

# DRAFT

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
HORACE W. PORTER HVAC BUILDING COMMITTEE  
Monday, March 4, 2024  
6:00 PM  
Horace Porter School Library  
3 Schoolhouse Rd., Columbia, CT**

**Members Present:** Chris Lent; Guy Wanegar; Alan Harbec; and Mike Sylvester, Facilities Manager (non-voting).

**Members Present (remotely):** None.

**Others Present:** Barbara Wilson, Superintendent; and Mark Walter, Town Administrator.

**Others Present (remotely):** Jim Russo, J.R. Russo, LLC.

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chris Lent called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.
2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** Alan moved to approve the agenda, and Guy seconded. Motion passed, 3:0 (unanimously)
3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**
  - 3.1 HVAC Building Committee Special Meeting Minutes for 2/21/24.  
  
Guy moved to approve the Special Meeting Minutes from 2/21/24, and Alan seconded. Motion to approve the Special Meeting Minutes of 2/21/24 passed, 3:0 (unanimously)
4. **AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS:**  
  
There were no comments or questions from the audience.
5. **OLD BUSINESS:**
  - 5.1 Discuss the status of the HVAC Indoor Air Quality grant application.  
  
Nothing new was reported on the status of the grant application.
6. **NEW BUSINESS: (NO MOTIONS)**
  - 6.1 Jim Russo of J.R. Russo, LLC ~~& Associates~~ to provide information regarding the Project Manager role for school construction projects.  
  
Chris Lent welcomed and introduced Jim Russo to the meeting. Jim made a clarification that his company is “J.R. Russo, LLC,” and not “J.R. Russo & Associates.”

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Jim provided an overview of the Owners Project Manager role. Services include, but are not limited to:

- Master Schedule – prepare of master schedule for the project including:
  - Remaining design phase activities
  - Bid phase/award phase
  - Construction phase
  - Close out phase
- Bid & Award Phase
  - Assist design team with preparation of final plans and Specifications for bid
  - Assist with Public Notice/DAS Advertisement
  - Assist with Pre-Bid meeting
  - Assist with Bid Quotations
  - Review and Formal Recommendations of Award
  - Assist with Pre-Construction Conference
  - Assist with Contract Award to third party for Commissioning
- Construction Phase
  - Coordinate school calendar with General Contractor
  - Review progress on-site
  - Contract Administration Duties
- Close out Phase
  - Coordinate submission of Operational Manual, Maintenance Manuals and Warranties as specified
  - Confirm Town has issued “Certificate of Completion”
  - Assist with resolution of all Punch List items
  - Obtain approval for Final Payment from General Contractor’s Surety Firm
  - Coordinate Final and Absolute Payment to General Contractor
  - Obtain Final and Complete Lien Waivers from General Contractor and First Tier Subcontractors
  - Monitor any corrective actions required during the warranty period

Jim noted one of the major distinguishable differences between a Project Manager and a Clerk of the Works is the former typically has broader technical experience, and often better situated to resolve construction phase issues through the use of Requests for Information (RFI) process.

Alan asked Jim about the process for obtaining wage certifications from Mechanical Contractors vs. General Contractors, as it’s possible the project could potentially be awarded to separate Mechanical and Electrical Contractors. In response, Jim recommended the Town not contract separately the electrical upgrades, and utilize the General Contractor model.

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Chris asked about the background check process of Contractors. Jim stated that any background check requirement would need to be included in the Specifications. Jim also noted the State Police could perform certain background checks, at a cost to the Town.

Jim noted his good working relationship with Silver Petrucelli & Associates (SP&A) on other projects; in his experience, SP&A has been very timely in their responses to RFIs.

6.2 Discuss the need for a commissioning agent. Possible action to make recommendations to the Board of Selectmen and Board of Education.

Chris asked Jim to opine on his experience with Commissioning Agents. Jim noted these third party agents are typically required for projects that reach a certain cost threshold and utilize state funding. He stated the estimated cost of a Commissioning Agent for the Horace Porter School Indoor Air Quality project would likely range between \$50,000 and \$70,000.

Chris noted that examples of Requests for Qualifications for a Commissioning Agent were included with the meeting notice to the Committee. The Committee determined further discussion would need to take place during future meetings.

**7. OTHER MATTERS:**

No additional matters were discussed.

**8. AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS:**

There were no comments or questions from the audience.

**9. ADJOURNMENT:**

Alan moved to adjourn, and Guy seconded. The Committee adjourned at 7:32 pm. Motion passed, 3:0 (unanimously)