

**Merrimack School Board Meeting
Merrimack Town Hall Meeting Room
October 20, 2014
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES**

PRESENT: Chairman Ortega, Vice Chairman Barnes, Board Members Powell, Guagliumi and Schneider, Superintendent Chiafery, Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin, Business Administrator Shevenell and Student Representative Crowley.

1. Call To Order

Chairman Ortega called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.
Chairman Ortega led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Approval of the October 6, 2014 minutes

Vice Chair Barnes moved (seconded by Board Member Guagliumi) to approve the minutes of the October 6, 2014 meeting:

Vice Chair Barnes requested the following changes to the minutes:

- Page 7 of 10, line 307, should read, “Vice Chair Barnes stated that the department heads/principals need to be ready to explain...”
- Page 9 of 10, line 393, the date of the Halloween party should be October 24, 2014.

Chairman Ortega requested the following changes to the minutes:

- Page 1 of 10, line 8, should be Student Representative Crowley
- Page 6 of 10, line 250, should read, “The 4.8 million dollar surplus will partially make up for the shortfall in the adequacy money of around one million dollars.”
- Page 7 of 10, line 291, insert the words “to the Superintendent” after the word “guidance”.
- Page 7 of 10, line 320, change the word “parody” to “parity”
- Page 8 of 10, line 354, add the sentence, “In times like these, student security must be a concern”.

The motion to accept the minutes of the October 6, 2014 meeting as amended passed 4-0-1 with Board Member Schneider abstaining.

3. Public Participation

There was no Public Participation.

4. Board’s Response to Merrimack Middle School Intersection Development

Chairman Ortega explained that at the September 15, 2014 board meeting, a plan for a rotary intersection to extend Old Blood Road into Madeline Bennett Drive was made by Ken Clinton of Meridian Land Services, Inc. along with Business Administrator Shevenell and Mr. Steve Keach. At that time the board requested two weeks to review the proposal, discuss it and get input on it. Board Member Powell moved (seconded by Board Member Schneider) that the school board has reviewed the proposal to relocate and upgrade a portion of Old Blood Road on the property owned by the school district as shown on a plan entitled “Chestnut Hill Cluster

Subdivision/Madeline Bennett Intersection Exhibit” and further identified as SK-C1 Sheet #6, prepared by Meridian Land Services, Inc. dated February 11, 2014 that was last revised on July 31, 2014 aka “the plan” and the school board does not object to the relocation and upgrade of such portion of Old Blood Road in accordance with the plan, provided, however, that the applicant honor its commitments that were made at the September 15, 2014 school board meeting and furthermore that the applicant shall submit any and all detailed engineering plans for such relocation and upgrades to the school board for review and for comment by the school board, the school board’s counsel, and its engineering consultant, prior to submission of such plans to the agency or authority with jurisdiction over such proposal.

Board Member Powell spoke to the motion, stating that the board has a vested interest in how the intersection is going to be set up because of the traffic flow in and out of the middle school. He added that he appreciated the time and effort of all parties and achieving the consensus to get the school board to feel comfortable with the proposal.

The motion passed 5-0-0.

5. New England School Development Council (NESDEC) Report Regarding Consolidation of the Superintendent and Special Education Offices

Mr. John Kennedy, facilities consultant for NESDEC, explained that NESDEC is an independent operating non-profit organization that helps school districts solve problems. They are involved in Strategic Planning and Facility Best Use studies.

NESDEC entered into an agreement with the Merrimack School District to develop a PK-12 School Facilities Best Educational Use Study. The goal of the project was to provide the district with an analysis of the feasibility of locating the Central Office and the Special Services Office in one of the existing public school facilities.

The NESDEC team analyzed district and municipal records, 2010 U.S. Census Data, birth data and information provided by the Merrimack Community Development Office and the Merrimack Chamber of Commerce. The study also included an analysis of present and planned school programs and the facilities needed to provide these programs. A member of the NESDEC study team visited all the district schools while they were in session. School documents, including district goals and curriculum and program information were studied.

Using the information gained from its analysis of enrollment trends, and coupled with its instructional programming/facility capacity analysis, NESDEC has developed several findings regarding alternatives that the district may be considering as it moves forward with decision making related to the relocation of the Central Office and the Special Services Office. The findings are designed to serve as a catalyst for further analysis and discussion and should be considered as a beginning point for future planning.

Mr. Kennedy explained the enrollment projections. Highlights included:

- For grades K-12 the enrollment history from 2004-2005 through 2014-2015 shows a significant decline in enrollment. It is a decline of 930 students over that time. A good portion of that decline is at the high school and the middle school. NESDEC is projecting a decline will continue, but will be less as compared to the last decade. This is because there are a few projects that are moving forward which will increase the population in Merrimack, therefore increasing the school population.

- It will be very important on an annual basis that the district talk to realtors, the community planning organizations and the Chamber of Commerce to keep a handle on what is happening in the residential market because it would affect the school district.

Mr. Kennedy spoke about the capacity analysis. This is done to point out that times have changed and are continuing to change. In the educational programs of the 1960's the buildings were built to meet the needs of a different educational program. There were few, if any, small group instruction spaces, Special Education services and computers were not used. Schools that one time housed six hundred students a generation ago, now may be overcrowded at five hundred students.

Mr. Kennedy explained that NESDEC based their capacity analysis on existing programs and accommodating existing programs. They also used grade level class sizes. They did an analysis of the high school master schedule. They found it was typical of many of the schools in the state.

Planned Operating Capacity (POC) for a 21st Century Programming:

- They take into consideration future planning/construction purposes
- Correct deficiencies
- Keep current programs
- Provides appropriate core and specialized facilities
- Parity/equity among all school buildings
- Meets current code requirements
- Maintains a sufficient "capacity cushion". NESDEC typical advises districts to maintain 10% capacity cushion.

Mr. Kennedy stated that the full report from NESDEC will be on the school district website.

Mr. Kennedy explained the findings from all the schools in the district: A typical school analysis includes:

- Site acreage
- When it was built
- What additions/renovations were done
- Square footage
- Number of interchangeable classrooms
- Number of preschool classrooms, number of kindergarten classrooms
- October 1st enrollment numbers, current operating capacity and planned operational capacity
- Instructional spaces
- Core facilities (gym, cafeteria, library, etc.)
- Administrative space
- Support Staff
- Instructional/Administrative Technology
- ADA compliance
- Major Systems (electrical, heating, roofs, flooring etc.)
- Site Information
- Storage

Merrimack Central Office

Mr. Kennedy noted the current workstations located in the Central Office include the ground floor and the first floor. Findings include:

- Office space is limited and viewed as inadequate.
- Due to the lack of space and the office work area configuration, confidentiality and privacy are affected
- The meeting area, break/lunch room and copy machines are all located in the same small space.
- Several work spaces are located on the ground floor/basement
- Storage capacity is limited
- The heating system, air conditioning and electrical systems are all inadequate.
- The roof and exterior walls are in need of an upgrade.

Special Services Office

Mr. Kennedy noted the current workstations located in the Special Services Building include the ground floor and the first floor. Findings include:

- Office space is limited and viewed as inadequate
- Confidentiality and privacy are affected
- The break/lunch room and the copy machine are all located in the same small space
- Storage capacity is limited
- The heating system, air conditioning and electrical systems are inadequate
- The exterior walls are in need of an upgrade

Findings

1. Maintaining the status quo: The Central Office and Special Services Office remain in their current locations.
 - a. NESDEC has found that the existing Central Office and Special Services Office facilities have several significant inadequacies including lack of sufficient and suitable space and building/system issues.
 - b. In NESDEC's view a status quo option is not viable, cost-effective or sustainable.
2. Relocation of the Central Office to Masticola Upper Elementary School (northeast corner, rooms 141-151)
 - a. The total estimated square footage would be 4,695 square feet
 - b. Advantages:
 - The Central Office would have sufficient work space as well as adequate private space
 - Storage space for public records and supplies would be adequate
 - Building problems would be eliminated
 - c. Challenges:
 - Sufficient space at JMUES would have to be relocated and/or reconfigured.
 - The playground fence would also require reconfiguration
 - The cost of reconfiguring the instructional space would be significant
 - The alignment/location of grade level team groupings may be altered.

- If enrollment trends change or there is a change to existing instructional programming, it would be difficult and costly to restore the reconfigured spaces to regular instructional classrooms
 - Parking would be a significant challenge which may require the paved playground be converted to a parking area.
 - Travel time between the Central Office and Special Services Office will increase.
3. Relocation of the Special Services Office to Merrimack Middle School (offices would be located on the first floor, rooms 127,128,129 and possibly 130)
- a. The total square footage would be 2,795 square feet.
 - b. Advantages
 - Special Services Office would have sufficient work space and private space would be available for parental and staff meetings
 - Storage space for student records and supplies would be adequate
 - Building problems would be eliminated
 - Sufficient space would be available for lunch/break room and office machinery
 - The location would be in an area that is easily accessed by the public
 - c. Challenges
 - Existing instructional spaces at Merrimack Middle School would have to be relocated and reconfigured.
 - The cost would be significant
 - The alignment of spaces for grade level groupings may be altered
 - Existing school corridor traffic patterns would have to be altered
 - Special Services staff would have to share restrooms with the Middle School administration and administrative staff
 - In the event that enrollment trends change or there are changes to existing instructional programming, it would be difficult and costly to restore reconfigured spaces to regular instructional classrooms.
 - Accommodating an additional twelve to fifteen Special Services Office parking spaces during sporting and other extracurricular events may be a significant challenge.
 - Travel time and distance between the Special Services Office and the Central Office will increase.
4. Relocation of the Central Office and the Special Services Office to one of the Merrimack District Schools.
- a. Total estimated square footage would be 7,490 square feet
 - b. NESDEC reviewed this option and determined that there is insufficient excess capacity in any Merrimack School to accommodate both the Central Office and the Special Services Office

Mr. Kennedy stated that NESDEC sees the report as a beginning point for study and discussion. An analysis of the advantages and challenges of relocating the Central Office and the Special Services Office to a single separate facility should also be reviewed because it was not part of the scope of this project.

Vice Chair Barnes commented on two of the items that Mr. Kennedy spoke about. First was the parking at the upper elementary school during community events and the other was the Special

Services Office being ADA compliant. She stated that she would like to see more specifics on these items noted in the report.

Board Member Guagliumi asked NESDEC if they looked into what economy of scale there would be if both the offices were together in one building.

Mr. Kennedy responded that they believed that there would be some economies of scale that could be developed if the two offices were located in the same area. He added that there may be some potential for economies that would not exist if the two are separate. They did not get into an in-depth analysis of the two together because they felt the two could not be put together utilizing the existing buildings.

Board Member Schneider asked about the 10% buffer in the projected occupancy estimates.

Mr. Kennedy responded that the numbers are done in each school in terms of the planned operating capacity and from that 10% is deducted because the trend is going to be that there will be more full-day kindergarten and there will be a wider expanse of pre-kindergarten as well as a building boom. He added that NESDEC feels it is very important to look at trends, i.e. births, residential housing, future planning for construction and anything else that may be an impetus or hindrance in regards to growth.

Chairman Ortega stated that this is a good document for the board to strategically look at in terms of operational planning for the district's facilities.

Board Member Schneider stated that the Planning and Building Committee is meeting on October 27th and he was sure the NESDEC report will be a discussion point. He asked if the board wanted to discuss whether they want to provide any direction they would like the Planning and Building Committee to take regarding the report.

Chairman Ortega responded that it is appropriate to have a discussion on the report before it goes before the Planning and Building Committee, especially its relation to the specific costs of the various options.

Board Member Schneider stated that he would like the school board to give a charge to the Planning and Building Committee to take steps towards looking at the options to see what the cost may be for each of the options and what the issues are for each option.

Board Member Schneider moved (seconded by Board Member Guagliumi) that the school board charge the Planning and Building Committee to look at the feasibility of moving the Special Services Office to the Middle School and the Central Office to the Upper Elementary School.

Board Member Schneider stated that he thinks it is important to look at the data on the costs of the options.

Vice Chair Barnes stated that the Planning and Building Committee can provide their original report of 2010 and see if there are some areas that are not covered in the NESDEC report and make an addendum to that report.

Board Member Schneider amended the motion to charge the Planning and Building Committee to provide detailed costs for the two options in the NESDEC report of locating the Central Office

to the Upper Elementary School and the Special Services Office to the Middle School and additionally to compare and contrast and update reporting based upon the Planning and Building Committee's original report and the new NESDEC report.

Board Member Powell asked if the motion could be amended to contain a time frame on it.

Superintendent Chiafery stated that deliberations on the budget will begin in January. She added that it would be her intention to include this in the budget as an item to consider as a warrant article. She added that when the board is going through hearings on the budget, one of the hearings could specifically deal with this.

Board Member Schneider amended the motion to charge the Planning and Building Committee to provide detailed costs for the two options in the NESDEC report of locating the Central Office to the Upper Elementary School and the Special Services Office to the Middle School and additionally to compare and contrast their existing report with the NESDEC report, making sure there are no gaps or deficiencies and ask that they do this work and complete it in order to report back to the school board by early January.

Board Member Guagliumi accepted the amendment.

The motion passed 5-0-0.

6. Presentation Regarding CopSync911

Police Chief Doyle gave a brief introduction to COPsync911. The police department has worked very closely with the people from Homeland Security to bring to the table a program which is a furtherance of the partnership between the police department and the school district in terms of outreach to serve the students and teachers through a more expedited process to get emergency notification out to emergency responders.

Lieutenant Paul Trepaney of the Merrimack Police Department spoke about the grant funds available for this program. The New Hampshire Department of Safety is funding the initiative via a federal Department of Homeland Security Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG).

Retired Chief Mike Sielicki explained that during this past year he was the President of the NH Chiefs of Police Association and it was during that time that Mr. Brandon Flanagan, Vice President of COPsync 911, brought the program to the attention of the police chiefs across the state. Then it went to the Sheriffs Association, the Tactical Officers Association, the NH State Police and Homeland Security. It became a state-wide initiative.

Brandon Flanagan gave a presentation on the program. Highlights include:

- Through COPsync911, they are hoping to bridge the gap between a school building under threat to law enforcement through their proprietary software.
- The primary purpose of COPsync911 is to reduce response time.
- The FBI and Secret Service conducted a study after Sandy Hook and the roughly 75 school shootings that have occurred in the country since then. The main purpose of the study was to figure out how to stop these incidents.

- From the law enforcement side:
 - The hope of this system is that by the mere presence of law enforcement responding on-scene quicker with this new means of communication, lives can be saved.
 - There is a software application that would sit on the computers inside a school building which would be accessible to all teachers, faculty and staff members.
 - Once the button from that software application is pushed, there is a fifteen second countdown. An alert is sent to the five nearest patrol cars regardless of their jurisdiction. A Wi-Fi or internet connectivity is used in order to initiate and send the alert out.
 - The mission is that the five nearest patrol cars receive the alert, as well as the local, county and state dispatch centers in NH as well as the cell phones of police officers in fifteen seconds or less. That is compared to the two to three minute average it takes for a someone to pick up his/her cell phone, dial 911, be routed to the local authorities and then to the local dispatcher.
 - The COPsync911 threat alert service improves communication among schools and law enforcement departments by enabling school computers and faculty and administration's mobile devices to connect to alert dispatchers and police cruisers directly.
 - The law enforcement officer learns which school district is under threat, what school specifically is affected, and the specific location of the building in danger.
 - The target floor plan is provided on the computers

- From the school side:
 - Have the ability to see the dispatchers and police officers who receive the alert.
 - This alert will silently notify all the staff in the school building.
 - The hope is to increase communication in a critical situation.
 - There is a mobile application for any staff member or administrator who is not in the building being threatened that can make them immediately aware of the situation.

Board Member Guagliumi asked if the system also works for medical emergencies.

Mr. Flanagan responded the product is meant to be used when lives are in jeopardy, lives are in danger or if there is an intruder or somebody with a weapon. However, local control may dictate how the system is used.

Board Member Guagliumi asked if there is integration with the GPS system.

Mr. Flanagan responded that they don't necessarily provide turn by turn directions but the dispatchers can determine the best route of travel to get an officer on scene as quickly as possible.

Board Member Powell asked what happens if the computer system locks down.

Mr. Flanagan responded that there will be an easy access to the computer. They also do provide for a mobile application. The number of users in a school is not limited. Protocol for policies may be changed so the computers do not lock out.

Board Member Powell asked if several individuals send an alert at the same time, will other alerts be cancelled out.

Mr. Flanagan responded that there will not be multiple alerts sent from the same location. Other individuals who attempt to send an alert will immediately be sent into an incident chat room.

Board Member Schneider asked if there is a check and balance of the system.

Mr. Flanagan responded that they go out of their way to protect the system as best as they can.

Board Member Schneider asked what other schools have been introduced to the system.

Mr. Flanagan responded that they are rolling this out as a state-wide initiative. New Hampshire is the first state in the nation to adopt a system such as this. They have at least 50 communities that are either on board or are in the process of adopting this plan. The hope is to have the whole state of New Hampshire online within three years.

Chief Sielicki responded that the goal is to keep everyone on one platform, regardless of where they are in the state, and to have the ability to communicate with each other.

Vice Chair Barnes asked if their system integrates with a law enforcement platform.

Mr. Flanagan responded that all responders would be utilizing their platform, so there is no need to integrate their software with any other law enforcement software. This is a stand-alone software platform.

Vice Chair Barnes asked if all law enforcement agencies are using the same platform.

Mr. Flanagan responded that they are working towards that.

Vice Chair Barnes asked about the grant and what the funds would cover.

Lt. Trepany responded that it is primarily a school grant and the police department is involved in applying for it.

Chief Sielicki responded that it is a 50% match grant. The grant covers the installation for the first year and all the training for the first year for both the police department and the schools. So there is no cost for the first year. There would be costs in the subsequent years.

Mr. Flanagan spoke about the 911 Reverse Alert. This occurs when someone outside the school facility raises a safety concern and sends a message to a police dispatcher, who sends an immediate alert to the administration in the school where there is a potential danger. The administration can then determine who will receive the alert within their building. Other examples when the 911 Reverse Alert may be used are a severe weather alert, police action in the neighborhood or downed power lines.

Board Member Powell asked about the radios presently located in the schools and how their use compares to the COPsync911 system response time.

Chief Doyle responded that this system will enhance the system that already exists in Merrimack. The radios provide the people in the front office the ability to reach out to the police department directly and immediately, but there is only one radio in every building in either the principal's office or the main office. This system is on every computer in that particular school building. He added that this system does not eliminate the radios, but enhances the system. He

stressed the importance of the system having immediate information sent to the nearest five patrol cars. Seconds could save lives.

Vice Chair Barnes asked about the application on the phones and if the system looks at where a teacher is located at that particular time, or where the teacher is based.

Mr. Flanagan responded that the administrator of the building has the option to select or program five locations that they most frequently travel throughout the day in their building. Otherwise they can use the location tab on the computer program which will ping the GPS location of the smart device. He added that they provide user/administrative privileges so they can maintain who is using the system, when they are using it, or activate or deactivate users.

Board Member Schneider asked what happens if there is a power outage in the school.

Mr. Flanagan responded that they recommend the system be put on as many devices as possible, so if the power goes out and Wi-Fi goes down, the cell phones still have the information. He added that there is no extra cost to put the system on all the devices.

Chairman Ortega asked about year-one installation and training. He envisions that there would have to be revisions to the existing emergency policies and procedures in the district and that the training period would be the time to address those revisions. He asked about the cost of the installation and training.

Mr. Flanagan responded that negotiated cost for year, one per school building, is one thousand eight hundred dollars (\$1,800). Since it is a 50% matching cost, the district would be responsible for nine hundred dollars (\$900) for each of the five schools. The James Mastricola Upper Elementary School and James Mastricola Elementary School are considered as one complex.

Chairman Ortega asked if the Superintendent's office and the maintenance building and the Special Services office would be covered as part of the five schools.

Mr. Flanagan responded that the Superintendent's office, the maintenance office and the Special Services office would be included in the program.

Business Administrator Shevenell asked if there will be a need for the district to purchase or maintain servers.

Mr. Flanagan responded that this is a cloud-based software platform so the district does not have to purchase or maintain new servers.

Chairman Ortega asked about the status of the grant.

Lt. Trepaney responded that the grant application has been submitted.

Board Member Powell asked if there are any school districts in New Hampshire that are currently on line and active. He asked if it would be possible to speak with the districts that are currently on line to hear about their experiences with the system.

Mr. Flanagan responded that they would provide that information.

Chairman Ortega thanked everyone for their presentation. He added that it is an example of the strong, solid, pro-active partnership that exists between the district and the police department.

7. Ongoing Preparation for Development of the 2015-2016 Budget

a. Board's Budget Message to the Superintendent

Chairman Ortega explained that each board member provided their individual guidance to the Superintendent for the 2015-2016 budget. He read the compilation of the board members' guidance aloud.

b. Status of Capital Reserve Fund

Business Administrator Shevenell explained the status of the Capital Reserve Funds:

- In 2012-2013, there were three reserve funds: the Thorntons Ferry Reserve Fund, the Masticola Repair Fund and a fund for the athletic fields. The total amount was sixty-seven thousand dollars (\$67,000).
- Those funds were dissolved and the sixty-seven thousand dollars (\$67,000) was put into the school district Emergency Repair Fund.
- That leaves us with six funds that are still active and have balances:
 - There is a school asbestos fund in the amount of fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000)
 - In 2003 a Remedial Reading and Math Fund that has close to sixty thousand dollars (\$60,000) was established in case Title One Funds were no longer available.
 - In 2001 the Special Education Trust Fund was established. A withdrawal of around one hundred thirty-six thousand dollars (\$136,000) three years ago was made, leaving four hundred ninety-six thousand dollars (\$496,000) remaining in the fund.
 - The School Roofing Fund was established in 1992 and currently has three thousand four hundred and twenty-eight dollars (\$3,428) left in the fund. .
 - The School Pavement/Reconstruction Fund was established in 1992. That currently has a balance of one thousand three hundred and seventeen dollars (\$1,317)
 - The School District Repair Fund had one hundred twenty-six thousand dollars (\$126,000). A few meetings ago the school board voted to use some of this money to replace the bleachers at the high school. The actual cost of replacing those bleachers is ninety-eight thousand and five hundred dollars (\$98,500) so that leaves this fund with a balance of twenty-seven thousand dollars (\$27,500).

Vice Chair Barnes asked if these funds could be considered for the district's asbestos abatement plan or would they be repurposed for the Repair Fund.

Business Administrator Shevenell responded that the only way to take money from the Asbestos Fund is through a warrant article. Therefore it would be best to repurpose that money into the School District Emergency Repair Fund since finding asbestos would constitute an unanticipated expenditure.

Chairman Ortega stated that one thing we have to look through the budget cycle and in preparation of the warrant articles, is the plan for reconstituting the Repair Fund to an adequate level.

Board Member Schneider asked about the reuse of the old bleachers.

Business Administrator Shevenell responded that the cost of ninety-eight thousand five hundred dollars (\$98,500) included the company removing and using the old materials. If that were not the case, the cost of the bleachers would have been higher.

Superintendent Chiafery added that it is the intent of the administration to bring forward a person who has great knowledge about the high school track at the November 3, 2014 board meeting. The board can use that information during the budget process.

8. HealthTrust Reimbursement for 2014-2015

Business Administrator Shevenell reported that last year we received 1.5 million dollars from the Health Insurance Trust for 2013-2014, a portion of which went to the employees because it was their money. This year, we have received one million ninety four thousand dollars (\$1,094,000) from the Health Insurance Trust.

Board Member Powell asked if this is going to be an ongoing occurrence every year.

Business Administrator Shevenell responded that he has no idea. He added that he doesn't see it ongoing for four or five years but until this is all sorted out perhaps we can see something next year.

Board Member Powell stated that he thought that it was a waste of manpower to have to go through the process every year to determine how much is returned to the employees and how much the district keeps.

9. Other

a) Correspondence

Chairman Ortega received an e-mail from a grandparent who was concerned with his/her grandchild's high school education

b) Comments

Student Representative Crowley stated that when the bleachers arrived to be installed, it caused some problems for the administration and the maintenance staff. It has really affected the sports teams and the Student Council as well. The pep rally had to be cancelled which is very detrimental to the senior class spirit. They also had to move their breast cancer volleyball fund raiser game as well as Senior Night and Teacher Appreciation Night. She added that in the future, they hope that the board would take into consideration the students' aspect of life at the high school as the construction pieces are going on.

10. New Business

Vice Chair Barnes stated that after the joint meeting with the Town Council, the concern about the tennis courts at O'Gara Drive being decommissioned was addressed. She asked for some documentation regarding the building of the tennis courts but there was none. Based on that, she thought there should be a professional assessment, perhaps by Steve Keach. If Mr. Keach finds the area is suitable for tennis courts, the district may want to pursue a letter to the state that states that the district does not approve of the decommissioning of the tennis courts. She would want to know what is suitable and viable for the site.

Chairman Ortega stated that this would have to be an agenda item since hiring a professional would have to be funded and the board would have to authorize funding.

9. Committee Reports

Student Representative Crowley gave her report:

- Student Council elected a new Secretary, Kim Ortega
- Homecoming was Saturday and was the most successful Student Council run dance they have had in years. They are looking to give out more than one scholarship this year, since a greater amount of money was raised.
- Student Congress is made up of homeroom reps, sports team captains, and club leaders and is run by the Student Council Executive Board. They are in the process of changing school policy on bringing out-of-district students to school dances.
- Mr. Woodward's government class is looking forward to a putting on a mock election in November in partnership with Student Council. This will be in accordance with the National Student Initiative to involve students in local and state government.
- The high school is looking for students over the age of eighteen to volunteer at the voting center in November and encourages them to vote as well.

Board Member Guagliumi reported on the Budget Committee meeting on October 14, 2014. It was announced that David Illg would fill the vacancy on the committee for the remainder of the term and the 2013-2014 budget was reviewed with Business Administrator Shevenell.

Board Member Schneider reported on the Merrimack Safeguard Committee meeting on October 2, 2014. They celebrated the receipt of the grant they received. They are going to look at their action plan and determine the specifics. He suggested the Merrimack Safeguard Committee come before the board at a later date, to lay out their plan.

Board Member Powell reported on the Health Care Cost Committee Meeting on October 1, 2014. A total of four individuals each won a one thousand dollar (\$1,000) Health Trust incentive. As of June, the district has realized a total cost savings of nineteen thousand dollars (\$19,000) due to the Smart Shopper Compass Program. The Smart Shopper Compass Program is a program where an employee can contact Smart Shopper Compass for recommendations of upcoming procedures and shop around for the most cost-effective one.

Vice Chair Barnes reported that the Parks and Recreation Committee did not meet in October because there was not a quorum. They will be putting on the Annual Halloween Party on Friday, October 24, 2014 at Wasserman Park. The skate park is closing October 17, 2014 for the season.

Chairman Ortega reported that he had an update from the Technology Committee by Nancy Rose:

The focus of the K-6 level has been on the most critical skills and understandings, in addition to focusing skills.

- They are looking at keyboarding and keyboard functioning
- Productivity software skills- using things like word and excel and the tools that are universal in all productivity software
- File management and understanding skills
- Work to build critical thinking skills, problem solving, persistence, reading for instruction, learning through play, trial and error and acceptable risk
- On the information side, the focus is on research steps in building up the complexity of the process as they progress through the grades, online data bases vs. web searching, navigating web pages, and evaluating sites and sources.

The focus of the Middle School

- The committee is looking to begin to integrate FIRST information and technical concepts into the SCALES work

At the high school level the committee is hoping to use all the pre-identified skills and to identify levels of mastery that ought to be demonstrated when a student reaches those levels.

Ultimately the focus will be on building staff understanding, facility and comfort and then increasing rigor and opportunities for creative expression. They will also begin looking at coding and programming at all levels.

10. Public Comments on Agenda Items

Rich Hendricks spoke as the chair of the Planning and Building Committee regarding the NESDEC report and the costs associated with the options. He stated that NESDEC used one cost for two different offices in two different buildings. He wanted people to know that the costs reported by NESDEC are five year old costs and that the Planning and Building Committee will be updating those costs.

11. Manifest

At 10:30 p.m. Vice Chair Barnes moved (seconded by Board Member Schneider) to adjourn the meeting.

The motion passed 5-0-0.