

SOUTH KINGSTOWN SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

Kate Macinanti
Chair
Brian Mahoney
Vice-Chair
Brian Silvia
Member
Lucas Murray
Member
James Manni
Town Manager



Terry Lynch
Member
Chip McGair
Member
David Palazzetti
Member
Michael Podraza
Superintendent

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EVENT DETAILS

TOPIC:	School Building Committee - Regular Meeting
DATE/TIME:	Thursday, January 09, 2025 @ 6:30 PM
LOCATION:	Town Council Chambers, 2 nd Floor, 180 High Street, Wakefield, RI
LIVESTREAM:	https://www.youtube.com/@sksbc/streams

MEETING MINUTES

Item	Topic
1.	<p>Call to Order/Roll Call:</p> <p>Members Present: Kate Macinanti, Brian Mahoney, Brian Silvia, Lucas Murray, Terry Lynch, Robert Littlefield, Chip McGair, David Palazzetti, James Manni, Terrence Connolly from Leftfield, Phil Conte from Studio JAED and Gilbane representative.</p> <p>The meeting was called to order at 6:34 PM by Kate Macinanti. Roll call was conducted, and a quorum was established.</p>
New Business Items:	
2.	<p>General Public Correspondence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correspondence Received: The committee acknowledged receipt of public correspondence related to the school building projects, particularly around HVAC systems and geothermal energy. Elizabeth Hoy's correspondence regarding the reconsideration of geothermal systems was noted, and the committee agreed to revisit the topic in future discussions. • Discussion: The committee reviewed the correspondence and noted that Elizabeth Hoy had provided detailed cost analysis and information on geothermal systems. The committee agreed to include this topic in the next meeting's agenda for further discussion.

3.	<p>Discussion: Cumulative Meeting Minutes Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary: The committee reviewed the status of meeting minutes updates led by Brian Mahoney. It was reported that all meeting minutes up to December 6, 2024, have been posted on the school district’s website. Three meetings remain to be finalized and posted, and they are currently in process. • Discussion: Brian Mahoney mentioned that the delay in posting the remaining minutes was due to the need for additional review and approval. • Action: The committee agreed to ensure the remaining minutes are posted promptly. The chair requested that the secretary follow up with the relevant parties to expedite the process.
4.	<p>Discussion/Action: Next Steps and Further Direction Around Pay-Go and Cost Reduction Strategies from Town Council Regarding Project Funding Gap</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary: The committee discussed the funding gap for the school building projects and explored cost reduction strategies led by Brian Mahoney. The focus was on the potential savings from geothermal systems versus traditional HVAC systems. Elizabeth Hoy’s detailed cost analysis was reviewed, and the committee debated the long-term financial implications of each option. • Key Points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Geothermal vs. HVAC: The geothermal system was noted to be slightly more efficient but not significantly enough to justify the higher upfront costs without additional subsidies. ○ Long-Term Costs: The committee discussed the lifecycle costs of both systems, including maintenance and replacement over 25-50 years. ○ Reimbursement Rates: The reimbursement rates for geothermal systems were discussed, with concerns raised about the feasibility of securing sufficient subsidies. • Discussion: Members debated the pros and cons of each system, with few members advocating for the long-term benefits of geothermal despite the higher initial costs. Others expressed concerns about the financial burden and the need for more data on potential subsidies. • Action: The committee decided to continue exploring both options and requested further data on long-term cost savings and potential subsidies. A follow-up discussion was scheduled for the next meeting.
5.	<p>Discussion/Action: Approval to Submit SKHS Building Schematic Design to RIDE School Building Authority for Review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary: The committee reviewed the schematic design for the South Kingstown High School (SKHS) building project. The design includes plans for new athletic fields, HVAC systems, and other facility upgrades. • Key Points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reimbursement Process: The committee discussed the reimbursement process through the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) School Building Authority. It was noted that 35% of the project costs would be reimbursed initially, with potential for up to 50% reimbursement upon project completion. ○ Timeline: The committee emphasized the importance of submitting the design promptly to avoid delays in the reimbursement process. • Discussion: A detailed overview of the schematic design, highlighting key features such as energy-efficient HVAC systems, improved athletic facilities, and enhanced classroom spaces. Members asked questions about the timeline for reimbursement and the potential impact of delays on the project budget. • Motion: A motion was made by Brian Mahoney and seconded by Terry Lynch to approve the submission of the SKHS building schematic design to RIDE for review. • Vote: The motion passed unanimously.
6.	<p>6. Discussion: Curtis Corner Athletic Fields Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary: The committee reviewed the progress on the Curtis Corner athletic fields project. Updates included plans for new parking areas, pickleball courts, and synthetic fields. • Key Points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Parking and Access: The design includes a new entrance off First-Foot Road to improve access to the fields. ○ Synthetic Fields: The synthetic fields were discussed, with an emphasis on their durability and long-term cost savings. ○ Restrooms and Concessions: Plans for new restrooms and concessions were reviewed, with a focus on improving visitor experience.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion: Terry Lynch provided a detailed update on the progress of the athletic fields project, including the timeline for completion and the budget. Members asked questions about the cost of synthetic fields versus natural grass and the potential for additional funding from community partnerships. • Action: The committee approved the current design and requested further updates on cost estimates for the next meeting.
7.	<p>Community Comment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Comments: Several community members (Elizabeth Hoy) expressed concerns about the cost of the geothermal system and its long-term benefits. Others voiced support for the athletic fields project, emphasizing the need for improved facilities for students. • Response: The committee acknowledged the comments and reiterated their commitment to exploring all options to ensure cost-effectiveness and community benefit. Chair Kate Macinanti thanked the community members (Mr. Beasley) for their input and assured them that their concerns would be taken into consideration in future discussions.
8.	<p>Discussion/Action: Future Meetings and Agenda Topics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary: Discussion Led by Kate Macinanti, the committee discussed future meeting dates and agenda items. The next meeting was scheduled for January 16, 2025, with a focus on further cost reduction strategies and updates on the SKHS building project. • Discussion: Members suggested additional topics for future meetings, including updates on the geothermal system analysis and a review of the athletic fields budget. • Motion: A motion was made by Brian Silvia and seconded by Lucas Murray to approve the proposed agenda and meeting date. • Vote: The motion passed unanimously.
9.	<p>Adjourn</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motion: A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Kate Macinanti and seconded by Chip McGair. • Vote: The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:11 PM.