COMMUNITY CENTER BUILDING COMMITTEE
MEETING AGENDA

6:00 PM THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2025

GRANT HOUSE

- **Call to Order**
- **Public Comments**
- **Approval of Minutes of October 16, 2025**
- **Public Input Session**
- **Capital Campaign**
- **Discussion of Capital Committee Presentation**
- **Site Plan and Discussion**
- **Other Items**
- **Action Items and Next Meeting Date**

COMMUNITY CENTER BUILDING COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

6:00 PM THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2025

GRANT HOUSE

6:00 PM – Regular Community Center Building Committee

Present: David Cohen, Greg Fyfe, Adam Gould, Bill Olsen, Richard Raimondi, Gregory Schwab, Brianna Scott, Peter Murray (ex-officio), Robert Palmer (ex officio) and Jacqueline Crafts (alternate)

Absent: No one

Others Present: Eliza Bird (York resident and parent), Todd A. Frederick (Selectboard Chair), Julie Kelbert (Chair, York School Committee) and Lynn Preble (York resident and parent)

Call to Order

Chair Olsen called the meeting to order at 6 pm.

1) Public Comments

Olsen called for any comments from the public members in attendance. The following people spoke:

A. Preble stated that she moved to York a year ago and was dismayed that a beach community did not have a public facility for year-round swimming lessons, water aerobics and water safety training. She said that one is needed for the citizens' health and safety; and
B. Bird advocated for an indoor pool and walking track. As a mother of a 12-year-old daughter, she said that she has to drive all over for swimming lessons and pool access.

Murray presented the following posted public comment concerning CCBC activities:

A. Laura Buonaiuto posted that she is happy to see progress on the project;
B. Liz Moore, a resident of Kittery, wrote of her support for the potential aquatic center. As a mother of a small child, she struggles to find affordable and available swimming lessons in the area. She stated that

she would be willing to pay a membership to the York community center for pool access. She further stated that an indoor pool would be a valuable asset by making swimming accessible year-round and make a youth swim team possible. She urged the committee to continue to look for funding opportunities, including local maritime industries for sea safety training;

C. Sue Gay wrote that she is opposed to the project as it is not needed at this time;
D. Rita Calnan posted that she does not want nor support a York community center as it would be too expensive and only used by a tiny percentage of York residents;
E. Laura Gilchrest wrote that she is against the community center as her taxes are too high currently;
F. Donald LeFante published that the town of York must stop increasing its budget as it is becoming unaffordable for residents with a fixed income;
G. Julie Edminster posted that she is in support of a two-pool facility and she urged the committee to update the website with pictures of community centers. She suggested the Lake Naomi, Pennsylvania facility as an ideal community center which could be used as a model for the York project. She offered several suggestions for the capital fundraising campaign, including a one-time assessment fee, short-term passes for summer-only residents and visitors, the need for a funding development position for the project and the ability for residents to buy guest passes for their visitors. She also urged the committee to look at it definition of resident to preclude misuse;
H. Art Vogel wrote that he is opposed to the project due to the tax burden. He suggested that money could be spent on improving existing programs instead of a community center, which is a want and not a need;
I. Sarah Francke, a former assistant director of parks and recreation, posted that pools are money pits and maintenance nightmares and are not needed as many hotels have opportunities for lessons and open swimming at little to no cost and she advocated for summer

swimming in the ocean. She wrote that additional indoor courts are needed and she questioned the suitability of Village Elementary School (VES) to meet the needs for senior programming. Lastly, she questioned what would happen with the old police department and the Grant House if the project was approved;

J. Liz Cooper wrote that she would rather see better utilization of York spaces. She cited an instance when she tried to rent either the VES or the middle school gyms and was turned down;
K. Karen Tabora posted that she is opposed to the project because of the impact on taxpayers and property owners compared to the number of residents likely to use the facility. She conjectured as to the average cost to a homeowner and urged a public vote and questionnaire to second-home owners;
L. Janalee Moquin urged the committee to look at the utilization of all available space, both public and private, before moving forward with the community center;
M. Meg Morgan wrote in support of the project as an important, lasting and smart investment in the town's health, safety and sense of community. She stated that a year-round pool facility provides educational and recreational opportunities and that the community center is a gathering place for all generations;
N. Ariana Munoz, a 7th grader at York Middle School, posted that she wants the community center for multiple reasons, including indoor regulation courts on which travel teams can practice, an indoor pool and an alternative to meeting at the library after school;
O. Courtney Munoz, Vice Chair of the Budget Committee, posted that she has been an advocate for a town pool since the 1980's and is in strong support of a full aquatic facility for the community center. She stated that the center offers a unique opportunity to define York's future by enhancing the town and focusing on community building. She wrote that past surveys and community feedback showed that a community pool was the most requested item and that without aquatic amenities the project would have a lessened impact for the community. She urged the committee to outline recommendations on

how to mitigate tax impacts, such as revenue-generating programming and memberships; partnering with neighboring communities, fundraising and partnership ideas, a reduction in the tax burden on lower fixed-income residents, and recommendations to sell town properties to offset some of the costs of the project. Lastly, she urged the committee to deliver the best plan to achieve community goals and to let the other town entities, such as the Selectboard, the School Committee, the Capital Planning Committee and the Budget Committee to fulfill their roles in the development of the project;

P. Lisa Korf wrote that as a York resident and parent she is in full support of the community center, including at least one pool. She said that when her children were young it was hard to find a local space for swim lessons due to limited slots available;
Q. Laura DiMarzo thanked the committee for its work and wrote of her support for a pool, running and walking track and additional gymnasium space;
R. Danial DiMarzo posted that a gym space for school and recreational sports, a swimming pool, a walking/running track and a well-equipped fitness center should be included in the facility;
S. Amy Burke wrote that she is in support of a multi-generational community center with a pool, exercise rooms, walking track, and meeting spaces. She stated that the pool is needed as swimming lessons are not locally available and critically important in a coastal town;
T. David Huot posted he enjoys being a York resident because it is surrounded by water which affords many opportunities for water recreation. However, he noted that it was difficult to get swimming lessons for his daughter as there were waiting list at local hotel pools which forced him to travel to the Portsmouth YMCA on a regular basis. He noted that it would be nice to have a York public pool to facilitate many different aquatic activities;
U. Rebecca Acree wrote in opposition to the project because she said there are plenty of resources including the beaches and that higher taxes drive seniors and young families out-of-town;

V. Devan Weber posted that he has two children in York Middle School (YMS) and that they would benefit greatly from a safe, designated space to spend time after school. Currently the only option is the library. A teen center with opportunities for pickup soccer/basketball, board games, and card games would be beneficial. He stated that he currently pays $150 a month to have access to a pool and gym in Portsmouth and that he'd rather spend that money here in York;

W. The director/developer of Impact Teen Space stated that a non-profit teen center is being opened here in York at no cost to the town;

X. Lynn Preble wrote that when she was moving to York from Portland, Oregon, she was shocked to learn that a town with four beaches didn't have an indoor pool in which swim lessons, water aerobics and team events could be held. She stated that this an indoor pool is a safety and wellness issue;

Y. Emily Wallwork posted that as a mother, wife and daughter of York residents she cares about a multigenerational community center which includes an aquatics facility, multi-court gymnasium, and integrated senior center. She wrote that aquatics facility is needed for safety and skills training for children, the health and wellness of seniors, and as a revenue generator to offset operating costs. She stated that a dedicated multi-court gymnasium would encourage youth engagement, offer flexibility to programming while increasing capacity and generate revenue for operating costs. Wallwork wrote that a community center with an integrated senior center would help combat isolation through social and wellness programs and would help connect the youth, adults and seniors. Lastly, she stated that, although cost is a factor and a legitimate concern, a comprehensive community facility is a smart fiscal decision, and she urged the committee to deliver a proposal that includes a facility with amenities for all generations of York citizens;

Z. Jonathan Crafts wrote that gymnasium space is at a premium in York and he detailed an experience concerning the lack and adequacy of practice space available in town. He stated that additional full-court gym space is needed;

AA. Kate Wallwork, a sixth grader at YMS, posted that York needs a community center with a pool, a large gym space and a place for seniors. She said that the pool could be used for swimming lessons and exercise for everyone, the gym would be a great place to gather after school and that she would like for a place for seniors and students to hang out together; and

BB. Rosemary Gordon wrote that she would like a multi-purpose swimming pool and an adult work-out gym.

2) <u>Approval of the October 16th Committee Meeting Minutes</u>

Fyfe moved that the minutes from the October 16th meeting of the Community Center Building Committee (CCBC) be accepted as distributed; Cohen seconded, and the motion passed without objection: Vote: 7-0.

3) <u>Public Input Session</u>

Olsen discussed that one of the duties of the CCBC charter is to gather public input which the committee was going to do with charrettes in September; however, that hasn't happened yet although recently a lot of public comments have been given in-person and via the webpage. He proposed that we need to have at least two well-publicized charrettes so that correct information can be disseminated to a large gathering of interested citizens and the committee members can get feedback on the project. He contended that this would aid in the transparency of the project design process. Olsen asked if any of the CCBC members had comments about public input sessions. Discussion included the following:

A. Raimondi stated that he is 100% behind getting accurate information to the public;

B. Cohen reported that he has been involved with highly successful charrettes for public projects in Portsmouth. He stated that during the sessions the public could see models/designs of the project and could respond to certain specific areas of the project;

C. Murray said that the public comment sessions during the Feasibility Study were invaluable and that similar charrettes where the public could see the cost of the whole project or specific elements could be very beneficial to the committee and to Bargmann Hendrie and Archetype (BH&A);

D. Scott agreed that it would be very helpful to have them so that the citizens would feel that they had input in the process;
E. Raimondi suggested that the charrettes include a presentation of the process to date;
F. Gould supported the concept of getting accurate information to the voters;
G. Cohen suggested that the charrettes could also elicit ideas on revenue streams for the construction and operating budgets for the project;
H. Palmer queried Cohen as to who facilitated the Portsmouth charrettes to which he responded that the sessions were led by the design professionals who would show how information from the first charrette was used to develop the project presented in the second session; and
I. Schwab asked Olsen if any time frame is proposed for the sessions to which he stated that it would be determined when we discuss the overall project schedule.

4) <u>Capital Campaign Presentation</u>

Olsen stated that the project as it stands is a large capital expense ask of the public since a large portion of the funding would have to come in a 20-year bond. He said that the CCBC needs to investigate outside entities for assistance with the capital funding. He asked CCBC members for their ideas on the subject. Murray reported that he had a conversation with Alyssa Wright, a York resident who does capital campaign development as her occupation. He relayed that Wright offered to come to a CCBC meeting to share ideas on how to establish a capital campaign. Raimondi moved that Wright be invited to an upcoming meeting to discuss plans for a capital campaign. Gould seconded the motion. Discussion included Cohen sharing that several York residents who do capital campaigns could be invited to a meeting and Olsen stated that another facet of the campaign has to be how to get taxpayer buy-in. The motion passed without objection: Vote: 7-0.

5) <u>Discussion of Capital Committee Presentation</u>

Olsen stated that the project's presentation to the Capital Planning Committee (CPC) has been moved to November 11 from 12:10-2 pm. He noted that the CCBC has been working on this project since the end of February and been meeting twice monthly discussing plans for the proposed community center. He contended that there are still some significant holes before a presentation can be

given and supported to the CPC. Gaps include the funding component, lack of solar in the current BH&A proposal, lack of charrettes to gather and share information with York residents, and some additional issues/ideas about the BH&A design for the facility. He said that the Selectboard charter for the CCBC did not require that the committee have a proposal ready for the May 2026 ballot and that he does not have an issue with presenting to the Selectboard and other committees an update on where the project proposal is at this time and that a delay to the May 2027 warrant ballot is not a failure, but an opportunity to gather and develop the best project proposal possible. He elicited responses from all CCBC members. Discussion on the timeframe for the proposal included the following points:

A. Gould disagreed with Olsen's contention; he felt that the committee should put forth its best project design and let the Selectboard make its decision. He stated that more time is not essential because the project could be fine-tuned as the budgetary process moves forward and that putting something forward is important;
B. Raimondi stated that he agreed with Olsen's comments and that the CCBC doesn't need to rush into a proposal and make mistakes. Furthermore, he said that since VES wouldn't be available for redesign before June 2027 at the earliest and September 2028 at the latest the construction cost estimates would be up to three years old;
C. Crafts argued that the project design isn't ready since VES is essential and the York School Committee (YSC) hasn't selected its reorganization plan yet and so the availability of VES is not certain;
D. Olsen stated that, if he were on the Selectboard, he doesn't think that he would vote for the project as the proposal stands without funding streams in place;
E. Cohen contended that the charrettes are needed to fully lay out the plan to the public, get the interested parties' feedback, and then incorporate it into the final proposal. He also stated that a selling point for those opposed to the cost of the facility may be the development of a "circuit breaker" scale/table for those who are lower income and/or on a fixed income. He proposed a city site on Bog Road that may work for the charrettes;

F. Scott said that she agrees that delaying to next year is necessary. She stated that the Communication subcommittee doesn't have all of the information and designs it would need to develop a convincing proposal to present to the budgetary committees. She agreed that the Selectboard needs to be updated with the status of the project and that further public input is needed to finetune the project design;
G. Olsen reported that he is seeing momentum in public input during the last two CCBC meetings. He also said that a delay is not changing the cost of the project since VES isn't available until 2027 anyway;
H. Fyfe stated that he has been working on a community center project since 2016 and the current interest is the most momentum that he's seen for the project. However, he said that the consolidation of the schools must be solved before this committee can move forward; and
I. Schwab agreed that the design as it exists isn't ready to be presented.

Following the discussion, Raimondi made a motion that an update be presented to the Selectboard and any other interested budgetary committee, such as the CPC and the Budget Committee. Scott seconded the motion. Discuss of the motion included the following:

A. Olsen said that he appreciated Gould's position;
B. Palmer stated that the presentation should include an idea of projected capital expenditures; and
C. Murray said if the project is moved to the Fiscal 2028 warrant bond election in May 2027, then the Selectboard would be of assistance in getting information concerning the project to the public.

Following the discussion the motion passed with one dissent: Vote: 6-1.

6) <u>Site Plan and Discussion</u>

Murray distributed an updated design and budget from BH&A. He said that the changes, such as orientation of the gymnasium and pool facilities, construction materials, etc., scaled back the overall cost of the project. He also reported that the floor plan on the last page of the handout was his reallocation of center programming. He solicited comments from committee members. Discussion centered around the following areas:

A. A designated toddler playroom/drop-off area versus using a multipurpose space during scheduled times;

B. The purpose of the remote workroom for small group projects;
C. The needs of the Adult Education program, including the following:
    i. A reception area;
    ii. A staff office;
    iii. A testing space;
    iv. A 20-seat classroom; and
    v. The use of other areas of the community center as needed (i.e.: the kitchen for teaching food preparation classes;
D. The exits and egress to the youth teen spaces not to include exterior doors;
E. The positioning the main entrance and central offices;
F. The use of a private assessment space/wellness space that could be utilized for massage therapy;
G. Locating the training room closer to the new gymnasium and pool complex so that it could be utilized during team competition events;
H. Use of the kitchen and dining areas for refreshment sales during events;
I. The orientation of the second-level viewing area of the pool needs to be lengthwise not at the end of the lanes;
J. The lack of a family changing room in the pool facility;
K. Extending the exterior walls of the pool and gymnasium complex to add additional floor space to accommodate bleachers;
L. Depth of the pool to allow lifesaving and other maritime training;
M. Need for an exterior roll-up or double-wide door in the gymnasium to allow for equipment to be brought in;
N. That the proposed project doesn't impede on the Land Water Conservation Fund footprint;
O. The need for a solar component in the project design and budget;
P. The need for additional staff to facilitate a multi-point of entry to the community center; and
Q. The need for adequately addressing the space between the VES building and the new gymnasium and pool facility.

7) <u>Other Items</u>

No other items were presented.

8) <u>Action Items and Next Meeting Date</u>

A. The main action items are as follows:

i. Murray and Olsen will work with Selectboard representatives to set up a CCBC update at a Selectboard meeting
ii. Murray to send site plan changes to BH&A;
iii. The Communication subcommittee to prepare updates for website and Facebook page;
iv. Murray to update the Capital Committee on CCBC plans at its November 23 meeting; and
v. Crafts and Cohen to develop a list of potential capital campaign directors.

B. The next regularly scheduled meeting will be Thursday, November 6 at 6 pm at the Grant House. Other 2025 meetings will be at 6 pm at the Grant House on November 20 and December 4.

Adjourn

Scott moved that meeting be adjourned; Gould seconded, and the motion passed without objection: Vote: 7-0.

At 8:00 pm Chair Bill Olsen adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Gregory Schwab
Secretary