

**COMMUNITY CENTER BUILDING COMMITTEE
MEETING AGENDA**

6:00 PM THURSDAY, JANUARY 22, 2026

GRANT HOUSE

- **Call to Order**
- **Public Comments**
- **Approval of Minutes of January 8, 2026**
- **Friends of York Community Center**
- **Other Items**
- **Action Items and Next Meeting Date**

COMMUNITY CENTER BUILDING COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

6:00 PM THURSDAY, JANUARY 22, 2026

GRANT HOUSE

6:00 PM – Regular Community Center Building Committee

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

Absent: David Cohen and Adam Gould

Others Present: Linda Bresnahan, Rhonda DiCarlo, Marilyn Fyfe, Mark Gangi, Elizabeth Maziarz, Deborah Meyers, Liz Moore, Lynn Preble and Alyssa Wright

Call to Order

Chair Olsen called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm.

1) Public Comments

Olsen opened the floor to public comments. None of the guests present spoke; Murray reported that there was one public comment posted to the website.

A. On January 13, Patrick Gray, a York resident, posted that he wanted to see what the project was about and to see what he could do to help.

2) Approval of the January 8th Committee Meeting Minutes

Raimondi moved that the minutes from the January 8th meeting of the Community Center Building Committee (CCBC) be accepted as amended; Fyfe seconded, and the motion passed without objection: Vote: 6-0.

3) Friends of York Community Center

Olsen welcomed the guests present to the kickoff meeting of the Friends of York Community Center (FYCC) group.

A. Olsen shared information about the CCBC and its efforts during the past year. He discussed how the committee winnowed down the prospective sites from ten properties to Village Elementary School (VES) due to its locale, size and “open concept” design. He further explained the need for additional gymnasium space with an indoor walking track in York and

an indoor swimming facility as few are available in the region. Olsen noted that the committee has been working closely with Bargmann, Hendrie and Archetype, Inc. (BH&A) to develop plans for the renovation of VES into a community center and the construction of a double gymnasium and swimming facility. He stated that the School Committee's reorganization plan, which originally was intending to go from four to two schools, was recently questioned by the Selectboard. Now there is some uncertainty regarding the availability of VES for the project. Olsen reported that the School Committee estimates the reorganization plan may not be completed until September 2029. Finally, Olsen told the guests that the estimated budget for the community center project is about \$40 million.

- B. Murray presented a PowerPoint presentation outlining CCBC plans and the role of the FYCC. He thanked the Communication subcommittee for the development of the presentation. His points included the following:
- i. Having a public indoor pool was the top choice in the community center interest survey;
 - ii. Currently there isn't enough gymnasium space to accommodate the needs of York residents;
 - iii. There isn't a large multipurpose room available to the York public;
 - iv. There isn't a public fitness center in town;
 - v. There aren't multigenerational maker and/or study spaces in York;
 - vi. Currently the community spaces are inadequate for the public demand; and
 - vii. The main pushback against a community center has been the cost to the York taxpayer.

Murray told the group that the estimated cost of a York community center is \$8 million to renovate VES; \$10 million for a new two court gymnasium with second-level, indoor walking track; and \$18 million for a two-pool aquatic facility.

Murray showed the group BH&A architectural drawings of the proposed facility including the following:

- i. A top view of the facility;
- ii. Ground plans for the complex;

- iii. An illustration and a detailed ground plan of the two-pool facility; he discussed that one pool would be a six-lane lap pool and the other a recreational pool that would serve water aerobics, aqua walking, swim lessons and other aquatic training;
- iv. An illustration and a detailed ground plan of the double gymnasium with walking track; he noted that the facility is planned to be open every day for 16 hours a day;
- v. A front elevation of the proposed facility; and
- vi. A detailed ground plan of the multigenerational, community spaces in the renovated VES building; he noted that many of the spaces are shared spaces between multiple groups and that a portion of the southwest corner of the facility is planned for York Adult Education's programming.

Murray noted that nothing is "set in stone" and that the CCBC is going to use the upcoming public charrettes to gather information from interested parties.

- C. Scott distributed a handout to the meeting's guests giving an overview of FYCC. She then discussed the dual purposes of the organization: advocacy/community engagement and fiscal development. She stated that the objective for FYCC is to develop relationships with York citizens, community groups and area entities so that when the bond initiative goes to the ballot there is wide-spread community support and that a sizeable portion of the cost of the facility has been obtained through donations/gifts/other fiscal sources. She explained the role of the eight positions on the FYCC Board of Directors, and she noted that positions on the board could evolve once the community center is built and operational.
- D. Other discussion concerning the formation of the FYCC group and its role in the community center included the following items:
 - i. Murray stated that more positive voices for the community center are needed;
 - ii. Schwab mentioned that the CCBC representative on the FYCC board would be eliminated once the center is built and a user

- representative position would take its place; he also noted that there will be general members to the group as well;
- iii. Scott said that the goal of the CCBC is that York residents would not pay a fee for regular use of the facility;
 - iv. Crafts reported that the CCBC cannot raise funds for the facility so it is essential to create a 501(3)(c) umbrella that could fundraise; she also noted that having expertise in capital fundraising campaigns is critical for FYCC's success; and
 - v. Wright, a professional fundraising strategist, stated that a fiscal feasibility study needs to be done in order to develop a sound strategy to the capital campaign; she noted that there are local parties who are interested in leaving legacy gifts and/or other sizeable donations to community projects such as the proposed facility.
- E. Before the meeting was open to questions and comments about FYCC, CCBC and guests introduced themselves and mentioned their reasons for interest in the project.
- F. Discussion concerning FYCC and its goals included the following topics:
- i. Fyfe asked about the procedures needed for FYCC to receive gifts for the facility; Palmer responded that the Selectboard would have to accept the gifts on behalf of the town and it would need to approve the naming of any part of the facility in lieu of a substantial donation; Wright queried whether the FYCC's gift acceptance policy would need to be approved by the Selectboard; and Palmer stated that it would need to be brought to the Selectboard and he noted that by publicly acknowledging contributions to the community center it would help with advocacy efforts;
 - ii. Fyfe asked whether the organization would be able to accept tangible gifts, such as bonds, stocks, and/or annuities; Wright reported that typically those are liquidated once they are received so that the cash could be applied to the capital project; and Murray stated that legacy gifts could be used to offset operating expenses;

- iii. Maziarz asked if Maine has a residential tax credit policy similar to the one in Connecticut; Wright responded that there is a new market tax credit, but that it is only for financially distressed areas;
- iv. Murray asked if an impact fee would be appropriate to help raise funds; Palmer reported that there is an impact fee for people moving into the area, but he is uncertain if it would be applicable to the project;
- v. Moore asked about the timeline for the advocacy and community engagement strategies; Olsen stated that the two public charrettes will occur in the spring; Schwab responded that the community center bond initiative will not appear on this May's ballot so there is more than a year to develop community buy-in; Crafts stated that it is the CCBC's hope that a large portion of the financial cost of the project would be in place prior to a May vote on the community center; Murray reported that the intention is to take a community center proposal to the Selectboard and other York entities the October following the approval of the School Committee's reorganization bond proposals; and Wright said there is time to engage the community in the project;
- vi. Scott stated that a goal is develop interest in the community center from individuals and groups from area communities, like Kittery and Eliot; Maziarz asked whether they could help fund the project to which Murray said that some operational funds could be derived from non-resident user fees; Scott reported that conversations could be conducted with area community agencies to elicit support or to negotiate rates for their residents/constituents; and Murray noted that he has had difficulty in the past working on joint proposals with area communities;
- vii. Fyfe noted that interest from entities interested in ocean rescue may be interested in the project as the proposed aquatic facility would have the requirements for ocean rescue training;

- viii. Olsen noted that the FYCC group could start up while the CCBC is awaiting verification of the School Committee's reorganization plan; and
- ix. Crafts handed out FYCC Interest Forms to the meeting's guests; they were completed by all present and collected by Schwab; and
- G. Olsen stated that the next step would be a follow-up meeting to elect a Board of Directors for FYCC; it was agreed that the meeting would be on Thursday, February 12 at 6:30 at the Grant House.
- H. Crafts moved that Scott be appointed the CCBC representative (ex-officio, voting) on the FYCC Board of Directors; Raimondi seconded, and the motion passed without objection: Vote: 6-0.

4) Other Items

- A. Murray asked Palmer as to the Selectboard's process in regard to the School Committee's reorganization plan; Palmer responded once the School Committee requests a bond warrant request for the May election then it is a two-vote process. The first vote is to determine whether the capital item appears on the ballot and then a preferential vote will occur as to whether each Selectperson is in favor of the item;
- B. Palmer noted that at last night's School Committee open forum the discussion centered on how to word the warrant so that it is clear to the voters that if they reject the large capital reorganization proposal then they need to approve the smaller capital improvements to the school facilities. He further noted that he believes the School Committee is committed to the four schools to two schools' option;
- C. Scott stated that she felt there was a portion of the public present at the forum that wanted any vacant school properties to be sold to lower the tax burden.
- D. Crafts noted that there was misinformation concerning the proposed cost of the community center made at the public forum last night; and
- E. Scott also reported that some person mentioned that the Parks and Recreation Department should be charged for use of school facilities; Murray responded that there is a long-standing agreement that recreational facilities would be maintained by the Parks and Recreation Department in order to use the facilities as needed.

5) Action Items and Next Meeting Date

- A. The main action items are as follows:
 - i. The Communication subcommittee will meet to develop updates for the website and other social media; and
 - ii. Murray will send out an email reminder and social media update about the FYCC meeting on February 12.
- B. The next regularly scheduled meeting will be Thursday, February 12 at 6 pm at the Grant House.

Adjourn

Fyfe moved that meeting be adjourned; Raimondi seconded, and the motion passed without objection: Vote: 6-0.

At 7:41 pm Chair Bill Olsen adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Gregory Schwab
Secretary