

Greater Fall River Vocational School District
MSBA School Building Committee Minutes
January 5, 2026

In attendance:

Paul Beaudoin Tina Bell Brian Bentley Myles Brilhante Jennifer DeMariano	Donald DiBiasio, Chair Kathryn Dufour Paul Jennings Deborah Kenney Richard Medeiros	Carl Sawejko Maria Torres Katie Warren Leslie Weckesser
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Also in attendance:

Crystal Bradwin, Colliers Charlie Roberts, Colliers Paul Dominov, KBA	Greg Joynt, KBA Matteo Batista Paul Freeman, Suffolk
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Absent:

Glenn Benevides Emanuel Botelho Lisa Desrosiers	Ed Hill Steven Kitchin Decio Matos	Joan Menard Debbie Pacheco Melissa Petrasso Aaron Soares
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***BOLD –Voting Member**

Mr. DiBiasio called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm. and called for a roll call.

Mr. DiBiasio called for a motion to approve the December 8, 2025 meeting minutes.

It was moved by Mr. Bentley, seconded by Mr. Sawejko, and voted unanimously to dispense with the reading of the December 8, 2025 minutes and approve them, as recorded.

Ms. Bradwin provided the Colliers project update. Interior work progress includes flooring, painting, and equipment installations. The Auto Collision pit grates have been installed and the final slab on grade has been poured. Work has begun at the gymnasium entrance. The storage building roof and concrete foundation are complete; waterproofing and exterior masonry work is ongoing. Floor polishing is in progress with a focus on the Trade Hall. Interior and exterior lighting systems are being energized and tested. The dust collector for carpentry has been installed. The gym equipment is being delivered and installed. The gym padding is being delivered and will be installed in January. The gym flooring is scheduled for installation in February. Ongoing work continues at the office entrance and auditorium, including ceiling hangers. Ductwork installation is ongoing, and fans are in place in the auditorium. Third-party testing is ongoing, including window testing.

Mr. DiBiasio requested an update on the window testing. Mr. Freeman stated that the window contractor, Cherry Hill, has completed internal testing on the ES14 & ES13 windows. The remaining windows to be tested are the ES20 larger windows, which are the final group requiring testing. Cherry Hill is currently working through their work list/checklist provided by Colliers and will notify Suffolk when they are ready for third-party testing.

Mrs. Kenney asked why the windows are failing. Mr. Freeman stated that previous window test failures were due to workmanship issues, specifically improper sealing at corners that allowed minor water intrusion during pressurized vacuum chamber testing. Cherry Hill has added a QC expert on site and has increased supervision to address workmanship issues. Mr. Bentley noted that Cherry Hill is being charged for any retesting costs.

Mrs. Kenney asked if Cherry Hill will guarantee their work. Mr. Freeman responded that Cherry Hill has confirmed they are responsible for the work and will guarantee that all deficiencies are corrected.

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Mrs. Kenney asked if Suffolk has worked with Cherry Hill in the past. Mr. Freeman responded that he has not worked with Cherry Hill. Mr. Joynt noted that Cherry Hill is a large, reputable glazing contractor in Connecticut. The issue identified is not uncommon in construction and that is why the required testing specifications are in place to ensure overall product quality. The window issue was identified, addressed, and corrected, with adequate testing. Mr. Joynt further stated that most of the windows that previously failed have already been retested, providing full confidence that the issue has been corrected. Mrs. Kenney asked if Cherry Hill has been paid. Mr. Joynt stated that payment for the window work has been made in accordance with the progress of the work. A 5% retainage is withheld from all work, until project completion to ensure all issues are corrected.

Mr. Roberts provided a summary of the monthly dashboard. Suffolk's pencil requisition #27 for \$5,800,728.24 was reviewed and as of December 31, the overall project is 71.4% complete. To date, \$4.9 million in change orders have been approved. The total retainage is \$7.2 million, which is withheld to ensure completion of work and resolution of any issues. There have not been any formal requests for retainage reductions received.

Mrs. Kenney left the meeting at 5:41 pm and returned at 5:42 pm.

Mr. Roberts provided an update on Contingencies, Holds, and Allowances. Total current project budget (including additional MSBA funding) is \$54,560,632 million of which \$25,581,662 has been expended leaving \$28,978,970 million remaining. The total amount in change orders approved to date is \$4,906,057.85. Funds used from the MSBA Additional Funding Authorization total \$2,156,324 million used for items such as the granite curbing and the change of asphalt to concrete. An amendment of \$170,000 is on the tonight's agenda and is pending approval. The remaining balance in the MSBA Additional Funding Authorization after tonight: \$9,407,362 million. The Owner's Contingency of \$3,634,504 million remains untouched. The Suffolk Construction Manager's Contingency has a balance of \$3,274,824 million remaining. The Holds has a balance of \$4,112,144 million remaining across over 200 categories. The Allowances balance is \$4,179,478 million. Mr. Roberts stated that with 71.4% project completion, the remaining funds are sufficient to support upcoming Phase 2 work, including any challenging areas with ledge. He further stated that the financial status of the project is stable and there is adequate funding remaining for anticipated changes and future work.

Mrs. Torres asked if unspent funds are returned to the sending towns. Mr. DiBiasio stated that funds are borrowed to cover expenses for which the sending communities are paying for. Mrs. Kenney noted that the District is only borrowing the amount needed; therefore, there will be no unused funds. Mr. Roberts noted that the project is being funded through short-term financing, and that the final amount would equal the total project cost minus the MSBA reimbursement. Mr. Joynt added that, to date, \$191,055,092 have been invoiced and the calculated MSBA reimbursement is \$116,377,854.

Mr. Joynt and Mr. Freeman provided the KBA and Suffolk project update. Mr. Joynt noted that the project remains generally on track with the original plan. However, there is a slight delay in one shop area due to the addition of polished flooring and getting the auto collision equipment finalized. Mr. Freeman stated that the date originally projected for the temporary certificate of occupancy was June 1st, has now shifted to June 18, 2026. The delay is directly related to the auto collision shops. Mr. Freeman noted that while the delay is real, it does not currently jeopardize Suffolk's overall commitment to have the school ready for the fall of 2026. Suffolk will continue to look at ways to recover time as the project progresses.

Mrs. Kenney asked if the June 18th date is when anyone will be allowed to start moving. Mr. Freeman responded that it is not. The temporary certificate of occupancy indicates that the building is safe to occupy; however, Suffolk still dictates who can be in and out of the building. Substantial completion will not occur until July. Mrs. Kenney asked when the District can start moving things into the new building. Mr. Freeman stated that the move will begin in July.

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Mr. DiBiasio noted that some equipment will be moved into the building in the spring, as soon as the school year ends for students. Mr. Freeman noted that the equipment Mr. DiBiasio is referring to is within Suffolk's schedule and budget, and will be relocated in late spring, with some continuing into June. This work is not in jeopardy and remains on schedule. Ms. Bradwin stated that the installation of larger items, such as shelving for the shops, is part of the project and is not affected by the delay. Mr. DiBiasio stated that the delay mostly impacts the move of offices, such as Mr. Bentley's, the main office, and the guidance offices.

Mr. Joynt clarified that occupancy and temporary certificate of occupancy are tied to two critical systems: the fire alarm and sprinkler systems. As the schedule unfolds, certain installations such as the spray booths require connections to such systems. While other portions of the building may be complete, the system can't be fully tested and activated until everything is completed.

Dr. Warren asked if major equipment in the science labs and shops could be set up in the spring so that instructors and science teachers can confirm that everything is in place for the start of the school year. Mr. DiBiasio stated that Ms. Bradwin, Mrs. Weckesser and Mr. Bentley meet weekly to discuss and plan for the move. A few pieces of equipment will be moved prior to July but the bulk of it will be moved in the summer.

Mrs. Torres asked who will be responsible for ensuring that equipment, such as compressors, suction lines, and CEREC machines in the Dental shop, is all connected correctly and working properly for the start of the school year. Mr. Joynt stated that a dental equipment provider will be hired to move and reinstall the equipment. He added that, under Suffolk's contract, Suffolk is responsible for relocating and installing items that are part of the construction project, such as fume hoods, gas valves, and suction lines in the science labs. Mr. Joynt noted that when teachers come back, all the furniture will be in their rooms and set up. Teachers will then be responsible for unpacking the classroom materials they packed into boxes. There will be a team from Colliers and Suffolk available to assist with any issues that arise from the move.

Dr. Warren requested confirmation that all the equipment will be moved into the building, set up in the classrooms, properly connected, fully functional, and ready for use for the beginning of the school year. Mr. Batista and Mr. Freeman confirmed that this would be the case. Ms. Bradwin noted that she is working with Mrs. Weckesser to get contracts for any equipment that requires decommissioning and recommissioning. Mrs. Torres asked who will be responsible for recertifying equipment. Mr. Joynt stated that equipment that needs to be recertified will be done by the appropriate service provider.

Mrs. Kenney asked how long of a presence will Suffolk have at Diman. Mr. Batista responded that Suffolk will have a presence here for quite some time and through Phase 2 which extends for a year or more. Once the building has been occupied for about a year, there's a mandated walkthrough with the MSBA to identify any items that need attention.

Mrs. Weckesser informed members that the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), in conjunction with Suffolk and MSBA, will need to inspect and test the equipment as part of the DESE requirements for Chapter 74. A preliminary visit is expected in May to inspect the space, at which time DESE may give their approval for occupancy.

Mr. Joynt and Mr. Freeman continued with the project update. Mr. Freeman noted that the façade work is moving right along with not much else to do on the exterior, aside from the loading platform. The front doors are still about five and a half feet above grade, and there are no usable exits which makes the building not ready to be fully occupied. Finishes are just starting in the Student Commons. The epoxy floor is installed in the kitchen and serving areas. Tile and floor coverings on the north side of the building are complete. Permanent lighting and fans are installed, the majority of the ductwork is in, and sprinkler piping is all there. Kitchen equipment has been delivered and is being set up. The polished floor in the Trade Hall has been completed and is covered temporary

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floor coverings to protect it. The tile in the conference room above has been installed, and the glass in that area will be going in soon. Mr. DiBiasio asked if the temporary floor covering is enough protection or will mats also be used. Mr. Freeman stated that the floor coverings being used are sufficient protection. A thicker temporary floor covering is used in high traffic areas. Mr. Joynt stated that the structure, ceiling, and walls in the gym have been fully painted and the basketball hoops are expected to be installed this week. Mr. DiBiasio asked if there is an orange accent wall. Mr. Joynt responded that there is not, but there are black and orange accents throughout the gym.

Mr. Freeman noted that the gym floor installer was on site today to test the humidity, which is critical for proper installation. Everything looks good and the flooring installation is on track to begin in February. Mr. Joynt added that the gym floor is approximately 2.5 inches of maple strip flooring making it both a good looking and safe product.

Mr. Joynt stated that generally speaking all the rooftop units are on. Mr. Freeman added that rooftop units in sequence one are being prepared to start them up to have air moving through that area.

Mr. Joynt noted that the roof on the storage building is nearly complete and the walls will start going up soon. Masonry will be going up very soon, and then the metal panel will be put on and the building will be enclosed.

Mrs. Torres asked if the fence is being saved and if it will be put up in the back of the building. Mr. Joynt stated that the fence will be used for the athletic fields. There will be fencing in a couple of areas, but there is generally a guardrail in the back.

Mr. Beaudoin asked for a status of the solar system. Mr. Joynt stated that the solar project is in the design phase and it will eventually be submitted for pricing. The designers are not only designing the solar component, but are also attempting to couple it with a battery system. The reason for coupling solar with a battery is that it makes the interconnection to the grid more efficient. A battery can be charged either by the grid or by the solar system, and it can be dispatched to reduce demand charges during peak demand periods.

Mr. Freeman provided a summary of PCCO No. 013. This is an out of scope change order that includes several PCO's for a total of \$148,617.14. Mr. Freeman highlighted the following: PCO #317 – Art room plumbing fixtures, PCO #338 – revised layout for Facilities Maintenance, PCO #579 - minor facade clarification for the installation of aluminum break metal on the west elevation, and PCO #571R1 - auto collision frame pit clarifications.

Mrs. Torres asked what prompted the revised layout for Facilities Maintenance. Mr. Joynt responded that DESE has moved a lot of the framework away from hands-on work with tools into management and assessment of systems. Twenty-four cord reels were added in a grid layout to provide flexibility, as it allows the area to be set up for the different needs of the program. The changes were made quickly, before the ceiling was installed, to avoid higher costs later.

It was moved by Mrs. Torres, seconded by Mrs. Kenney, and voted unanimously to approve Prime Contract Change Order (PCCO) No. 013 for the total amount of \$148,617.14.

Mr. Freeman provided a summary of PCCO No. 013.1. Mr. Freeman highlighted the following: PCO #401- coordination due to conflict with thermostats and marker boards, PCO #533 – costs for rework of auditorium catwalk hangers to avoid clashing with previously installed drywall, PCO #577- costs for premium time as coordinated with the district July 19th, and PCO #600 - back charge to Arden for failure to layout penetrations in CMU for Sequence 3 LL, resulting in coring after installation of wall.

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Mr. Joynt provided a summary of the proposal for Additional Landscape Design Services – Amendment #12 for the amount of \$170,000. The proposal is for additional services to redesign the area between the student parking lot and the lower fields to make the site more usable and decrease the amount of steeply sloped site maintenance. This scope was not included in the design due to budget constraints but has been accounted for in the additional funding approved by the district’s sending communities. The proposal will formally add the scope to KBA’s contract enabling them to proceed with design and solicit pricing from Suffolk for the incorporation of the construction. Once formal pricing is obtained, it will be presented to the School Building Committee for approval. The proposed scope of services includes Landscape Architecture, Electrical, Civil and Site Structural design requirements for the proposed area.

Mr. Joynt noted that there are several line items in the Value Management list that could attribute to a potential future change. These include funds allocated for additional concrete walkways, landscaping and irrigation, as well as additional benches, trash cans, bike racks, and other items beyond what is already included in the project.

Mrs. Torres asked if there was anything else, other than the loss of square footage, and the movable wall in the auditorium, that had been taken out of the project during Value Management and not brought back. Mr. Joynt stated that a majority of the items have been brought back, with the exception of the square footage, the terracotta façade and other items that it was too late to add back.

Dr. Warren asked if the safety lights discussed two meetings ago were added back in the project. Mr. Joynt stated that the recommendation to add indicator lights associated with the alarm system has been approved.

Mrs. Bell asked about the plans for the area being redesigned. Mr. Joynt stated that the area will be made up of terraces. The goal is to reroute storm water by using the terraces to slow it down, as well as putting in larger catch basins. The intent is to avoid triggering a full redesign of the parking lot while making the space usable.

It was moved by Ms. Bell, seconded by Mr. Sawejko, and voted unanimously to approve the Designer Amendment #12 – Additional Landscaping Scope for the amount of \$170,000, as presented.

Mrs. Torres asked who will be responsible for the cost of reinstalling the equipment. Mr. Roberts stated that it may be necessary to use funds from the Owner’s Contingency for those services. Mr. Joynt noted that the Miscellaneous Project Costs budget line can be used to charge items that are not reimbursable.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 9, 2026.

It was moved by Mrs. Torres, seconded by Mrs. Kenney, and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 6:50 pm.

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

Materials:

- December 8, 2025 Minutes
- January Monthly Dashboard
- PCCO No. 013
- PCCO No. 013.1 (Internal Change Order)
- Designer Amendment #12 – Additional Landscape Scope