

Portland Board of Education
Building & Grounds Subcommittee
Minutes of Wednesday, March 12, 2025 @ 3:30 pm
Via Zoom: <https://www.portlandctschoools.org>

Committee Members Present:

Meg Scata
Dave Murphy
Kim Nagy-Maruschock

Committee Members Absent:

None

Administration Present:

Dr. Charles D. Britton, Superintendent of Schools
Stephanie Fragola, Assistant to the Superintendent for Business and Financial Affairs
Bob Shea, Director of Facilities

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

M. Scata called the meeting to order at 3:32 pm

2. Approve Minutes of January 28, 2025

M. Scata moved to approve the minutes of January 28, 2025, seconded by K. Nagy-Maruschock. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED

3. Discussion and Possible VOTE: Boiler at Brownstone

B. Shea explained that we are currently dealing with a leak in Boiler #1, one of two 15-section units. We made repairs on this boiler a few years ago, but unfortunately, it's the same boiler that is now leaking. The system operates with two main components: one side produces hot water, which generates steam, while the other side involves combustion with fire and gas. Due to concerns about the possibility of the leak reaching the combustion chamber, B. Shea contacted a representative from the boiler company for further guidance. At present, we are still using one functional boiler at Brownstone, which is producing enough steam, given the mild temperatures. The boiler itself is from the 1980's, and based on its current condition, it's not feasible to replace the damaged sections and have a proper seal. Additionally, the pitting between sections means the second boiler will likely start leaking soon as well. Once more than 30% of the sections are compromised, the boiler will need to be replaced. B. Shea received estimates for the replacement cost, which is approximately \$146,000. The boiler room is located below grade, so an additional \$12,000 will be needed for rigging to remove the old unit and install the new one. The lead time for a new boiler is 28 weeks, which will extend into the heating season. However, if we move forward with the replacement within the next month, we should be able to continue using the single boiler until the new unit is installed. B. Shea also reviewed the procedural steps and timeline, noting the challenges associated with securing the necessary funding.

There was a discussion about approaching the Town to request funding for the boiler replacement. Dr. Britton suggested that the Board ask for a bid waiver from the town and explore all available funding options within the BOE. The goal is to get approval from the Board so we can begin the process and have all materials and installation completed before the cold weather sets in.

Dr. Britton explained that if we place the order now, it will take approximately 28 weeks for the new boiler to arrive, with an additional week or two needed for setup. B. Shea then outlined the installation process once the boiler is delivered.

B. Shea suggested that we consider paying for the boiler and parts within this budget cycle and then allocate funds for labor in the next budget cycle. Since labor doesn't need to be paid until the installation is completed, this approach would help manage cash flow.

B. Shea explained that if we request a bid waiver, Perfect Temp would be able to supply the boiler, which would streamline the process. If we put it to bid, however, it would take additional time, potentially delaying the delivery of the boiler.

There was a discussion on how to process the payment and which fund to use. This will be an agenda item for the 3/18 Board meeting, where Board authorization will be needed for the funding, with the priority set as a capital expense. The discussion also covered the bid waiver process, if it is approved.

B. Shea explained that the second boiler is in the same condition and age as the first. Currently, the one functioning boiler is performing the work of both.

Dr. Britton discussed the scenario of looking ahead to next winter with only one boiler at Brownstone. There was a discussion on the most feasible options, including replacing one or both boilers or opting not to replace any at all. Perfect Temp's recommendation is to replace both boilers simultaneously due to their age and the cost of the machinery required for installation. B. Shea will gather pricing for all options to present to the Board for a decision.

There was a consensus to add the discussion of the bid waiver and replacement options to the Board agenda for next week.

4. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:43 pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Tricia Dean
Executive Assistant to the Superintendent/Board Clerk