




Thomas A. Golden, Jr.
City Manager

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Chau and Members of the City Council
FROM: Thomas A. Golden, Jr., City Manager 
CC: Conor Baldwin, Chief Financial Officer
DATE: July 12, 2022
SUBJECT: **MOTION RESPONSE – 6/14/22 - C. Rourke** - Req. City Mgr. Set A New School Building Committee.

The composition of and the process for appointment of members to a School Building Committee (“SBC”) are stipulated in Section 2.10 [963 CMR: Massachusetts School Building Authority](#). The regulation requires an “Eligible Application” (i.e. the chief executive official where prescribed by statute or charter of the city) to form a school building committee at the beginning the MSBA application process. The committee is to be formed in accordance with the provisions of the applicant’s local charter, which in the case of the City of Lowell involves appointment by the City Manager.

The CMR does not establish or require a set number of members for a community’s school building committee. Rather, it recommends the inclusion of one or more of the following individuals:

- The local chief executive officer of the Eligible Applicant (in Lowell: the City Manager);
- At least one member of the School Committee;
- The superintendent of schools;
- The local official responsible for building maintenance (in Lowell: the DPW Commissioner);
- A representative of the office or body authorized by law to construct school buildings in the city;
- The school principal of the subject school (for LHS: the Head of School),
- A member who has knowledge of the education mission of the facility,
- A local budget official (in Lowell: the CFO), and
- Members of the community with architecture, engineering and/or construction experience.

Each of these categories is represented through the current membership of Lowell’s SBC. Since the formation of the Committee, the City has also opted to include public safety representatives and a member of the Commission on Disability, which are allowable as members with knowledge of the educational mission of the facility. It has also become precedent in the course of the Lowell High School project for the Mayor to be appointed to the SBC as a member of the school committee, and to retain membership at the conclusion of their term as a member of the community with knowledge of the facility’s academic mission. This factor has gradually increased the membership of the Committee since its formation.

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The CMR further recommends that a reasonable effort is made to retain members appointed to the Committee through the duration of the project. Discretion around the filling of vacant positions is generally limited given the criteria associated with various positions on the Committee. For instance, as it is required that the school principal serves as a member of the Committee, Michael Fiato was automatically appointed upon becoming Head of School. In a scenario where a vacancy is created for a position with less strict criteria, such as community member with architectural experience or with knowledge of the facility's educational mission; the position would be posted and applications would be accepted, similar to the process to make appointments on other boards and commissions.

At this point in time, as the project has reached the milestone of the completion of Phase I of the construction schedule, it is appropriate to thank the current membership for their time and efforts, thus far, and to re-solicit interest from the community for populating the school building committee to be seated during the remaining phases of the project, through project completion in 2026.

In response to the motion made by the Council, I have drafted a letter (attached) to be sent to each current member of the School Building Committee thanking them for their service and asking them to submit a letter to my office, should they wish to continue to serve of the committee. Also attached is a list of the current members, many of whom have served on the SBC since the feasibility stage of the project.

Please let me know if there are any questions.

Designation	Name & Title
Local Chief Executive Officer & Representative of Office authorized by law to construct school buildings	Thomas Golden City Manager [CHAIR]
SBC member who is MCPPO certified	Michael Vaughn, CPO
School Committee Member	Connie Martin, School Committee Member
Superintendent of Schools	Joel Boyd, Superintendent of Schools
Local Official Responsible for building maintenance	Richard Underwood, Director of Maintenance and Facilities
School Principal	Michael Fiato, Lowell High School Headmaster
Local budget official or member of local finance Committee	Conor Baldwin, CFO
Members of community with architecture, engineering and/or construction experience	Jay Mason, Community Member
Members of community with architecture, engineering and/or construction experience	TBD Commissioner of Public Works
Local official responsible for Lowell Public School finance	Bill Jo Turner, School Business Administrator
Mayor and Chair of School Committee	Sokhary Chau, Mayor
Member knowledgeable in educational mission and function of facility	Maria Sheehy, Community Member
Member knowledgeable in educational mission and function of facility	Benjamin Opara, Community Member
Public Safety Representative	David Peaslee, Captain, Lowell Police Department
Member of the Lowell Commission on Disability	Erica Harvey, Commission Member
Former Elected Official	William Samaras, Former City Councilor
Elected Official	Edward Kennedy, State Senator
Elected Official	John Leahy, City Councilor
Former Elected Official	Rodney Elliot, Former City Councilor
Public Safety Representative	Maryann Manzi, Director of Public Safety Research and Development



Thomas A. Golden, Jr.
City Manager

July 12, 2022

<INSERT ADDRESS BLOCK HERE>

Re: School Building Committee Membership

Dear <INSERT NAME HERE>:

As you are aware, the Lowell High School project is nearing completion of Phase I of the construction phase of the project and has entered Phase II which will run from June 2022 through approximately April of 2024. The subsequent phases of construction will bring the project towards its ultimate completion on or about August of 2026. As the project will become more intensive, in terms of the work of the School Building Committee ('SBC'), I am writing to solicit your interest in retaining membership on the Committee through completion.

In order to keep the project on-schedule and on-budget, it is my expectation that the SBC will meet monthly with the project team (Skanska, Perkins Eastman, and Suffolk Construction). In order to maintain a quorum at meetings in order to act swiftly, it will be imperative that attendance be mandatory and I will be recommending to the SBC that we establish a policy that members, except in the case of illness or other extenuating circumstances, shall not miss more than two successive meetings through the remainder of the project.

I hope that you will consider remaining on the SBC and ask that you respond, in writing, confirming your acceptance, prior to the August SBC meeting. However, if you are unable to continue to serve on the Committee, I want to extend my deepest appreciation for the time, effort, and focus you have dedicated to this project since your appointment. The City of Lowell appreciates your service as a member of the LHS School Building Committee, and on its behalf I extend thanks.

Very truly yours,

Thomas A. Golden, Jr.
City Manager

cc: Conor Baldwin, Chief Financial Officer
Skanska Building USA (OPM)
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