

**Merrimack School Board Meeting
Town Hall Meeting Room
November 2, 2015
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES**

Present: Chairman Ortega, Vice Chair Barnes, Board Members Guagliumi, Schneider and Powell, Superintendent Chiafery, Business Administrator Shevenell and Student Representative Marcus.

Absent: Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin

1. Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Ortega called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Chairman Ortega led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Approval of October 19, 2015 Minutes

Board Member Schneider moved (seconded by Board Member Guagliumi) to approve the minutes of the October 19, 2015 meeting.

Board Member Guagliumi requested the following changes to the minutes:

- Page 2, line 56, after “distributed”, change “the Board” to “the Merrimack School Board...”
- Page 2, line 63, insert the word School between Merrimack and District.
- Page 2, line 76, at the end of the sentence put 2016.
- Page 3, line 135, change “...plan is done...” to “...plan would be done...”
- Page 5, line 223, change “...was concerned...” to “...expressed some concern...”
- Page 5, line 224, change “...cost of the trip.” to “...cost to the families of the trip.”
- Page 5, line 233, change “...would have been unable...” to “...would have previously been unable...”

Student Representative Marcus requested the following changes to the minutes:

- Page 11, line 515, after “...band halftime show,...” change to say “...and small class presentations including the playing of an ancient New Year’s game.”
- Page 12, line 520, change “Lazama” to “Lezama”.
- Page 12, line 527, change “Duvall” to “Duval”.

The motion passed as amended 5-0-0.

3. Public Participation

There was no public participation.

4. Request to Purchase a Food Service Transport Van from Food Service Surplus Funds

Business Administrator Shevenell explained that Food Service Director Dziki was appearing before the School Board to request \$25,586.00 from the Food Service Program surplus of

\$135,436.00, to purchase a replacement van. The existing vehicle, a 2008 Ford cargo van, is used daily to deliver hot food to our satellite cafeterias at Reeds Ferry Elementary School and Thorntons Ferry Elementary School.

Leftover funds do not go back to the taxpayer but instead are returned to the Food Service Program budget. In the past the surplus has been used to purchase steam tables and food service automation software and upgrades.

Food Service Director Dziki provided some history on the existing van. It was purchased in 2009. The transmission was replaced and the van experienced other smaller problems including problems starting when it is raining. It is very important to have a reliable vehicle.

The proposed purchase van is a 2016 Ford T50 Transit Cargo Van with an extended wheel base and a wired protective partition between the driver and the cargo area. A trade-in is also a possibility.

Business Administrator Shevenell noted that there was only money in the budget for maintenance.

Board Member Powell asked if the quote was put out to other dealers and was told it was a state bid.

Vice Chair Barnes asked how soon after School Board approval would the vehicle be obtained and was told it would be about a month.

Superintendent Chiafery commented that in her earlier discussions with Food Service Director Dziki and Business Administrator Shevenell they had discussed hopefully putting the item on the Consent Agenda for the November 16, 2015 meeting and having it turned around for January 2016.

Vice Chair Barnes asked if the approval would be for up to \$25,586 because we do not know the trade in value at this time and was told yes.

Board Member Schneider shared that the warranty was 36,000 miles/three years bumper to bumper and the power train warranty was 60,000 miles/five years.

Chairman Ortega asked what the anticipated miles per year would be and was told it was under 10,000 miles a year. The anticipated life would be about 70,000 miles due in part to the fact that the van is used to transport heavy loads.

Business Administrator Shevenell shared his concerns about the safety issues involved with the van often only starting in neutral.

Chairman Ortega recommended putting the van purchase approval up to the amount of \$25,586.00 on the next Consent Agenda.

There will be no need to specify what account the funds will come from.

Chairman Ortega thanked Mr. Dziki for the information.

5. Board's Response to Letter to Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) for Intervenor Status

Chairman Ortega invited Board Member Guagliumi to share her thoughts on a letter she had drafted on behalf of the Merrimack School Board.

Board Member Guagliumi opened her remarks by noting that the comment period to FERC has now ended and that the Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company, LLC is expected to be filing its application for a pipeline before Thanksgiving.

One option to protect Merrimack School District lands is to file for Intervenor Status with FERC. This must be done within twenty one days after the filing of the proposed route by Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company, LLC.

Filing for Intervenor Status must be within the FERC timeline to afford Merrimack the rights to receive applicants' filings, any other commission documents relating to the case, and materials filed by other interested parties.

Filing for Intervenor Status does not require Merrimack to ever have to take action.

Board Member Schneider questioned how we would distribute documentation to everyone else who has filed for Intervenor Status and stressed caution.

Chairman Ortega stated that his understanding of how notification worked is that there is a list maintained and that email is an acceptable format for distribution.

It was noted that the issue of Intervenor Status is on the Town Council agenda for November 5, 2015.

Vice Chair Barnes noted that there might not be a final decision due to the fluidity of the process.

Chairman Ortega thanked Board Member Guagliumi for raising this issue and the noted the importance of being prepared and having a pre-approved letter or other decision ready.

Questions as to the correct spelling of intervener/intervenor will be forwarded to legal counsel.

Chairman Ortega spoke about the on-line submission procedures. He registered on the FERC site as a Merrimack School Board representative and sent the two previous letters as PDF documents. Hard copies were mailed as follow ups.

Board Member Guagliumi added that the letter for Intervenor Status can also be submitted on-line.

Board Member Schneider noted that the first letter used the wording "school buildings" and the second letter used the wording "school property" and suggested consistent wording on all three letters.

Chairman Ortega has contacted Town Council Chair Harrington for legal counsel contact information so that this letter can be shared with them for their opinion on its wording. The revised letter will be shared at the next School Board meeting scheduled for November 16, 2015. At that time further action will be discussed.

Board Member Guagliumi reminded the Board of the twenty-one day timeline.

6. Board's Position Regarding Kinder Morgan Land Surveys

Chairman Ortega noted that Kinder Morgan will soon ask to survey school district properties. The School Board, as caretakers, should have a position on the conditions under which we would or would not allow Kinder Morgan to survey the properties. The model developed by the Town Council is a good model to begin with in crafting one that relates to the Merrimack School District properties.

Chairman Ortega suggested the following criteria:

- prior approval, number of days in advance
- representatives from Central Office
- two members from the Merrimack School Board
- requests to survey are pre-approved
- checking in with the main office where a school is involved
- a designated mechanism for checking in when a school is not involved
- anything discussed during the surveys is public information

Vice Chair Barnes added two thoughts; meeting at Central Office before each survey, and video-taping the surveys.

Discussion ensued in regards to the status of the agreement of criteria by the Town Council and Kinder Morgan.

Chairman Ortega will draft a letter to be sent to Kinder Morgan, anticipating that they may want to survey the Merrimack School District lands, that lists the criteria under which they would get permission to conduct their surveys.

Student Representative Marcus asked if there would be time wasted on the back and forth of letters and if this could lead to Kinder Morgan going to FERC with a complaint.

Chairman Ortega responded that expediting the survey process is not worth giving up any of the concerns raised by the School Board. He suggested that legal counsel would have to answer that question.

Further discussion ensued among the Board Members.

Vice Chair Barnes recommended that the School Board Members will meet as needed.

Vice Chair Barnes moved (seconded by Board Member Guagliumi) to have Chairman Ortega draft a letter to Kinder Morgan regarding the surveying of Merrimack School District lands, setting out the guidelines proposed at this meeting.

The motion carried 5-0-0.

Student Representative Marcus voted In Favor.

7. Guaranteed Maximum Health Insurance for 2016-2017

Business Administrator Shevenell reminded the School Board members that at the beginning of the budget season a guaranteed maximum rate insurance increase is provided by the HealthTrust. The actual rate is not known until the Spring. This year the rate is around twelve and a half percent which is higher than last year's rate. Inquiries to the HealthTrust on why the rate has increased have yet to be answered.

Board Member Schneider asked for a ballpark estimate of the actual dollar amount this would be and was told it is between \$800,000 and one million dollars.

Vice Chair Barnes asked for prior year increase rates and was told going backwards the increases have been 5%, 5%, 19% and 27%.

Chairman Ortega stated that he still has a lot of questions and suggested asking Debie Clayton to return with the executive director of HealthTrust to address the Board.

Superintendent Chiafery responded that they have already been asked and the two possible dates for them to attend are November 16 or December 7.

Business Administrator Shevenell shared that he has asked other similar surrounding districts what their rates are and that the prices are quite varied. This is due to the rate increase.

8. Update on School Board's Invitation to Town Council for Joint Meeting

Chairman Ortega stated that Superintendent Chiafery has taken steps on a possible way of showing progress on a sustainability plan as required in year seven of the Merrimack Safeguard grant. At the last School Board meeting the majority of members thought that the School Resource Officer (SRO) should be funded through the police department budget and that the School District fund other things such as outreach.

It was agreed that this issue should involve a joint meeting with the Town Council in December.

Chairman Ortega asked that Board Members forward agenda points to him as well as suggested meeting dates.

Discussion ensued in regards to the location for the meeting and the James Masticola Upper Elementary All Purpose Room site is a preferred location.

9. Other

a) Correspondence

Board Member Schneider had received a letter from a constituent in regards to the Londonderry High School lunch program and the impacts of the changes it has made.

Chairman Ortega shared that he had received correspondence from U.S. Senator Kelly Ayotte in regards to the letter the School Board had sent to FERC.

Board Member Powell noted that there had been additional comments from a parent in regards to an incident at the middle school about the soccer team.

b) Comments

There were no comments.

10. New Business

There was no new business.

11. Committee Reports

Vice Chair Barnes noted that she had attended the PERC meeting on October 20th and four courses were reviewed for consideration as additions to the High School course of study, one regular and three interdisciplinary courses.

- AP World History
- Science/Social Studies: an example of a unit would be “Climate and weather and their impact on society”
- Math/English: an example of a unit would be “Truth and Logic” which will teach conflict resolution
- Art/Cooking: an example of a unit would be “Chinese Culture”, a non-language course.

Vice Chair Barnes attended the Grater Woods meeting also on October 20th. On November 14th there will be overall trail work done in preparation for winter and a new kiosk will be placed near the Amherst border. The Conservation Commission will be purchasing about 152 acres near Amherst which will bring the total acreage to over 600 acres. This area was previously used for target shooting which would be prohibited once it was acquired under conservation regulations.

Vice Chair Barnes attended the District Parent Group on October 28th. They reviewed the building and support group fundraising goals. To date the Special Education Parent Group has hosted two lectures. The 32nd annual Thorntons Ferry Elementary Craft Fair will be held on Saturday, November 7, 2015.

Vice Chair Barnes shared that she and Chairman Ortega met with the high school principals to discuss co-curricular funding. Vice Chair Barnes created a template that would be filled out by a representative for each team or group. The goal is to discover existing funding sources and needs.

Board Member Guagliumi attended the Parks and Recreation meeting. She shared that the Holiday Parade and Christmas Tree Lighting is scheduled for December 6th. The dog park planning and Wasserman Park facilities were also discussed at the Park and Recreation meeting.

Board Member Powell was concerned that the language used in the template created by Vice Chair Barnes sounded as if the School Board would now be overseeing the booster clubs.

Chairman Ortega expressed the need to understand the funding needs and funding sources and that that was the underlying purpose of the template. There would be no oversight of the booster clubs by the School Board.

Board Member Powell noted that this is a good first step and thanked Vice Chair Barnes for putting the template together. This sentiment was echoed by other Board Members.

Board Member Schneider asked how the Board Members might provide input and ideas beforehand, such as on travel costs during regular season and post season.

Chairman Ortega suggested that any feedback would be welcome.

Student Representative Marcus expressed his thanks to Vice Chair Barnes for this on behalf of himself and his classmates who are involved in several co-curricular school organizations.

12. Public Comments on Agenda Items

There were no public comments.

13. Manifest

The Board signed the manifest.

At 8:20 p.m. Vice Chair Barnes moved (seconded by Board Member Schneider) to enter non-public session per RSA A 91-A: 3, II, (a), (b), (c).

A roll call vote was taken. The motion passed 5-0-0.

At 9:51 p.m. Vice Chair Barnes moved (seconded by Board Member Guagliumi) to adjourn the meeting.

The motion passed 5-0-0.