

COMMITTEE ON JOINT SCHOOL BUILDINGS

September 9, 2025 at 5:00 PM

Chairman O'Connell called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen Terrio, Kantor, O'Neil
School Committee Members O'Connell, Soule (late), Turner (late)

Messrs.: M. Lenfest, J. Soucy

1. Presentation from LeftField regarding the School District Priority One Project to date.

Mark Lenfest, Senior Project Manager at LeftField: In the last thirty days for completed activities, we have had continued OAC weekly meetings for Hillside and McLaughlin. We started the MEPS coordination meetings. We continued the logistics development. We continued project schedule developments, mostly work that is ongoing versus how it translates to the occupancy of the school and the upcoming work. We continued Group 1 scope procurement. We are about 90% procured there. Consigli did a GMP resubmission. We have an update on that as well. We think that will be executed this week. Group 1 sitework continued this past month. We had removal of the arsenic containing soils. We continued sub-contractor descopes, which is when Consigli narrows the field down to two or three qualified sub-contractors. They go through a descope, which is a list of questions to make sure that they understand completely the scope of work that we're asking them to perform. It gives them a final opportunity to make sure their price includes all of the details in the scope of work. G2, the 75% construction document pricing set was issued. We started construction documents phase for Beech, site access and coordination with city agencies continued. G2 and Beech soil testing continued. G2 and Beech phasing development continued. The modular HVAC ERV installation continued. We requested a detailed schedule from Triumph. We want to track more mid-October, not late October. We had continued communication with all stakeholders. It was a productive thirty days. The next thirty will be even better. We anticipate execution of the Group 1 GMP contract within days. We will continue the OAC meetings for Group 1, and the MEPS coordination meetings. We will continue logistics and procurement, sitework with excavation and additional soil removal. Group 1 will start foundation work and the elevator pits will begin. We will continue roofing at McLaughlin. There is a detailed plan on where that starts and stops. We are fortunate they have been able to push further than the original target. Group 2 is 75% at construction documents and reconciliation. The Beech construction document is to be issued and followed by estimates and reconciliation. Group 2 and Beech pre-construction meetings are ongoing. The OAC meetings for those will start at the end of September on the 30th. Beech Street project's schedule will be finalized and we will award the CM contract. The final draft has been submitted. We continue modular HVAC installations and warranty work. Warranty work regards the flooring which hasn't held up the way we wanted it to, the ceiling tiles that have been removed to do the improved HVAC work will be replaced. Anything that hasn't held up: door seals, silencers on doors, one or two of the bathroom locking devices, things like that. We will continue communication with all stakeholders.

Chairman O'Connell: You mentioned the elevator pits. That was complete, so maybe that is hot off the press from Friday. The first pouring of concrete was done on Friday.

M. Lenfest: Correct. It has been poured. That allows us to get the mason out there to start the erection of the shaft.

Chairman O'Connell: It was a milestone to see concrete going in the ground.

M. Lenfest: Priority I project update summary, there were a few changes. Beech moved into the construction documents phase. That is an advancement in programming and design. McLaughlin and Hillside, we are about 95% procured, and construction continues. If you get a chance, you can see the sitework that is going on as well as the roofing. Your Fire Department requirements for life-safety during construction was done. Parkside and Southside we are at 75% CDs, which are in the estimate phase. We are holding the \$306 million budget; the detailed reports are included in the monthly report. They have been updated to reflect the current known budget. The invoice update at the time of this meeting we don't have this available; it will be available following Friday's invoice review with the district. We will provide that document after the meeting to this group. We like to include these links so you are aware. Consigli has done a good job with keeping these updated. If you get a chance to see the sites, do it. They take great photos. You can see the underground drainage system that has been installed, the new teacher parking lot at Hillside, the excavation for the footings and foundation work. As the Chairman said, the concrete pour for the elevator pits, and the masonry will start there as well. There are no scheduled changes to report. We had questions in another meeting with a municipal body about how some things had been handled. I thought it was a good opportunity to update our group.

Chairman O'Connell: This is in response to questions raised at the Aldermanic meeting on September 2 about award of contracts. Then we can discuss this after you've done your report.

M. Lenfest: For example, this is called a leveling sheet. What Consigli does is they narrow the fields to the last two or three competitive responsive sub-contractors and trade-bidders. Based on that, they drilled down and asked them all the questions to make sure. If you're looking at the levelling sheet, this is Hillside's electrical. Section 078413, penetration fire-stopping, they make sure they have it. The first contractor has it, the second one says its not required, the third one has it. It gives them a baseline. They can say we need to look at the second contractor and make sure that if it is not in there there is someone covering that work. It is a total scope of work. There are hundreds of these different questions and qualifications that they go through. They reach back out to the sub-contractors and give them an opportunity to update their pricing based on conversations and scope development that happens. Based on that, they get final proposals. The final proposals are at the top. Hillside's job, Interstate Electric was the most advantageous, they were the lowest bidder, they proved they could do the work, they have the manpower and experience. Third was Longchamps. It was a competitive bid. Consigli did a good job getting us good coverage on this. We have direct experience with two of these firms. Longchamps did a bid of our modular work and helped us with that. They were awarded the McLaughlin job. This is a good opportunity to show you this particular levelling sheet.

Alderman Kantor: Thanks for the clarity. When people share, it is a little complicated. How does it work with the products? Not the trade part, using specific lighting. I asked the gentleman who brought this to my attention. I want to bring up Kallwall, too. Are you doing any work with them?

M. Lenfest: Not on this project. You shared that documentation with us. Unfortunately, when we reviewed it, it doesn't fit this project.

Jen Soucy, Project Architect at SMMA: Correct. That is primarily a translucent product which is not a transparent product.

Alderman Kantor: Are you saying its not transparent, like you can't see through it?

J. Soucy: Yes.

M. Lenfest: It is the level of transparency, translucent being different than transparent. This project was designed with the glass, frames, windows, and particularly Group 1 had been procured. We had bought the window assembly systems through R&R. We appreciated the product data. We weren't able to get it into the Group 1 projects. What happens is how it relates products with sub-contractor coverage. The products are selected prior to the sub-contractors and they are in the specifications in the bid package. All of the sub-contractors are bidding on the same products from the same vendors.

Alderman Kantor: You are only using the same vendors?

M. Lenfest: No, not on every job. Windows, they will list three or four manufacturers of windows and put in a clause that says as equal. For example, one of the three preferred manufacturers that we are familiar with, their models work in these applications and you could choose them or one of the other three or present an as equal which you can fill out a performance data sheet you need to fill out to prove the other party has an equal product, then it can be priced and included.

Alderman Kantor: I understood it is an equal product. He is here. I want to know. He is saying the bidding process wasn't fair. Can we have him come up and speak in a little bit to share his experience in the bidding process with all these projects? Nothing is ever perfect, let's face it. It is not easy, but if there is complete clarity and transparency.

Chairman O'Connell: We have two different things going on. We will deal with the first one. I was not at the Aldermanic meeting, but I want to deal with that piece first. There were claims at the Aldermanic meeting regarding a local company, Longchamps, that they had not been awarded contracts or that they were the lowest contractor and ended up not getting it.

Alderman Kantor: Yes. I was not clear. I'm trying to find out.

Chairman O'Connell: Sometimes when something is said, it is said, and that is the word that gets out. We owe it to the people, the project, and the citizens of Manchester, to give them correct information. To be clear, you said it, but I want to repeat it, in the case of

electrical awards, the first one was for the modulares. It was awarded to Longchamps. The second one, Hillside and McLaughlin, Longchamps bid and were successful in their bid and are the electrical contractor at McLaughlin school. The third one is the project at McLaughlin, and Longchamps was the third from lowest and the company that was awarded the electrical work was also a Manchester company, Interstate Electric. As part of the process, Consigli is doing its work as it should. In the end they make the decision. They engage the sub-contractors. It is being done in an informed way, particularly with the Department of Public Works who do all the construction in the city and have years of experience. I want to reassure the members of this committee and the public that due diligence is being done and the process is pristine. When bids go out, there is a due date. Everyone gets the same opportunity and paperwork. At that point, the most responsive company is awarded the contract. I hope going forward that if there are questions, they would come here or if the need to go to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen they should go at the point at which an answer has been sought and responded to. The news that came out of the meeting was that there was a problem on the contract. I'm glad we have resolved it here. It seems like, Alderman Kantor, that you now understand that the project was done in a way in which it should, and Longchamps did get their shot.

Alderman Kantor: Yes, they did get their shot. I'd like to talk about products. I apologize, I definitely want to get things clear. Didn't we have an issue with the modulares? Didn't Longchamps have to come in and fix the issues? There were a lot of technical difficulties. Not from Longchamps, but I heard they came in and fixed things.

M. Lenfest: Not from Longchamps. T&T, which is a voice and data contractor for the city, they were the ones that came in and solved the technical issues. The school district's IT department, Steve Cross, he initiated an upgrade based on some of the existing equipment's limitations. Those were the issues on the technical end of things. Those folks with Consigli and Triumph fixed it.

Alderman O'Neil: What would be helpful is if on the major sub-contractor awards, if the committee is given a report monthly. It has to be on the awards, not negotiations. Are they values or yes and no in the various line-items?

M. Lenfest: This page is yes and no. The number at the top is their final bid value. From my experience, because I called an electric company that has a plug number, their original bid didn't include scopes of work. Consigli worked with them with certain numbers. We called to make sure they were in agreement with those values and they were. I can show you what you want going forward.

Alderman O'Neil: I don't know if we need all of that stuff, but maybe that slide is helpful. So far, sitework has been awarded, but I can't tell you the name of the contractor. Foundation has been awarded, there was some reference to roofing be awarded, and then electrical. Are there other trades that have been awarded?

M. Lenfest: Yes, sir. I put together two additional slides based on earlier conversations. Right here is a Hillside procurement log. It will show that roughly 21 trades have been awarded. We can give you the breakdown on the major trades for this. Your major trades for Hillside are sitework, windows, roofing, electric, mechanical, plumbing, masonry.

Alderman O'Neil: If I can get that sheet for the major trades.

M. Lenfest: I will include this slide with the updated report that we do following this meeting. I will give you the levelling sheets for the major trades for each project.

Alderman O'Neil: If we had that, we wouldn't be getting incorrect information. It would be helpful. I will only speak for my colleagues on the Board of Aldermen, it would be helpful. I am pleased that there is such an interest in this project by Manchester companies and New Hampshire companies that employ Manchester people, that is great. It hasn't always been the case. This will continue through Parkside and Southside and will continue to Beech. I don't want to speak for my colleagues, Aldermen Terrio and Kantor, does that sheet look like it would be helpful to us? It says the three contractors on the top with their number.

Chairman O'Connell: Alderman O'Neil, in response to the questions that were asked at the Board of Aldermen meeting, I spoke with Mr. Lenfest about what we should do to pull out the information so it is in one place. The intention is to produce this on a monthly basis, which will give you what you asked for. This slide and the other one has a list of all the awarded contracts. In the fullness of time, that will happen as we go on every month so we can see it and people can ask questions about it. Everything in the project is open to the public. The documentation, there are hundreds of documents involved, we want to get the meaning out rather than buried in documents.

Alderman O'Neil: What is important is they give their first price, then they go back to levelling. At the end of the day, who did Consigli award the project to? That is perfect. Maybe those various items are helpful so you can see that they meet requirements or missed something. That sheet would be good for all the major trades. Sitework is going on, foundations and roofing, electrical, any trades that were awarded, not negotiating or providing preliminary pricing, awarded. That would be good for all the school projects.

Alderman Terrio: Some of the feedback I got from some of my colleagues on the BMA was a process question. A bid goes out for electrical work, you boil it down to the three best bids, at this point I would assume it would come back to this committee. Who makes the final decision? The Board of School Committee? Consigli?

Chairman O'Connell: The sub-contractor awards are awarded by the contractor. Then there is oversight from the city, from the Board of School Committee, the school district. Generally, that is Tim Clougherty or his designee Josh Gagne. They are at the weekly OAC meeting. We awarded a contract to a general contractor, and they are awarding sub-contracts. We have DPW in that room, because in the city they are the ones who hold the knowledge of the trades and the local companies. That is the way to ensure that Consigli or Harvey doesn't miss anything. The bids are public. Every effort is made to reach out to bidders as well.

Alderman Terrio: I agree that if we can get this information, that would be helpful.

M. Lenfest: The descopes, the school district is invited, DPW attends. This document is a page of a levelling sheet that is in a document called an owner authorization letter. Consigli writes the letter to explain why they want to award this sub-contractor the work.

It is based off of what the budget for the work is from our original estimates to show that they are within budget, and if not, why. If there is something missing should there be an additional allowance included? What are the risks moving forward? It is a thorough document. We'd be glad to share these in a folder for the committee. It is voluminous.

Chairman O'Connell: We have moved forward today. We will get these reports every month. You will also have a list each month of the contracts awarded to date, chronologically.

M. Lenfest: That is what these next two slides are. These are contracts that have been written. We are 90%+ procured at Hillside, same with McLaughlin. At Alderman O'Neil's request, I will provide all these with the report as well as the levelling sheets from the OALs. It will be a complete file for the team to review.

Chairman O'Connell: We can review it next month if we need to refine it. Whatever the committee needs to be satisfied.

M. Lenfest: I have one slide left. Based on the team's hard work and Consigli taking it seriously to look for local sub-contractors, when I update this, it will be 68% of the value of the work will have been awarded to New Hampshire sub-contractors.

Alderman O'Neil: Is there a reason or can you give an example of a contract that was not awarded to New Hampshire contractors?

M. Lenfest: Maybe Trimax Steel. Structural steel pricing is more advantageous coming from Trimax, which is outside of New Hampshire. They did solicit pricing from local vendors out of Hudson and two gentlemen out of Lawrence that bid on the work. When you look at steel pricing, it is tough to beat Canada on a lot of the work. Someone has to be very aggressive. We are happy with awarding Trimax.

Alderman O'Neil: Is Trimax the fabricator?

M. Lenfest: They are both fabrication and installation.

Alderman O'Neil: Do they bring Canadians to do the install?

M. Lenfest: I would have to check on that.

Alderman O'Neil: That isn't uncommon. The market has hit that. The Verizon was Canadian. The airport parking garage was Canadian. The install was New Hampshire people. For me, trying to get as many New Hampshire people and Manchester people working first on the project is important.

M. Lenfest: Consigli was diligent and circulated an extensive list of contractors they were looking to go out to bid to. That list was vetted by the DPW. Any issues were discussed and the list was refined. That being said, they used modern means of reaching out to the sub-contractor pool. That could be placing the notice of opportunity to bid with different plan holders and that was done. If a New Hampshire sub-contractor wasn't awarded it

was either based on not receiving a New Hampshire sub-contractor bid for the work, or it was not competitive.

Alderman O'Neil: I want to be clear. I want to make sure this does not reflect on Consigli. We have not been in a process spending this amount of money in a long time. I don't want to call it growing pains, but it has been a long time since we have done anything this big. It is generating interest among our constituents and our businesses. This doesn't reflect on Consigli. They have to play the cards that were dealt to them. I want to be clear on that.

M. Lenfest: I agree. That being said, this reflects well on them that in today's market they were able to get to 68% of New Hampshire firms. That is impressive, there is a lot of competition from out of state.

Chairman O'Connell: We have consensus that we are going to do the obvious thing, which is to spend the maximum amount of the project with viable vendors from New Hampshire and in particular from Manchester. In fairness to Consigli, they have an office in Manchester. Vance lives in Manchester. He didn't come here for this project, he lives here. It is a major company. The other company that is going to be doing Priority II and Beech Street is Harvey, which is a New Hampshire company in Bedford.

Alderman O'Neil: We are lucky to have both companies.

Chairman O'Connell: Alderman Kantor, would you like to discuss your next issue?

Alderman O'Neil: I think what she is trying to show is Kallwall is a Manchester company, they employ Manchester people, and I haven't had a conversation about it. I had to ask her for the brochure. Is there a way for a Manchester based company to incorporate some of their products in future design?

Chairman O'Connell: The design of the buildings is complex and based on lots of things. Jen from SMMA represents a team of people who are working on this project, who have designed everything from curbstones to roofs to windows to doors to flooring. There are lots of different products and they do different things and have different attributes. I want to respond as a committee to any questions. There are thousands of products involved in these projects. I don't want to make a precedent here where we are going to have a vendor come before the committee to offer their product. That's not a viable thing to do. I don't think it's the right way to approach it. If there is a vendor who has a complaint or concern, if they were to bring that forward and say we don't like the process or understand it, or it is flawed, that would be a good way to approach it.

Alderman Kantor: I appreciate that. It is about the design of the building, bringing in the light that was such an important thing, and green-space, to me why wouldn't we think of Kallwall that does these amazing things? Besides the point, what was brought up, and sorry that I misunderstood. Longchamps got the bid, and that is wonderful. But the lighting part was confusing to me. The gentleman, Ken Dennison, is here. I wanted him to explain this because it is important. He is saying the bidding wasn't fair with the lighting. He has a product company; he works for the company. It is a problem; what is the process, what is the protocol? I am going to speak up and ask questions, if I offend someone, I am sorry.

I definitely misspoke, Longchamps won, so that is great. It is Manchester taxpayer's money. That is my bottom line. When someone comes in lower on a product cost, we have to ask why.

M. Lenfest: When we are talking about products, the manufacturers normally do outreach and contact architects. SMMA has been working with the city for a few years in developing these projects. If they want their product to be specified to be part of the bid package, they reach out to the designers. They impress upon the designer the quality of their product and that it would fit the design. Based on that information, the designer would include them as an example of a product that you could have as an as equal. That being said, there are a few components that go into this. One is there is a district standard for lighting. When Facilities goes out there, they have to know the type of light they are working on. You want them for maintenance reasons to be as standardized as practical. When an electrician from the district goes from one building to another, he will know what he is dealing with. There is no learning curve there. That being said, once you get to the bid phase the product manufacturer has another opportunity, and they could go to the successful bidder or the electrician and say I have a better product that could save the district money. You could be more competitive in your bidding; we could possibly get a credit for the school district. They could again put their product forward, and if the subcontractor liked it they could put it in as a product substitution to the designer, which would then review the criteria. If it meets the requirements, they could make a substitution based on an advantageous benefit to the district. We have not seen that regarding lighting on this project.

Alderman Kantor: The gentleman is here. Can we hear from him?

Chairman O'Connell: I am not accepting that. We are not having a presentation from anybody because I don't want to create precedent. We could have ten other people here.

Alderman Kantor: You said if there is a problem in the bidding process.

Chairman O'Connell: If there is a problem with the bidding process, I suggest the submission be made to this committee that there is a complaint about the bidding process, specify what the complaint is, and we will respond to it. It is not on the agenda. The people who might be able to respond aren't here. I am not accepting an addition to our agenda on this topic. In the end, if there is a better product and for some reason, we didn't get to it by our process, then we will make sure it happens. I am not comfortable adding this to our agenda tonight. I suggest the method that Mr. Lenfest has suggested, that the vendor could approach the people who have been awarded the contracts, approach the general contractor. They are all about saving money and are happy to do it.

School Committee Member Turner: It is a slippery slope if we start bringing in individual companies. We were talking about geo-technical work last month. There are companies that don't provide a product, but provide a service. They can help site the land or cutting into the earth. I don't think it is the business of this committee to be making suggestions of the thousands of businesses that would be part of what would go out for RFP. That is my opinion. It is not the place of this committee, and I don't think it is appropriate for a presentation tonight. If Alderman Terrio came in with a geo-technical person that he thinks

does a good job, they might, but again it is not our job to micromanage what is happening with the experts.

Alderman Terrio: I agree with School Committee Member Turner, I don't want to get in the weeds or micromanage. On the other hand, this committee does need to take up if there is a problem with the bidding process if it is unfair. In future meetings, we should be addressing that. We should hear the complaint, evaluate it, and make changes or determine it is not worthy of a change. I don't want to get in the weeds or be at every meeting looking at every detail. I don't want to micromanage. If there is a problem with the bidding process, we should address it in the future.

Chairman O'Connell: I agree that is our role, well said. If there is a problem with the process or it is flawed, we should be notified of that. We'd be open to hearing that.

Alderman O'Neil: Jen, did Kallwall reach out to you at all?

J. Soucy: Personally, I didn't get any correspondence from them. I have used them on projects. I am not opposed to them. We haven't specified that type of product for these middle school projects. We would use them in a gym where you want diffused light and you're not getting direct sunlight into a space. Kallwall is a great product. We don't have that application for this product.

Alderman O'Neil: But you are familiar with them. If they want to reach out, they could.

J. Soucy: Absolutely.

2. Monthly status and financial report for August 2025 submitted by LeftField.

*On motion of **School Committee Member Turner**, duly seconded by **School Committee Member Soule**, it was voted to accept the report and submit it to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen and Board of School Committee for informational purposes.*

Alderman O'Neil: I wrote down three terms. I don't know if it gets into weeds, but descope, reconciliation, and levelling.

M. Lenfest: Descope is when you narrow it down to two or three final competitive sub-contractors and you descope them, you take the scope of work, all the elements required, and you literally ask them to agree on a sheet that all of these items are included in their price. The first one I read off was penetration fire-proofing. As an electrician, you drill a hold through a wall to run a wire through it, you have to fire-proof that wall if it is a rated wall. They want to make sure everybody has it and said yes, I have it. If they don't have it what is the value that you should have had? Consigli excels at that. Reconciliation is when you have an estimate by the CM and then you sit down and go through it. We participate. Sometimes a third-party cost consultant sits with us and the architect sits in. We all go through each price of each item and we agree collectively on the value that should be carried is.

Alderman O'Neil: This is before sub-contractor pricing?

M. Lenfest: At different intervals. At schematic design, there is no sub-contractor coverage at that point. As you progress, you will get more and more sub-contractor coverage. Right now, Group 2 projects were at 75% construction documents, so there is sub-contractor coverage. Currently, Harvey is getting that sub-contractor pricing. They bring that back, show where they were strong in coverage, and where they themselves had to provide their own in-house pricing, then we critique that. It is an adversarial process; we go back and forth and agree on the final numbers and that is what is carried in the budget. Levelling is when you have three sub-contractors that bid the same scope of work, you look to make sure. On the electrical for the Hillside project, the original bid, there was a low number but they were missing scope. Consigli goes through every line to make sure they are using the specified products or they have the right bid and manpower, they have insurance, their safety rating is correct, and when they discover an item that somebody missed or they don't have an appropriate value, they ask them and say you missed this, what should it be. That person provides a number, without going through the whole resubmission of a proposal. Based on the numbers that needed to be plugged in that were missing, they then moved from the low bid to the second number. I am interested in what the questions on the bid process are, I am a highly certified person as it comes to bid process. This particular one, I personally met with Josh Gagne to go through our questions. I called the bidder and they confirmed every line-item with me to reinsure the integrity of the process.

Alderman O'Neil: Are levelling and descope synonymous?

M. Lenfest: Yes. The levelling happens through the descope process. You identify what somebody is missing.

Chairman O'Connell: Thank you guys for the work you are doing. I am confident in the team we have in place at LeftField. They are managing billions of dollars up and down the east coast worth of projects. Many are school projects. SMMA has vast experience in this. LeftField, all of those involved on a daily basis, this is what they do for a living. This is what their reputation depends upon, that they deliver value and they catch snags. That is the reason people pay them to be in the room. Their reputation is worth far more to them. They don't want to make mistakes. Thank you all for your work.

*There being no further business, on motion of **School Committee Member Turner**, duly seconded by **School Committee Member Soule**, it was voted to adjourn.*

A True Record. Attest.



Clerk of Committee

Meeting Start Time: 5:00PM

Meeting End Time: 5:57PM

Minutes Prepared By: Michael Intranuovo