

**Merrimack School Board Special Meeting
Merrimack High School Cafeteria
January 20, 2015
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES**

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

1. Pledge of Allegiance

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

2. Approval of January 5, 2015 Minutes

Vice Chair Barnes moved (seconded by Board Member Schneider) to approve the minutes of the January 5, 2015 meeting.

Board Member Guagliumi requested the following changes to the minutes:

- Page 3, lines 135 and 136, clarify that the meetings were Budget Committee Hearings.
- Page 7, line 326, replace the word “be” with the word “than”.

Board Member Schneider requested the following changes to the minutes:

- Page 7, line 299, add the word “week” between the words “twelve period”.
- Add a statement to clarify that administrators responded to pre-submitted questions by school board members.

Vice Chair Barnes requested the following changes to the minutes:

- Page 3, line 103, replace the word “goals” with the words “succession planning”.
- Page 8, line 367, replace the words “Local Government Center” with “HeathTrust”.

Chairman Ortega requested the following changes to the minutes:

- Page 3, place lines 130-136 under section 6.
- Page 6, section 8 references to “Technology and Library Media Services” should be consistent.
- Page 7, line 332, the sentence should read “Chairman Ortega asked if the Planning Board was aware of the reasons why the track was being considered in the fiscal year 2015-2016 despite being on the Capital Improvement Plan when the Planning Board moved it to 2017-2018.”
- Page 7, line 335, replace the word “added” with the word “stated”.
- Page 7, line 301, add the following sentence to the end of the paragraph. Director Rose’s primary concern around testing is not the number of computers but the bandwidth.

The motion passed 4-0-1 with Board Member Powell abstaining.

3. Public Participation

There was no public participation.

4. Acceptance of Gifts/Grants under \$5,000

Business Administrator Shevenell presented the following gifts and grants under \$5,000 to the Board.

- Energy North Inc. to Merrimack Middle School for \$500

Vice Chair Barnes moved (seconded by Board Member Guagliumi) to approve the acceptance of the gifts and grants under \$5,000 with gratitude.

The motion passed 5-0-0.

5. Request to Conduct Staff Survey Regarding School Climate and Leadership at James Mastricola Elementary School for a Doctoral Dissertation

Superintendent Chiafery introduced Lois Costa Principal at Adeline C. Marston School in Hampton and former teacher at Reeds Ferry Elementary School and James Mastricola Elementary School Principal Emilie Carter.

Ms. Costa provided the Board with details about her Doctoral Dissertation. Ms. Costa requested approval from the Board to survey the professional staff at James Mastricola Elementary School for her Doctoral Dissertation regarding school climate and leadership.

Chair Ortega requested that the board waive the two week rule.

Ms. Costa answered several questions from the board members.

Vice Chair Barnes moved (seconded by Board Member Guagliumi) to allow Mrs. Lois Costa to work with James Mastricola Elementary School to conduct research for her Doctoral Dissertation and to waive the two week rule.

The motion passed 5-0-0.

6. Update to the Original Planning and Building Committee's Report for the Consolidation of the Special Services Office and the Superintendent's Office

Chairman Ortega introduced Chairman of the Planning and Building Committee Rich Hendricks and Committee Member Gage Perry.

Chairman Ortega explained that the Board recently charged the Planning and Building Committee with the task of revisiting all previously discussed options for the consolidation of the Special Services Office and the Superintendent's Office, provide updated costs and to consider the information contained in the recent NESDEC report.

Rich Hendricks noted the NESDEC report provided the Planning and Building Committee with additional information to consider.

Mr. Hendricks stated that the Planning and Building Committee reconsidered all previous options. There are not many opportunities to lease office space with 9,000 square feet. There is currently one office building for sale; however, it would be unrealistic to expect that a seller would hold the sale of the building until the annual deliberative session.

Mr. Hendricks noted that the NESDEC report suggested that the Special Services Office could relocate to a space in the middle school. The Committee determined that the relocation would not serve the needs of its visitors with special needs, for example, the lack of handicapped parking and the distance from the main entrance. The NESDEC report suggested that the Superintendent's Office could relocate to a space in the upper elementary school. The Committee determined that the relocation would result in a major disruption to the hallway foot traffic.

Mr. Hendricks reported the School District Planning and Building unanimously recommends that a new consolidated Superintendent's Office and Special Services Office building be built on the one-acre parcel of land adjacent to the Merrimack High School parking lot and the James Masticola Elementary School Athletic field.

Board Member Schneider asked Business Administrator Shevenell to provide the Board with a rendering of all bonded debt over time.

Chairman Ortega summarized the Board and the Planning and Building Committee were in agreement that a new consolidated building was the desired outcome.

Chairman Ortega stated that the Board would discuss all Warrant Articles on February 2, 2015. He asked Mr. Hendricks to provide the Board with a dollar amount for the Warrant Article. He requested that the amount of the Warrant Article be itemized and inclusive of demolition, moving costs, paving costs, gas line hook up, etc.

7. Update on the Merrimack Middle School Traffic Survey for the Intersection of Madeline Bennett Lane and Chestnut Hill Subdivision

Business Administrator Shevenell stated that Stephen G. Pernaw and Company, Inc. provided a summary statement of their findings and recommendations concerning the geometric configuration of the future intersection of Madeline Bennett Lane and Old Blood Road.

Business Administrator Shevenell reported that Mr. Pernaw's traffic engineering solution is to construct a simple three-leg T-intersection with Madeline Bennett Lane as the major street and the subdivision road being the minor leg of the intersection. The subdivision road approach to Madeline Bennett Lane should operate under stop sign control, similar to other public street intersections.

Business Administrator Shevenell stated that he and Chairman Ortega attended a meeting with the developer and representatives from the Town of Merrimack to review Mr. Pernaw's report. During that meeting the representatives from the Town were resistant to the stop sign at Old Blood Road. The concept of interchangeable flashing red and flashing yellow lights controlled by the School District during school hours and controlled by the Town during non-school hours was discussed.

Chairman Ortega stated that the developer, Chestnut Hill Subdivision, was presenting before the Planning Board this evening. The School board is expected to take a formal vote on the intersection of Madeline Bennett Lane and Old Blood Road at the February 2, 2015 meeting.

Superintendent Chiafery expressed her concern over a middle school administrator manually controlling traffic lights at the same time they are responding to a very busy end of school dismissal time. She would prefer a stop sign.

Board Member Guagliumi expressed safety concerns over the light solution as well as expressed frustration and couldn't understand why flashing lights would be a preference over traffic study results of a stop sign and concerned over Madeline Bennett not having the right of way.

Vice Chair Barnes stated that the board supported a gated entrance on Old Blood Road and a number of options presented that were not accepted by the Town. She expressed frustration that Mr. Pernaw's recommendation was not agreed upon by all. She does not support remote controlled flashing red and yellow lights. She suggested a stop sign at Old Blood Road with added signage defining that the stop sign is to be limited to school hours only.

Board Member Schneider added individuals who are color blind may have trouble determining the color of a single flashing light meant to control the traffic.

8. Update on Final Modifications to the Educator Performance and Evaluation Model

Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin presented the board with a final report of the Educator Performance and Evaluation Committee (EPEC). The presentation included a restatement of the charge of the committee (to develop a tool and process for educator evaluation that is contemporary and research based) and a brief description of its membership, representing a cross-section of community and school interests. The presentation also reviewed the central component of the proposed evaluation model, a rubric consisting of five domains:

- Planning and Preparation
- Educational Environment
- Instruction
- Monitoring, Assessment, and Follow-Up
- Professional Responsibilities

The proposed four levels of performance were also summarized:

- Highly Effective
- Effective
- Basic
- Does Not Meet Standard

Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin also shared with the board the forms proposed to be used in support of both formative and summative educator observations and described the proposed cycle of observations for both continuing contract and probationary educators.

In addition, Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin reviewed the dimensions of the pilot of the model that ran for one month, from early May to early June, and described the modifications to the tool and the process that resulted from a review of the findings based on multiple focus groups and on-line surveys completed by pilot participants. The primary modifications included:

- The addition of an optional pre-conference
- The reduction in total number of observations for probationary educators
- The clarification of language used to differentiate levels of performance
- The streamlining of performance level descriptors in the rubric
- The enhanced representation of all educators in the educator rubric

The presentation concluded with a description of the extensive educator and evaluator training that has taken place to date, and a statement concerning the district's commitment to on-going training as a significant component of the long term strategy for success of the proposed model. Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin thanked all members of the committee who worked tirelessly for over two years in service of this initiative.

9. Other

a) Correspondence

Chairman Ortega stated that he received and responded to six emails related to the reduction of one English teaching position and one math teaching position from the budget. He received one email regarding the Family and Consumer Science presentation in December 2014. He received one correspondence from a parent wanting to talk to him about preschool concerns.

b) Comments

Superintendent Chiafery highlighted a flyer from the HealthTrust containing information about a regional program on February 12, 2015 in Londonderry on the Affordable Care Act. She asked board members to contact Human Resources Director Linda Hastings if they want to attend.

10. New Business

There was no new business.

11. Committee Reports

Board Member Guagliumi reported that the Program Development Committee met on January 15th.

Board Member Guagliumi reported the Budget Committee began its review of the 2015-2016 budget on January 13th. The next Budget Committee hearing will be held on January 27th at 7:00 p.m.

Board Member Guagliumi reported that she attended a liaison meeting at the upper elementary school last Thursday.

Board Member Schneider reported that the Merrimack Safeguard met in January.

Board Member Schneider reported that the Planning and Building Committee has met periodically during the month of January.

12. Public Participation on Agenda Items

There was no public participation on agenda items.

13. Manifest

The board signed the manifest.

At 10:45 p.m. Board Member Schneider moved (seconded by Board Member Guagliumi) to adjourn the meeting.

The motion passed 5-0-0.