

GREATER FALL RIVER VOCATIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
HOUSEBUILDING/FACILITIES SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES
251 STONEHAVEN ROAD, FALL RIVER, MA
DISTRICT OFFICE CONFERENCE ROOM
September 11, 2025

In attendance: Paul Jennings of Westport, Joan Menard of Fall River and Donald DiBiasio of Somerset.

Also in attendance: Richard Manuels Jr., School Committee Member, Brian Bentley, Superintendent-Director, Leslie Weckesser, Assistant Superintendent-Principal, Jennifer DeMariano, Assistant Principal of Technical Affairs, Gregory Brilhante, Legal Counsel and Helena Neves, Executive Secretary.

Remote Attendance: Jeffrey Cabral

The meeting began with a roll call at 5:00 p.m.

It was moved by Mr. Jennings, seconded by Ms. Menard and voted unanimously to dispense with the reading of the June 12, 2025 minutes and approve them, as recorded.

Mr. DiBiasio deferred to Ms. DeMariano for the community projects update. Ms. DeMariano stated that she has spoken to all the staff that are working on the community projects to have an understanding of each project's status. Some of the projects have been removed from the list, some have been placed on hold and the others are ongoing.

Ms. DeMariano stated that she received an email regarding the Somerset Baseball League project. She will be contacting the gentleman to find out more information. Mr. DiBiasio stated that the project was placed on hold last year due to the fence not being able to support the roof. They have had new dugout fences installed and the Highway Department installed the roof. They are looking for Diman to build a shed which will be used for storage. Mr. DiBiasio further stated that the fields and facilities are used by the high school, parks and recreation and the little league. Ms. DeMariano stated that she will speak to Mr. Bowen to see if he has availability in the schedule to complete the project.

Ms. DeMariano stated that Mr. Bowen has a busy schedule with projects for the BioReserve, Somerset Water Department, the Westport Athletic fields and the finish work for the house being built in Westport.

Mr. DiBiasio stated that the Somerset shed project has been on the list for two years but yet newer projects have been completed ahead of it. Mrs. Weckesser stated that the process for community projects has changed. All community projects will be on the list with a request date added for each project. Bi-weekly meetings with the instructors will be taking place so that everyone is on the same page and only take on projects that are realistic. Mr. DiBiasio stated that it is important that community projects are accepted from the four sending communities.

Mr. Jennings asked if the 12x20 shed can be built at Diman and transported to Somerset. Ms. DeMariano stated that she will touch base with Carpentry and Facilities Management to see if this a possibility.

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Mr. DiBiasio deferred to Mr. Cabral for an the 25/26 Housebuilding Program update. Mr. Cabral stated that the foundation in the ground and done on time. The foundation company actually did a really nice job with the foundation. Students have begun working at the site.

Mr. Cabral met with the homeowner and the electrician at the job site and there a couple of things that need to be noted.

1. There's some preliminary plumbing in the basement that needs to be done for a future bathroom that the homeowners want to install. The bathroom that is in the plans is unfortunately in the way of where the furnace or heat system needs to go therefore the homeowners will have to go to their architect and redesign their downstairs to include future bathroom.
2. The installation of windows and doors before the December break will be an issue due to the interior extension jam that comes attached to the window which is made of pine and is finger-jointed and primed. Installing them without a roof on could pose an issue if there's a rainstorm or snow. A solution is being worked on.

Mr. DiBiasio stated that the students could take two days away from the project so that the homeowners can have the trusses put up. This can be used as a teaching moment for students to see how the trusses go up. Mr. Cabral stated that there is a lot more framing involved with this house. The basement walls will be framed first, then the floor system, then the walls. Mr. Cabral stated that the goal is to have the roof on right at Christmas break. Having the roof go on when the students are not on site will allow the subcontractor to put the roof on, do the trim, and the siding.

3. The foundation is a little bit higher out of the ground than expected. A mistake was found on the site plan. The foundation is about almost a foot and a half out of the ground of what's called for in the site plan. The homeowner doesn't hand railings on the front deck. Therefore they will have to bring in more fill in order to meet that building code.
4. The homeowner has to get permission from the Homeowner's Association to tap into their transformer for the power supply. Due to this issue and getting the permits, temporary electrical service is expected to be available by the end of September or beginning of October. A generator will be used until the temporary power is available.
5. Mistakes in sizing and quantities for windows were found. Had discussion with homeowner to have these mistakes corrected.

Mr. Cabral stated that the homeowner has requested to add a couple more cameras with motion lights on two sides of the house, a couple extra plugs in a few different areas of the house, a garage power washer and a transfer switch for a future installation of a generator. Mr. Cabral further stated that he has not given them a definite answer on whether their request is able to be done or not. Mr. Jennings stated that any change orders need to be submitted to Mr. Bentley, Superintendent-Director for approval.

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Mr. DiBiasio asked for clarification on the foundation mistake. Mr. Cabral stated that he was giving the students a lesson on how to read a site plan when he discovered a mistake on it. The site plan called for the top of foundation to be at 120 feet and it also called for the top of the basement floor to be at 113.5 feet, so that only gives 6.5 feet of basement wall. The actual house plans call for 7.5 feet of basement concrete wall. Mr. Cabral further stated that he met with the homeowners to explain that in order to meet code, they either put a railing on the house or bring in more fill to bring the grade up to.

Mr. DiBiasio asked Mr. Cabral if he has enough help at the job site. Mr. Cabral stated that he has 12 students at the job site and he is managing without the teacher's aide but it would be nice to have that person back on board.

It was moved by Mr. Jennings, seconded by Ms. Menard, and voted unanimously adjourn the meeting at 5:24 PM.

Respectfully Submitted
Helena S. Neves
Helena S. Neves, Executive Secretary

Materials Included:
June 12, 2025 minutes
Community Projects List