

February 2022

Dear Cohasset Community Members:

We write to introduce ourselves as the members of the recently reconstituted Cohasset School Facilities Committee (the “SFC”). The SFC was formed pursuant to §3-56 of the town bylaws to investigate and study the condition and adequacy of the Cohasset Public School facilities and to advance the goals of the Cohasset School Committee relative to the addition, renovation, and/or construction of school facilities in the district. The full committee charge was drafted and approved by the Select Board and School Committee and can be viewed [on the SFC website](#). The SFC is comprised of nine members in total, and applications were solicited and considered from September 2020 – August 2021. Three committee members were appointed by the School Committee, three by the Select Board, and three by the town moderator, pursuant to the town bylaws. We have backgrounds in education, project management, engineering, construction, public finance, and law. The SFC first convened on August 19, 2021, and currently meets once a month, typically (but not always) the last Tuesday of each month at 7PM. Meeting information is posted on the town [website](#), and the meetings are open to members of the public.

Since we first convened in August, we have organized the committee, electing Jason Earls as the Chairperson, Dr. Paul Schubert as Vice Chairperson, and Nan Roth as the Clerk. In addition, we have preliminarily evaluated the current state of our school facilities and have started to compare those initial findings with current standards and facilities in surrounding and nearby school districts. To further evaluate the conditions and opportunities for improvement at our schools, the SFC recently evaluated bids from several qualified consultants, and selected Ai3 Architects, a leading educational design firm, to conduct an existing conditions study for all three of our school buildings. This study, which is currently being conducted by Ai3, will identify specific opportunities for improvement and/or deficiencies within our school facilities and is the first step towards the development of a long-term plan to ensure that our school facilities meet the needs of our students, teachers, and community in accordance with the goals identified by the Select Board and School Committee. The SFC is particularly focused on the Middle/High School, which was built in 1950 and renovated in 2003, and is in need of many significant updates. Based on the findings of the existing conditions study, we expect to submit a Statement of Interest (“SOI”) regarding the Middle/High School to the Massachusetts School Building Authority (“MSBA”). The [MSBA](#) is a quasi-independent government authority that funds capital improvement projects in the Commonwealth’s public schools and works with local communities to create affordable, sustainable, and energy efficient schools across Massachusetts. The SOI is a document that identifies deficiencies in a district’s school facilities; it is the first (very preliminary) step in working with the MBSA to seek funding for school improvements. The MBSA only accepts SOIs for a limited time period each year, so our goal is to prepare an analysis of our school’s current conditions before the end of April 2022, when this year’s submission period closes.

The SFC is mindful of the fact that any major project concerning the schools is a community decision that will take years to properly evaluate, prepare for, and undertake. We are at the very beginning stages of evaluating the opportunities for improvement in our school facilities, and as the process develops further, there will be many more updates like this one, open communication, public meetings and information sessions, before, ultimately, any vote at a town

meeting that would be required for any major decisions such as a renovation or construction. We welcome and value your input. It will be critical for the entire community to be well-informed and have an opportunity to be a part of the discussion and important decisions.

Ultimately, our goal is to ensure that the Town of Cohasset has a premier school district that is reflective of the unique needs, priorities, and values of our entire community. We are excited by the prospects of this undertaking and look forward to community-wide discourse and participation as we move forward.

Respectfully,

Your School Facilities Committee:

Mr. Jason Earls, Chairperson

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Dr. Paul Schubert, Vice Chairperson

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