



PLANNING & BUILDING COMMITTEE

Merrimack School District

<https://www.sau26.org/domain/23>

Minutes

May 22, 2024

Present: G. Perry, S. Albuquerque, F. Rothhaus, A. Santoriello, K. Bernier, T. Groff and School Board Liaison L. Rothhaus

Also Present: Chief Educational Officer B. Olsen (late), Business Administrator M. Shevenell, School Board Chair Lori Peters

S. Albuquerque called the meeting to order at 7 PM.

School Board Charge

S. Albuquerque introduced School Board Chair L. Peters who had come to present a charge for the Committee from the School Board.

L. Peters read the School Board's 2024-25 charge to the Committee. The charge asks:

1. That each member of the Committee sign the School Board ethics agreement.
2. That the Committee meet
 - a. At least monthly
 - b. In the Memorial Room at Town Hall and be recorded by Merrimack TV.
3. For the New Central Office Plan, that the Committee
 - a. Participate and collaborate with the Administration and the School Board to learn all aspects of the new Central Office plan.
 - b. Update all information regarding all previously explored alternative options,
 - c. Provide a detailed analysis of the cost of the final plan.
 - d. Set up an Ad Hoc Committee to help with communication and visualization of the final plan.
 - e. Take a formal vote on the final plan.
 - f. Work with the School Board during public presentations of the plan.
4. For the Capital Improvement Plan, that the Committee
 - a. Update and communicate the C.I.P to the School Board.
 - b. Take a formal vote on its C.I.P recommendations.
5. That the Committee appoint a member to collaborate with the Athletic Advisory Committee regarding fields and facilities.

L. Peters told the Committee this charge is being presented to the Committee before the School Board has set its Yearly Goals and Objectives, but a new Central Office will be one of the Board's goals for the year. She said Merrimack TV has agreed to record the Committee meetings and she indicated she wants the information about a new Central Office plan by early November.

After discussion about the need to sign an Ethics Agreement, S. Albuquerque asked all members who would be ethical to raise their hands. Everyone did.

Members discussed having meetings recorded and, by consensus, agreed that doing so might be beneficial to help promote the Central Office plan. Members also agreed that it could meet at Town Hall or in the high school cafeteria because both have the necessary recording equipment available but Town Hall is air conditioned and summer is coming.

New Central Office Plan

S. Albuquerque opened discussion on next steps for a new Central Office Plan.

Discussion included the following:

- Maybe the District should hire a director for the project.
- The information about the project that was on the website has been returned to the website, but most of it needs to be updated.
- Is a new video necessary?
- The Committee would like to meet with the architect.
- Should a smaller project be proposed?
- A large conference room and at least one smaller conference room are important.
- B. Olsen offered to do a report on the functionality of a central office and the core competencies it should have to explain why it is best to have everyone in the same building rather than spread around the District.
- Construction costs continue to go up.
- Some staff need private offices to discuss confidential matters.
- Other staff members can share office space and/or should be located near other staff in the same "department." Examples: Finance, Human Resources.
- Can some workers be remote?
- While the District does not "do" centralized staff training, if the District had a large conference room, would they?
- Does the Committee want to tour Central Offices in the area to see how our current offices and the proposed new Central Office compare to other District offices?
- The Committee never saw information about costs and concerns to rent and/or renovate Rite Aid, the Police Station and other spaces that have been mentioned as alternative solutions.
- M. Shevenell prefers to continue to work with Marinace Associates as the architect.

After the discussion, by consensus, the Committee agreed to the following plan:

- Members will send questions they want answered to S. Albuquerque by June 15th.
- S. Albuquerque will compile a list and send the list to B. Olsen and M. Shevenell as soon as possible.
- Administration will respond with answers by July 31st and the information will be shared with members.
- Members will meet on August 7th to discuss answers, hopefully with M. Shevenell and/or B. Olsen present.
- Then members will schedule a meeting with the architect and M. Shevenell to discuss next steps for a new plan.

By-laws

S. Albuquerque said unless someone objected, discussion of By-Laws would be put off until late fall.

Right-to-Know Law

Members were given a copy of RSA 91-A, the Right-To-Know Law and reminded to be careful about email communications, especially sending emails or replying to all members since such communications could be considered a meeting and a violation of the law.

Approval of Prior Minutes

G. Perry made a MOTION to approve the minutes of May 8, 2024. Second: T. Groff.

S. Albuquerque asked if anyone had any corrections. There were suggestions that the minutes should be rewritten to re-organize the Election Results discussion to more clearly define member comments and comments made to the members by the public.

G. Perry and T. Groff withdrew the motion and second.

S. Albuquerque said a new draft of the minutes will be sent out for review and approval at the next meeting,

Next Meeting

S. Albuquerque said the meeting originally scheduled for June 12th is cancelled and the next meeting will be on August 7th. Members will be notified when the meeting is posted.

G. Perry made a MOTION to adjourn. Second: T. Groff.

S. Albuquerque declared the meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.