criteria to Determine if the Bren Road and or Lincoln Properties Meet Our Needs:** The SGTF will keep an eye on the Lincoln site. The Bren Road site meets the selection criteria. It has 210 thousand square feet, sufficient green space and parking. The property has full height windows and the depth of the building will allow for classrooms with natural light. The ceiling height of 32 feet could accommodate a gymnasium/auditorium. Column spacing is wide allowing for flexibility in classrooms. It has a full size kitchen and skylights. It is not currently zoned for a school but is zoned for public use. It sits on the edge of Opus, allowing easy traffic access. A site visit with the architect will be scheduled. R Nelson advised to start the process sooner rather than later to allow 12 months for construction to be completed as there are labor and material shortages in this area.

**Item 5: Advise Board Chair and ABC Chair on Purchase Agreement:** It was recommended that a purchase agreement is made on the Mtka site. A vote was taken, K Williams voted no, A Watanabe deferred, all others present voted yes. K Williams would like to see the site before agreeing to a purchase agreement and asked to be put on the site search committee. The purchase agreement will start the due diligence process set forth in the Eagle Ridge Academy Facility Process. A tour of the Mtka facility is scheduled for Friday, February 06, 2015.

**Item 6: Community Engagement Committee:** A community engagement committee was established to keep the community informed and participating in the facility process. The architects will help with the community engagement process. The committee members are as follows: Jason Ulbrich, Randy Vetsch, Kelly Schiffman, Martha Duclos, Melanie Baier, Janice Gerheart, and April Grabanski. The committee will be responsible for such things as tours, website updates, town hall meetings, and etcetera.

**Architect Selection:** The Architect Search Committee completed a thorough search, receiving packets from 5 different architectural firms. The committee conducted interviews with 4 of the firms and narrowed the selection down to 2 candidates. Both candidates toured the Lincoln Drive site and then presented to the committee. The process was very beneficial to learn how each firm thinks and processes. After the search the committee choose Rivera Architectural Firm, they have a long list of design experience with charter schools in MN and a thorough knowledge of MDE. Their children also attend Nova in St Paul, giving them a unique perspective on the needs of a charter school community.

**The next SGTF meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 2<sup>nd</sup> at 5:30 pm.**