

# **COMMUNITY CENTER BUILDING COMMITTEE**

## **MEETING AGENDA**

**4:00 PM THURSDAY, MAY 15, 2025**

### **GRANT HOUSE**

- **Public Comments**
- **Approval of Minutes and CRES Walk-Through Report**
- **Thoughts on Three Proposed Sites**
- **Subcommittee Team Updates:**
  - **Funding – Gould/Olsen**
  - **Construction and Site Evaluation – Fyfe/Raimondi**
  - **Operations – Cohen/Murray**
  - **Communications/Marketing/Promotion – Scott/Crafts/Schwab**
- **Action Items and next meeting date**

## **COMMUNITY CENTER BUILDING COMMITTEE**

### **MEETING MINUTES**

**4:00 PM THURSDAY, MAY 15, 2025**

### **GRANT HOUSE**

#### **4:00 PM – Regular Community Center Building Committee (started at 4:00 p.m.)**

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

Absent: None

Others Present: Andy Kahrell (Park and Recreation Recreation Coordinator)

#### **Call to Order**

Chair Olsen called the meeting to order

#### **A. Public Comments**

1. Murray read the six submissions from the CCBC Public Comment Form. Submissions were from Julie Edminster, Elizabeth Moore (Kittery resident), Kath Ross, Celeste Ledoux, Fred Weston, and Cindy Gould.
  - a. Edminster stated that she had served on the greater York recreational complex about eight years ago; the committee wanted a convertible gymnasium that could double as tennis and/or pickleball courts during the day; she stated that a pool is definitely needed to generate operating revenue; and she said that the fitness center could utilize a lease program where the leasing company could replace equipment every few years;
  - b. Moore stated that as residents of Kittery they would be very interested in the indoor pool as the Kittery Community Center lacks one; she said as coastal communities it is important for children and all residents to know how to swim; she reported that

the Portsmouth pool and local hotels to teach children to swim; however, there are issues with limited space and available time for those facilities; she encouraged York to consider a membership option for those in the greater York County area; and she noted that the 2017 Recreation Needs Assessment and Planning Report showed that an indoor pool was the second-highest priority of survey respondents;

- c. Ross said that she would love to help out with the project;
- d. Ledoux reported that she supports the project as York has a large population of residents over 50 years of age and that they have outgrown the Center for Active Living (CAL) and she reported that a community center would serve York residents of all ages;
- e. Weston stated that focus should be on the 64.2% majority who support the project; he said that York needs the community center and funding should be found and the center built; and
- f. C. Gould stated that she liked all of the proposed locations and, of those, the Village Elementary School site stands out.

2. Following public comments, several topics were discussed by members of the Community Center Building Committee (CCBC), including
- a. All of the comments were supportive of the project and
  - b. The use of comments in marketing and promotion campaigns.

**B. Approval of the May 1st Committee Meeting Minutes**

Raimondi moved Scott seconded that the minutes from the May 1st meeting of the Community Center Building Committee (CCBC) be accepted as distributed. Vote: 7-0, motion passes.

**C. Approval of the May 8th Coastal Ridge Elementary School Walk-Through Report**

Fyfe moved and Gould seconded that the report from the May 8th walk-through be accepted as distributed. Vote: 7-0, motion passes.

**D. Thoughts on Three Proposed Sites**

Olsen requested that the CCBC members express their thoughts on the three proposed project sites.

- a. Fyfe stated that his choice of sites would be VES (1<sup>st</sup>) and CRES (2<sup>nd</sup>) and that 32 Long Sands Road (LSR) is not a viable option due to the limited space for the footprint of the facility;
- b. Raimondi reported that he has concerns with the potential ledge at LSR and that he thinks that VES is the best choice of the two;
- c. Murray reported his pros and cons of each of the schools with VES being his first choice since part of it was built as an “open-concept” facility and would lend itself to the project’s needs better than CRES’s pod layout and VES is air-conditioned while CRES is not;
- d. Kahrell discussed the differences in the gyms at each school and how CRES has very little off-court space and that the loss of any gym would greatly impact the Parks and Recreation’s programs;
- e. Olsen discussed that VES was his first choice as well due to its location, structure and size, and that it would be less expensive to renovate for the project’s needs compared to CRES, he noted that CRES’s lot is a lot larger than VES’s and would be suitable to build either a new school or the community center, and he stated that he doesn’t think that LSR is suitable for the project and the city could sell it to an abutter or to a developer;
- f. Schwab said that he believed that VES was the most suitable site for the needs of the facility;
- g. Gould commented that CRES’s layout is designed to be a school and is less adaptable than VES’s floorplan;
- h. Scott discussed the importance of adding at least one new feature to facility (i.e.: new gym, new pool or both) in order to get the support of many voters and she noted that the high school would be the best existing school for the project;
- i. Cohen stated that he prefers VES as the site for the project especially since it sits on top of a hill and is visible from a distance; he also reported that the pool needs to be in the first phase of the plan because it is a primary revenue source; and he did say that CRES could be a viable option;

- j. Palmer posited the idea of how the committee would react if the York School the Reorganization Planning Advisory Committee (RPAC) would want to keep VES and offer CRES for the community center; committee members discussed the options of demolishing part/all of CRES and rebuilding on the site, the significant suitability issues with CRES, the community's preference as to which school should be retained, the need for a feasibility study of adapting CRES into the community center; the potential higher cost for using CRES versus using VES, the possibility that the RPAC would propose keeping both schools, the non-viability of LSR, the need for both the RPAC and the CCBC to work on a joint proposal to be presented to the voters, and that the RPAC's report needs to occur by the end-of-June; and
- k. Members agreed that Olsen, Murray and Palmer should meet before the next CCBC meeting with David Foster (RPAC chair), Julie Kelbert (York School Committee Chair) and Marla Johnson (RPAC Selectboard representative) to give the committee's preferences concerning the use of either school.

**E. Subcommittee Team Updates**

**1. Funding:**

Olsen stated that there is nothing new to report regarding funding for the project at this time.

**2. Construction and Site Evaluation:**

Fyfe stated that there is nothing new to report until a site is determined.

**3. Operations:**

Cohen stated that the operations' report can wait the next meeting.

**4. Communication/Marketing/Promotion:**

- a. The committee discussed that the new Community Center page on the Parks and Recreation website looked great. Murray was thanked for his role in getting the changes made.
- b. Crafts mentioned that the Communication Subcommittee is meeting on May 22 to draft an update for the webpage. She stated that it should be smaller than the first update and would include the results of the May 17 town election.

- c. Murray mentioned that the list of community members who want updates about the community center project has grown to about 75 people.

**F. Action Items and Next Meeting Date**

1. The main action items are
  - a. The development of the monthly CCBC webpage update and
  - b. The upcoming meeting with CCBC representatives and RPAC members.
2. The next regularly scheduled meeting will be on Thursday, June 5 at 6 pm at the Grant House.
3. Fyfe invited CCBC members to stop by the CAL Spring Fair this Friday and Saturday from 9 am to 3 pm.

**Adjourn**

Gould moved that the meeting be adjourned; Raimondi seconded, and the motion passed without objection: Vote: 7-0. At 5:16 PM Chair Bill Olsen adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Gregory Schwab

Secretary