



CALL TO ORDER:

Mr. Stone called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Mr. Stone recognized Mrs. Curtis for filling in for today's meeting in Sam's absence.

PRESENT:

Superintendent Steven Stone, Nicholas Botelho, Dr. Rebecca Duda, Stefanie Fields, Katharine Foster (arrived at 4:05), Andrew Graham, Kate Hodges (arrived at 4:05) Michael LaCava, Dave Martin, Barbara O'Connor, Dennis Piendak, Robert Sheppard, Josh Taylor, Phil Thibault, Dr. Linda Trouville, Renee Young

OTHERS PRESENT:

John Abbot, LiRo-Hill
Dennis Grudkowski, Mount Vernon Group Architects
Paul Kalous, LiRo-Hill
Susan Taylor, Mount Vernon Group Architects
Frank Tedesco, Mount Vernon Group Architects
Cynthia Curtis, Recording Secretary

ABSENT:

Michael Pestana

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. Motion by Mr. Piendak, seconded by Dr. Trouville to approve the July 16, 2025 meeting minutes.

Under discussion, Mr. Sheppard would like to amend the minutes to add "with a waiver" after "he stated this fifty-foot buffer was just passed at town meeting".

Mr. Stone requested that under absent, to remove Mary Carney. Dr. Carney is the new Principal at Greenmont and has not been appointed to this Board.

2. Motion by Mr. Piendak, seconded by Dr. Trouville to approve the July 16, 2025 minutes with the proposed amendments.

Vote: Unanimously Approved

Mr. Stone asked for a motion to approve the minutes of August 6, 2025. It was discussed that the amendments made were for the August 6th meeting and not the July 16th meeting.

3. Motion by Mr. Piendak, seconded by Mr. Sheppard to approve the August 6, 2025 minutes with the two proposed amendments.

Vote: Unanimously Approved

A second vote on the July 16 meeting minutes.

Motion by Mrs. Young, seconded by Dr. Trouville to approve the July 16, 2025 meeting minutes.

Vote: Unanimously Approved

AGENDA ITEMS: Review and approve July invoices

Copies of invoices were not made available in advance for review. This item was tabled until the next meeting.

Project update: Budget

Mr. Kalous reviewed the budget spreadsheet. A draft was presented at the last meeting as informational. No votes were taken due to lack of a quorum. There have been some adjustments made to the budget since the last meeting, as it was mentioned at the previous meeting there would be.

Kate Hodges and Katharine Foster entered the meeting.

As presented previously, this budget format, provided by MSBA, is the crux of the funding agreement for the construction of any school in the Commonwealth. This spreadsheet has a number of formulas that massage the value of what that reimbursement is going to be. Mr. Kalous mentioned that the MSBA works extremely hard to make sure that every community in the State has to go through exactly the same thing so that no school district gets more than another and every community is treated exactly the same as how MSBA dispenses the money for their projects. The form contains the costs of the project, costs that are eligible for reimbursement and the ones that are ineligible. With that, a community has to vote for the entire budget as it is presented.

The proposed budget includes item description, estimated budget, and subsequent columns as to what is eligible, what's ineligible, and what the grant amount is that might be connected with the line item. Mr. Kalous reviewed the sections of the budget including:

Feasibility Study Agreement which is the work of the group for the past two years which include the feasibility study, schematic design and consultant fees which totals \$1 million and is handled under a separate funding agreement, but it gets incorporated into the funding agreement for the whole school at the end.

- Legal Fees are not reimbursable from MSBA. This is included under administrative costs.
- Other sections of the budget spreadsheet include the Owner's Project Manager category, Architecture and Engineering for the project.
- Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment (FF&E) and Technology are considered soft costs. Anything that's in construction is considered a hard cost.

MSBA has a limit for the amount of money that can be spent on soft costs of 20%, and they do not reimburse greater than that. In completing this spreadsheet, Mr. Kalous said they stayed underneath the 20%.

Under the Construction category, the line items are all the things that build the building, and the trades, the actual labor, bricks, mortar, carpentry, etc. that bring up the sum total.

Site work is a separate category. MSBA only pays for some of the site work. MSBA pays \$59 per square foot for the size of the building towards the site work. Previously it was a percentage, now it is a flat rate. With 158,100 square feet, that is the amount of eligible dollars towards site work.

Also included is the various design pricing contingency. This is for all of the things that the designers have in mind but not designed as of yet. Some of the \$13,582,000 will migrate up to the other line items for the things that were actually counted off in drawings that were provided. Additional items include insurance, general conditions, cost for temporary fences, temporary bathrooms, office trailer during construction, and other similar items.

The escalation to mid-point construction includes an escalation rate per year following the trend, which is approximately 4% per year. In addition to that, they tried to estimate potential tariffs on the project.

The budget document also includes miscellaneous utility costs, testing services for testing of all materials that go into the building and testing the suitability of the site to be able to accept the building, such as compaction of soil, compaction for roadways, strength of concrete, x-ray of welds on steel, testing windows, etc. There is also a line item of \$150,000 for mailing and moving.

There is an estimate for furnishings and equipment of 2,850,000. This is an itemized estimate for all the tables, chairs, equipment, snowblowers, lifts to reach higher areas, and other items. The technology line is for switches and items that would fall under technology. The project budget, without owner's contingencies, is \$166,216,560.

There is a total of \$37,688,000 of items that are not eligible for grant reimbursement. MSBA pays \$586 per square foot for the building. The spreadsheet shows the amount of money that is eligible for site work. MSBA may have judgments when reviewing. Roughly \$37 million is going to be deemed not eligible by the MSBA based on their regulations. Mr. Kalous reported that as of today, the new reimbursement is now 58.41%. This new percentage will be reflected in the spreadsheet.

There is a total of 5.45 incentive points. These incentive points are given to the town for 1.45 incentive points for maintenance. Mr. Kalous complimented Andrew Graham for his good work of tracking work that has to be done, when it needs to be done, on all the buildings, and that all work gets done. The other four points are the green building incentives, which is going to be helped out by the fact that there would be a geothermal system that would reduce the electrical use. Also, of those four points, one of those points is for air quality in the building, which is something that would be done anyway, and providing electric vehicle charges that amount to 10% of the parking spots.

Of the projected budget of \$166,216,560 there are ineligible items. The maximum basis of the grant is \$128,527,000 times the reimbursement rate of 63.82. The estimated facility grant is \$82,026,000. There are also owners and construction contingencies which MSBA pays up to 1% on these contingencies. According to the calculation from the formula, the total grant from the MSBA will be \$83,369,980 for Dracut. Mr. Kalous indicated there could be some small tweaks to the budget.

Mr. Taylor indicated he wanted the budget in advance and it was not received until Tuesday evening and the one received is different from the one presented in some categories and Mr. Taylor asked that the document be dated. Mr. Taylor asked why the \$100,000 for legal purposes was not categorized with the \$37 million not reimbursable. Under the construction category, exterior windows and exterior doors are listed with no amount.

Mr. Kalous apologized for not sharing the budget sooner as they were still making changes which makes the presentation different from what was shared prior to the meeting. The date is included on the document. Mr. Abbot responded about the windows and doors and stated the way the estimates are done are indicated within the exterior shell of the building estimate. Mr. Sheppard asked what percentage would be windows and doors. Mr. Abbot will have to inquire. Mr. Kalous stated if the legal costs were left in legal the cost would not be reimbursable and if placed in other administrative the money could be used and there is room under the 20% soft costs.

Mrs. Hodges inquired about the \$5,613,948 in ineligible construction contingency. Mr. Kalous indicated that after sharing the draft document, they continued to review the line items and filling in what would possibly be ineligible to present to the Committee before submission to MSBA. Mrs. Hodges inquired about the 35 EV chargers on site and if this was not part of the plan how much less would be the reimbursement. Mr. Kalous responded it would be a substantial loss of 1% incentive point.

Mr. Martin inquired about estimating the cost based on square footage and not knowing the cost of materials, cost of electrical, plumbing, structural materials, etc. Mr. Tedesco stated there is a detailed list of cost estimates and the detailed list was transposed into this spreadsheet. Mr. Abbot stated the Committee has seen the detailed list. Mr. Sheppard confirmed the detailed list was shared at a previous meeting. Mr. Thibault stated the total number is presented to MSBA and the design team works from that number back down. Mr. Tedesco stated the next phase is design development where more information is made available.

Mr. Sheppard stated contingencies are added and there is no way to encompass all the fine line details for all line items at this stage. Mr. Sheppard was thankful for the level of detail provided.

Mr. Sheppard made a motion to take the adjacent access update out of order on the agenda before the vote on schematic design.

Schedule

Prior to a vote, Mr. Stone asked the architects for a review of the drawings. The presentation included the Feasibility and Schematic Design Schedule, site plan, landscape site plan, floor plans, exterior elevations, exterior and interior renderings, schematic design MSBA submission table of contents, and meeting schedules.

5. Motion by Mr. Sheppard, seconded by Mrs. Young to take the adjacent access update out of order on the agenda before the vote schematic design.

Vote: Unanimously Approved

Adjacent Access Update: Mr. Sheppard commented Lot 64 has conservation restrictions that are owned by Dracut Land Trust that allows for public access. In the letter from the Attorney, they recommend acquiring the parcel through eminent domain. Mr. Sheppard stated the Committee thought the town owned the parcel. In the GIS website the owner is listed as the Town of Dracut. Mr. Sheppard stated this needs to be corrected as it is unsure of who owns the parcel. Mr. Sheppard stated its of beneficial interest for the Town to own this parcel, continue to maintain it and continue to work with the Dracut Land Trust. Mr. Sheppard stated this is supposed to be common land, owned by an HOA, that he does not believe exists and would like further information to be looked at by the Board of Selectmen. There is also a parcel to the east, 1091 Methuen Street, which was presented by Alison Manugian at a previous meeting when she questioned why this parcel was being chosen at 109 Bellevue. Mr. Sheppard stated both lots are beneficial to the project.

Motion by Mr. Sheppard, seconded by Mr. Martin, to recommend the properties known as 1091 Methuen Street and 64 Draycott Avenue on the Dracut GIS to the Board of Selectmen for acquisition by all legal means necessary to benefit the development of this school project.

Mr. Thibault, Mrs. Hodges, Ms. Foster, Ms. O'Connor and Mr. Taylor opposed.

Discussion continued on this topic. Mr. Sheppard stated the motion is to have this go before the Board of Selectmen as documents for 64 Draycott Avenue do not line up. GIS does not match documents and at some point, parcels were acquired and then given back. Mr. Sheppard stated this needs to be resolved whether the Board of Selectmen take action or not to acquire the parcels. 1091 Methuen Street was recommended by Alison Manugian and would like to continue forward with her recommendation. Mr. Sheppard stated, according to GIS, the town owns Lot 64.

Mrs. Hodges stated GIS is incorrect and it is a third-party service. The Town can reach out to them to have this corrected. Mrs. Hodges commented on the high costs associated with obtaining Lot 64 and not as simple as eminent domain. Dr. Duda asked if taking the other lots would change the design. Mr. Sheppard stated the design could change with the acquisition of land. Mr. Sheppard stated as of now there is access for emergency vehicles for Lot 64 and there is currently an allowance for trails and Dracut Land Trust is allowed to expand the trail width greater than 4 feet. Mrs. Hodges disagreed. Mr. Sheppard referenced the letter from the town attorney which states they advised the town to take the property by eminent domain subject to an agreement where Southern End Realty waives any damages resulting of the taking, i.e., friendly taking. Mrs. Hodges responded that the Dracut Land Trust and the State must have no objections to bringing forward to them that they put in a conveyance and restriction without having the legal authority to

do so. Mrs. Hodges said the town would have to go to the State and Land Trust and have them relinquished. Mr. Taylor stated the Board of Selectmen has seen the letter from legal counsel.

Mr. Piendak offered an amendment to the motion as he does not know, as a member of the Permanent Building Committee, if they are in a position to recommend the Board of Selectmen to do something. Mr. Piendak amends the motion to request the Town look at the avenues of improving access to the property with those sites without a time limit. Mr. Piendak stated it can be done anytime and the Town can always acquire land during a project. Mr. Sheppard and Mr. Martin accept the amendment. Mr. Martin stated it is important to look at this moving forward for the safety of the school staff and children, police, fire and ambulance. It was stated the access road is

58 feet wide. Mr. Piendak stated that a typical sub-division road is 40 feet wide with two 12-foot travel lanes and a sidewalk. Mr. Piendak compared this to Lakeview Avenue which is 60 feet wide with travel lanes, center lane and shoulders on each side. Mrs. Hodges reiterated it would be costly and not as simple as eminent domain. Mr. Taylor commented this is the first that 1091 Methuen Street has been mentioned and acquiring Lot 64 is not the issue, seeking ownership is simple but it is getting permission to use it that is an issue as for years things have not been done correctly in regard to this property. Mr. Stone stated the motion is to have the investigation continued more deeply by the Town.

Mr. Piendak asked for an amendment to the motion to request the Town look at the possible acquisition and/or access through the property sites of 1091 Methuen Street and 64 Draycott Avenue to enhance the facility without tying up the project.

Mr. Taylor asked about funding if this will be part of the project or through town meeting. Mr. Piendak said it could be and referenced when building the town hall there were two properties that were funded out of the project budget. Mr. Taylor said if town meeting a motion needs to be put together for November. Mr. Piendak responded his intent is not that this has to be done now.

6. Motion by Mr. Sheppard, seconded by Mr. Martin, to amend the original motion to request the Town look at the possible acquisition and/or access through the property sites of 1091 Methuen Street and 64 Draycott Avenue to enhance the facility without tying up the project to benefit the development of this school project. Vote: Motion passes with two abstentions

Mrs. Hodges indicated that she and Ms. Foster must abstain as they cannot instruct the Board of Selectmen to do something.

Vote Schematic Design:

7. Motion by Mrs. Young, seconded by Mr. Sheppard that the Owner's Project Management team submit the Campbell School Schematic Design in accordance with MSBA requirements for this submittal, as prepared by Mount Vernon Group Architects to the Massachusetts School Building Authority. The new Campbell Elementary School will replace the existing Joseph A. Campbell School and the Greenmont Avenue School.

This Schematic Design is of a new school for 860 Kindergarten through Grade 5 students plus Pre-Kindergarten. It is approximately 158,100 square feet in size with associated site development, furniture and technology. With consultants and contingencies, the total project budget is \$178,146,199 and currently scheduled for occupancy for the 2029-2030 school year.

Roll Call Vote: Mr. Thibault, Yes Mr. Piendak, Yes Mr. Martin, Yes Ms. Foster, No Mrs. Hodges, No Mr. Graham, Yes Ms. O'Connor, No Mr. Taylor, Yes Mrs. Young, Yes Mr. Botelho, Yes Mr. LaCava, Yes Mrs. Fields, Yes Mr. Sheppard, Yes Dr. Trouville, Yes Dr. Duda, No Mr. Stone, Yes Motion Passes 12-4

Community Input: No Community Input

Schedule The next meeting is scheduled for September 3, 2025. Mr. Stone asked if there is any anticipation of significant votes as this is the first day of school. Mr. Kalous indicated it will be informational items on the agenda and vote on invoices.

ADJOURNMENT:

8. Motion by Dr. Duda, seconded by Dr. Trouville to adjourn the School Building Committee.
Vote: Unanimously Approved

The School Building Committee Meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m.