

TOWN OF SHERMAN  
**SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES**

SPECIAL MEETING  
THURSDAY JULY 24, 2025  
12:00 PM  
VIA ZOOM

**Presentation Link:** <https://youtu.be/E0KjrLcBf4>

The school building committee (SBC) special meeting was called to order by committee chair Kerry Merkel at 12:01 PM.

⇒ **PRESENT**

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| For the committee: | Kerry Merkel (Chair), Bob Gamper (Vice Chair), Christian Dacunha, Carrie DePuy, Dave Febbraio, Tim Laughlin (BOE member), Matt Vogt (Chair, BOE) |
| BOS & Treasurer:   | Don Lowe (First Selectman), Joel Bruzinski (Selectman), Bob Ostrosky (Selectman), Andrea Maloney (Treasurer)                                     |
| SHERMAN SCHOOL:    | Mary Fernand (Principal), Joe Lombardozzi (Director of Facilities), Lauren Yansick (Educational Technology/Library Media Specialist),            |
| Antinozzi Assoc.:  | Michael LoSasso (Principal)  |
| CSG LLC:           | Sam D'Agostino (Project Manager)   |
| Newfield:          | Mike D'Angelo (Project Executive)  |

⇒ **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None at this time.

⇒ **APPROVAL OF CURRENT BILLS**

⇒ Current Bill Summary

CSG, as owner's project manager, has an invoice for the school project in the amount of \$32,176.80 and a second invoice in the amount of \$19,723.54. For the central administration portion of the project, they have an invoice for \$195.53 and a second invoice for \$128.76. K. Merkel asked for clarification on the \$128.76.

T. Laughlin **made a motion** to approve the invoices for CSG.

**Seconded by:** D. Lowe

**Vote For:** All in Favor

The next set of invoices are for Newfield Construction for the school portion of the project. The first invoice is for \$13,726.08. The second invoice is for the central administration portion of the project and is in the amount of \$722.43.

K. Merkel **made a motion** to approve the invoices for Newfield Construction dated May 31, 2025.

**Seconded by:** D. Lowe

**Vote For:** All in Favor

The next invoice is for the move manager Meyer in the amount of \$13,341.25 dated June 24, 2025.

D. Lowe **made a motion** to approve the invoice for Meyer dated June 24, 2025.

**Seconded by:** K. Merkel

**Vote For:** All in Favor

The final set of invoices is for the commissioning agent Vanzelm Engineers with invoices dated June 26, 2025. The school project portion is \$9,763.66 and the central administration portion is \$58.94.

K. Merkel **made a motion** to approve Vanzelm Engineers invoices dated June 26, 2025

**Seconded by:** A. Maloney

**Vote For:** All in Favor

M. LoSasso inquired about receipt of a June invoice for Antinozzi Associates. Per S. D'Agostino they never received the invoice. M. LoSasso will forward. K. Merkel advised it will be added to the list going forward.

## ⇒ **DISCUSSION & ACTION ITEMS**

### ⇒ **REVIEW VALUE ENGINEERING EFFORT OUTCOMES, PROGRAM MODIFICATION TRADEOFFS, & COST REDUCTION ANALYSIS CONSIDERATIONS**

T. Laughlin reiterated that the bid results were significantly higher than anticipated. Since that time there has been a continuation of the value engineering effort. The school has made an earnest effort to review what, if any, programmatic changes and square footage reductions could be possible that could achieve cost savings. The cost reductions would not yield enough to justify significant program changes. Rather, they create risks and challenges that they'll go through. T. Laughlin thanked the administrative team for their analysis.

B. Ostrosky asked for clarification on the budget summary that was distributed prior to the meeting to understand better how the \$8M gap was reduced to \$2M. According to T.

Laughlin, value engineering efforts will produce \$2M in savings. Programmatic changes could result in \$1M to \$1.5M in savings, however, some of that savings is duplicative to the value engineering. In addition, engaging in a redesign would require modifying contracts with architectural and engineering consultants thus potentially incurring \$300,000 to \$400,000 in redesign fees.

T. Laughlin then walked through line items on the revised budget summary inclusive of eligible and ineligible costs as well as the state's share of project costs. The new total project cost to taxpayers would be \$35M. What was authorized at referendum is \$32,075,000 in bonding for the project. The referendum question specifically had that amount and said it shall not exceed that authority for the board of finance to issue bonds in that amount. Prior to the referendum on 8/14/23, the town approved \$340,000 for schematic design services at town meeting. On 9/22/22 the town approved \$150,000 for the playground resurfacing and the poured in place that will be a part of this project with a different installer. In addition, there is \$7,787 remaining in a pre-construction services account for legal expenses and other school project items, which was approved on 11/10/22. Taken all together, this amounts to \$32,572,787. This would equate to an additional taxpayer approval needed amount of \$2,425,241.

B. Ostrosky asked if the state reimbursement was guaranteed. Per T. Laughlin, the state has the project valued at \$42.5M. The total amount approved at referendum was for \$42.8M as it includes the central administrative space. The state has a standard process for this type of submission called a 1049R. Once submitted the state reauthorizes and refunds the project. This is not uncommon. However, it is not guaranteed.

M. LoSasso emphasized that non-programmatic revisions were the more effective approach than programmatic revisions. He has greater confidence in these numbers as they are derived from direct discussions with the bidders. He said they didn't see the same value from reducing whole sections of the building compared to a reduction in usable components. M. D'Angelo said the trade contractors don't get economies of scale when the building size is reduced. With respect to the non-programmatic items, they can lock-in those numbers now and have a hard value. In addition, M. LoSasso highlighted that as no PCBs were found in the 1930's and 1970 wings, this frees up some of the planned contingency that would have been otherwise consumed.

#### ⇒ [REVIEW PROPOSED PROJECT BUDGET MODIFICATIONS & VALUE ENGINEERING TARGET](#)

The bulk of the discussion on this agenda item occurred in the previous section. C. DePuy asked what the process would entail moving forward on the town's end. K. Merkel explained that the school building committee would need to make a decision if they wish to have this presented and handed over to the BoS/BoF tonight for their meeting. If so, it would be for the BoS/BoF to decide. It would then go to a town meeting or referendum.

#### ⇒ [REVIEW PROJECT SCHEDULING MILESTONES](#)

B. Ostrosky asked if the project is frozen until the additional funding is approved by the town. In response to that question, T. Laughlin advised this budget has a contingency of \$2,149,347, which is the majority of the overage. Thus, in theory they can go ahead and issue the G.M.P. and move the project forward because there is authorization to proceed

for the construction cost value. However, ideally it would be preferable to obtain the additional funding in an effort to submit the 1049R to the state for approval. This would allow the state to examine appropriations to determine if additional monies can be allocated to the project prior to the expiration of bid proposals on 9/15/25. Presently the project is still on schedule.

K. Merkel asked what would be the final date to submit. T. Laughlin indicated it should be as soon as possible underscoring it is permissible to submit the 1049R with a pathway specified on how the additional town funding would be secured. A. Maloney asked if the additional funding had to be secured prior to locking-in the bids given that the bids are set to soon expire. S. D'Agostino clarified that it is possible to accept the bids, however the 1049R has to be submitted otherwise it will be considered an unauthorized cost increase. The town must also show that it can fund the increase once approved.

C. DePuy asked if there is exposure for another escalation beyond this point. T. Laughlin said there could be past the 15<sup>th</sup> of September as it would require re-bidding. C. DePuy emphasized the need to protect the contingency as change orders will be inevitable once construction begins.

K. Merkel asked M. D'Angelo to speak to key scheduling milestones. M. D'Angelo advised getting the GMP1 approved is essential as they need to start the abatement process throughout the building. Completing this process during the summer as much as possible will help save money overall. They are working with J. Lombardozzi to set up the swing space and spoke with Bill Murphy (Building Inspector) yesterday to discuss permitting. He believes they have everything in line for permitting for the enabling work. Thus, it is important to get the project approved and the trade contractors under contract to maintain the original schedule as much as possible. It may shift the schedule minimally by a month or two. K. Merkel confirmed with M. D'Angelo that GMP approval means a safe and secure working construction site in September. T. Laughlin asked for the ideal timeline to lock-in contracts to achieve that goal. Per M. D'Angelo, it takes two to three weeks to secure contracts, ensure contractors have their certificates of insurance, are issued bonds, and everything is in place to mobilize them on site.

⇒ **DISCUSSION & POSSIBLE ACTION TO APPROVE PROJECT BUDGET MODIFICATIONS & TRANSMIT TO THE BoS/BoF FOR POSSIBLE ACTION TO APPROVE**

T. Laughlin **made a motion** that the School Building Committee recommend to the Board of Selectmen also acting as the Board of Finance to increase the Sherman School Renovation project and Central Administration project budget to a total project cost of \$49.6M with a total local share project cost not to exceed \$35M.

**Seconded by:** B. Gamper

**Vote For:** All in favor

⇒ **DISCUSSION & POSSIBLE ACTION TO APPROVE PARTIAL G.M.P. & TRANSMIT TO THE BoS/BoF FOR POSSIBLE ACTION TO APPROVE**

M. D'Angelo walked the committee through the GMP, outlining the bid packages, proposed trade contractors, general conditions, Newfield staffing, value engineering bid amounts, and unit pricing with total contract value.

T. Laughlin **made a motion** to approve a partial GMP considered GMP amendment 1 for an amount not to exceed \$4,300,632 to the Board of Selectmen acting as the Board of Finance for consideration.

**Seconded by:** A. Maloney

**Vote For:** All in Favor

⇒ **DISCUSSION & POSSIBLE ACTION TO APPROVE RELEASE OF RFQ/P #6 FOR INDEPENDENT MATERIALS TESTING & SPECIAL INSPECTION SERVICES**

T. Laughlin explained that they need to put out an RFP for special inspections which are required by the Building Department. Special inspections include testing concrete, testing materials, and others to ensure structural integrity. S. D'Agostino at CSG has prepared an RFP of which technical amendments to dates need to be made. The goal is to release it tomorrow, if approved today.

B. Ostrosky **made a motion** to approve the release of RFQ/P #6 to move forward with testing.

**Seconded by:** D. Febbraio

**Vote For:** All in favor

⇒ **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

No comments at this time.

⇒ **COMMITTEE COMMENTS**

T. Laughlin reminded the committee that the BOS meeting would be at 7:00 p.m. tonight.

⇒ **ADJOURNMENT**

K. Merkel adjourned the meeting at 1:00 PM.

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*\*Abbreviations used above:*

CSG LLC – Construction Solutions Group, LLC