



Lowell City Council

Michael Q. Geary
City Clerk

Municipal Facilities SC Joint with School Facilities SC Minutes

Date: February 25, 2026
Time: 6:00 PM
Location: 375 Merrimack Street, Council Chamber, 2nd Floor, Lowell, MA / Zoom (Hybrid)

PRESENT:

Present on Roll Call were C. Descoteaux, C. Robinson, C. Scott, SC Bahou, and SC DelRossi. One absent (SC Martin). Also present were Rita Mercier, Erik Gitschier, Manager Golden, Jr. and Austin Ball (Asst. Fin. Dir.) Present from School administration were John Leahy, James Hall, Ricky Underwood and Supt. Skinner.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:

C. Descoteaux called the meeting to order noting purpose of the meeting. SC Bahou made note that SC DelRossi was a member of their subcommittee.

ORDER OF BUSINESS:

C. Descoteaux commented on the amount of money the City contributes to the school system. C. Descoteaux noted this discussion was started by M. Gitschier for efficiency purposes and further noted the number of meetings to date trying to make headway. SC Bahou noted contributions of the City and the importance of a partnership. C. Robinson commented on how the idea grew and that it was never his intention to include privatization of work into the mix. C. Robinson noted the concerns of the school committee and indicated that there must be a partnership developed to reach certain goals regarding the school buildings. SC DelRossi noted her backing of City and school collaboration and that if work is to be done it must be done together. Supt. Skinner commented on the partnership and the need to maintain the schools. SC DelRossi commented on work orders and who is doing what, and that there is a lack of communication in the system. Supt. Skinner outlined the School Dude program and the lack of skilled labor. Mr. Underwood noted the School Dude process and noted the number instances that the school side is doing the work of the City and that the schools are unfairly criticized. C. Descoteaux noted the need to work together and not point fingers. Mr. Gitschier commented as a resident of the City and noted the language should be inclusive not divisive and portrayed earlier. Mr. Gitschier noted the lack of



operations in the schools and at a minimum the buildings must be cleaned. C. Descoteaux noted the lack of skilled labor in the work force which causes much of these issues and that there should be professionals in the building with apprentice programs. C. Scott noted the blame game must end and that there should be tight structured department developed. SC DelRossi noted the need to have a managed department with professional laborers. C. Robinson noted the need to meet and develop a department with input from all partners to ensure efficiency and professionalism. Manager Golden, Jr. noted the continued conversations with the schools which bring ideas together to bring proper structure.

Meeting was open to public; Pam Argiant noted the need to follow protocol; John Leahy noted prior experiences and that the fix would not be difficult and that there is a need for a second shift; Paul Georges noted that privatization must be completely eliminated; and Sophia Marsden noted the need to support positions.

Motion by C. Robinson, seconded by SC DelRossi to remove privatization element from any discussion regarding developing a centralized facilities department. Adopted per Roll Call vote 5 yeas (C. Descoteaux, C. Robinson, C. Scott, SC Bahou, SC DelRossi), 1 absent (SC Martin). So voted. Mr. Underwood did not agree with the removal of privatization. C. Descoteaux noted the need to develop structure for change. SC Bahou commented on the need to collaborate. Mr. Gitschier noted Plan E form of government and the restraints on elected officials under that plan. C. Scott noted the vote made note of intention not direction.

C. Descoteaux brought remaining items forward. Mr. Underwood provided updates regarding chairlifts and the Butler School and status at St. Jeane D'Arc project including elevators. SC Bahou noted fast track timeline.

C. Descoteaux final remarks indicated future meetings.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to adjourn by C. Robinson, seconded by C. Scott. So voted.

Meeting adjourned at 7:12 PM.

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