

**Merrimack School Board Meeting
Merrimack Town Hall Meeting Room
July 15, 2013
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES**

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

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 June 17, 2013 Minutes

Board Member Schneider moved (seconded by Board Member Barnes) to approve the minutes of the June 17, 2013 meeting.

Board Member Barnes requested the following changes to the minutes:

- Page 4 of 15, 3rd paragraph from the bottom should read, “Board Member Barnes asked if there is a game plan to ensure that consistently performing co-curricular teams, such as the Science Olympiad, have sufficient funding.
- Page 8 of 15, 5th paragraph from the bottom, 2nd sentence, add the word “live” after the word broadcasted.

Board Member Schneider requested the following changes to the minutes:

- Page 3 of 15, second Mission Statement from the bottom, third bullet, add All-State Band
- Page 10 of 15, paragraph 8, change “potential” to “social”.

Board Member Markwell requested the following changes to the minutes:

- Page 15 of 15, under Committee reports, add that Mr. Markwell stated that there was not a Planning and Building Committee in June because it was cancelled due to the lack of a forum.

Vice Chairman Powell requested the following changes to the minutes:

- Page 7 of 15, paragraph 5 from the bottom, 2nd sentence, change the word “board” to “district”.
- Page 7 of 15, paragraph 4 from the bottom, remove the “s” from “ideas”
- Page 9 of 15, paragraph 2, first sentence, should be “Vice Chairman Powell”.

Chairman Ortega requested the following changes to the minutes:

- Page 8 of 15, paragraph 3, add “to some of the people who voted against it”.

The motion to accept the minutes as amended passed 5-0-0.

3. Public Participation:

There was no public participation.

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

Business Administrator Shevenell presented the following gifts/grants:

- Foundation for Healthy Communities to Reeds Ferry Elementary School for \$500 as the recipient of the HEAL (Healthy Eating Active Living) NH EDie Award.

Board Member Markwell moved (seconded by Board Member Barnes) to accept the gifts/grants as presented.

The motion passed 5-0-0.

5. Consent Agenda:

Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin presented the following items for approval.

- a) Teacher Nominations and Administrator Nomination
- Kimberly Chouinard, Part-Time Pre-School Teacher, Masticola Elementary School
 - Lisa Frenette, Special Education Coordinator, Merrimack High School
 - Michele Shermeta, Special Education Reading Specialist, Merrimack High School
 - Nancy Rose, Director of Library and Technology, Merrimack High School

Board Member Barnes moved (seconded by Board Member Markwell) to accept the Consent Agenda as presented.

The motion passed 5-0-0.

6. Discussion Regarding Future Capital Improvement Project

Business Administrator Shevenell explained that the idea is to have the same type of conversation as last year in putting together the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). A few things have changed over the past seven years, when the original plan was done. Initially one of the major components was a natural gas conversion. Natural gas is considerably cheaper than the oil or propane options. The plan was pulled from the table because there was not enough capacity in the lines to feed the schools since they are rather large buildings. This year the same questions were asked about feasibility, resulting in a positive response.

Business Administrator Shevenell introduced Tom Touseau, Facilities Director, Jim Lucy from Honeywell and Wally Howe, one of the engineers and prime designer of the current systems. He explained the presentation would be an overview of the cost of the conversion, and what the rate of payback would be.

Mr. Lucy explained the background of the project. In 2006 there was an energy audit. This year there is a budgetary proposal, adding that the recommendations are now feasible. Highlights of his presentation included:

Why Natural Gas?

- The projects being referred to are Merrimack High School, John Masticola Upper Elementary School, James Masticola Elementary School, the Maintenance building, the Special Services building and the Administration Building.

- The baseline consumption of the buildings is 74,702 gallons of number two oil and one thousand seven hundred and three (1,703) gallons of liquid propane gas. Gas is 60% cheaper than oil and 45% cheaper than liquid propane.
- The fuel costs compared on a common basis (dollars per one million BTU output) is \$31.93 for #2 fuel oil, \$22.62 for liquid propane and \$12.12 natural gas.
- This is a cost savings, not usage savings, which could change at any time.

Natural Gas Conversion Scope of Work Summary

- High School
 - Demolition and disposal of five oil burners along with associated oil piping
 - Installation of five Natural Gas burners
 - Venting to the outdoors as required by code
 - Upgrade boiler room combustion air, chimney and breeching to meet code
 - Conversion and connection to labs and home economics rooms
- Mastricola Upper and Lower Elementary Schools
 - Demolition and disposal of four oil burners along with associated oil piping
 - Installation of four Natural Gas burners and conversion of one LP Gas Burner to Natural Gas
 - Venting to the outdoors as required by code
 - Upgrade boiler room combustion air, chimney and breeching to meet code
 - Conversion of boiler room and kitchen equipment currently Liquid Propane Gas.
- Maintenance Building
 - Conversion of boiler room equipment from Liquid Propane to Natural Gas
 - Upgrade boiler room combustion air to meet current codes
- Special Services Building
 - Demolition and disposal of existing boiler and burner along with associated oil piping
 - Installation of one condensing high efficiency natural gas boiler/ burner.
 - Installation of one natural gas water heater
 - Upgrade boiler room combustion air, chimney and breeching to meet code.
- Superintendent Office Building
 - Demolition and disposal of existing boiler and burner along with associated oil piping
 - Installation of one condensing high efficiency Natural Gas boiler/burner
 - Installation of one Natural Gas water heater
 - Upgrade boiler room combustion air, chimney and breeching to meet code.
 - Upgrade new air conditioning system
- Additional Work Performed:
 - Oil tank cleaning and removal
 - Liberty Utilities gas line installation to the exterior of the buildings

Existing HVAC Equipment Capital Needs

- Replace the 1977 High School Air Cooled Chiller
 - The rated life of the current chiller is 30 years, therefore at some point in the near future it will fail
 - Mr. Howe explained that a chiller takes water from the inside of the building and brings it back in. One of the problems is that the air conditioning will not function if the temperature outside is cold. The new system would have anti-freeze so it can be used year round.

- Chairman Ortega asked in what section of the High School roof is this chiller located and if it was budgeted to be replaced.
- Mr. Lucy explained that they do not know about the structural reinforcement at this time. There is money to do a structural analysis, but there is no budget in this plan to replace the roof.
- Retrofit or Replace 1977 High School C Section (central core) HVAC Unit
 - Mr. Touseau explained that the rooms that are not serviced by the chiller are the band room, the little theater, and the library
 - With the addition of computer rooms, the temperatures need to remain consistent throughout the year.

Board Member Barnes asked if there is significant cost to implement the gas lines from the line point to the SAU/SPED buildings.

Mr. Lucy responded that it would be approximately \$45,000 for each building, for a total of \$90,000. The gas company will run the piping to the buildings and then the entire system will be converted and upgraded.

Chairman Ortega asked what the difference in cost would be if the “blue and green” buildings are replaced by one new office.

Mr. Howe responded that it would depend on where a new building would be located.

Board Member Schneider asked why there wasn't enough volume before, but all of a sudden there is now.

Mr. Howe responded that the pressure in the system has been upped so they can produce more volume. KeySpan, the former natural gas company, said that it could not be done, but Liberty Utilities is being more aggressive.

Board Member Schneider asked if there is any risk that once the project was completed something would change and there could be some sort of supply issue down the road.

Mr. Howe responded that he didn't think so. He added that it's hard to say what the companies are thinking.

Board Member Schneider stated that was the stumbling block last time.

Mr. Howe responded that when they spoke with KeySpan in 2006, they were planning on running the pipes from Baboosic Lake Road. What has changed is that now the pipes would be coming in from the main line off Woodbury. That made the big difference.

Mr. Howe continued, saying that he spoke with Mr. Lagasse at Liberty Utilities one year ago. They could not produce enough natural gas, but they were using the old engineers from KeySpan. As soon as they got their own engineers involved, they changed their minds.

Business Administrator Shevenell asked if the line was going to be under the turnpike, would it be at the Merrill's Marauders Bridge.

Mr. Howe responded that he believed they would be coming across and picking up the lines at Baboosic Lake Road.

Business Administrator Shevenell stated that the Merrimack Town Hall and Merrimack Police Station are now on natural gas.

Mr. Howe responded that in 2006 they were talking about putting the Merrimack Town Hall and Merrimack Police Station on natural gas and investigating if the schools could also be converted. Back then the gas company said they could do the Mastricola complex but not the High School. They were looking at coming up from the High School instead of coming up from the main drag at that time.

Mr. Lucy explained that the Mastricola complex is coming up off Baboosic Lake Road so it is a different connection point. They will bring the line down

Mr. Howe added that they will not run the lines around the upper elementary school where the small gym is. That is Honeywell's proposal. He wanted a third line into the kitchen, but Liberty Utilities will only put two meters in a building, not three. Right now the kitchen is being run from a propane tank just outside the door of the James Mastricola Elementary School boiler room across the parking lot. We might be able to utilize that line to save some money, but he was not sure. A new AC system in the Administration building is planned. The boilers there are in pretty bad shape, so they should be replaced, but if the board is planning on replacing these buildings, that would be different.

Board Member Barnes asked what the difference is between a burner and a boiler.

Mr. Howe responded that the burner is the heating mechanism that goes into the boiler that creates the heat in the boiler. So the boiler itself is what creates the heat into the building. In most of the buildings, they are able to remove the burners running on #2 fuel, remove the oil lines, put in a new boiler and bring natural gas line.

Mr. Howe continued, stating that it doesn't make sense just to replace the burners when the boilers are in bad shape, and it would cost half the budget to replace them. The maintenance building is already on propane. Just the nozzles need to be changed to natural gas openings. One blower at James Mastricola Elementary School is also on propane and can easily be converted to natural gas.

Business Administrator Shevenell asked if only the elementary school is converted, will it be at no cost.

Mr. Lucy responded that the high school and the elementary schools are two different projects.

Business Administrator Shevenell stated that there are underground oil tanks. He understood that some inspection criteria need to be met by 2016.

Mr. Howe responded that the cost for the Mastricola conversion is from the gas company. The cost to get it there is approximately \$65,000. Then there is piping to the new boilers and

upgrading the combustion to the boilers. Chimneys have to be lined. Even if the conversion does not take place, we would still need to upgrade the chimneys. That is code.

Board Member Barnes asked what the cost would be for the conversion of Masticola by Honeywell.

Mr. Howe responded that there would be no cost.

Board Member Barnes stated that a lot of costs go with the high school, i.e. the old equipment. She asked if we could get a quick payback.

Mr. Lucy responded that if you look at the payback at Masticola, it is about four years. If you take out the SAU/SPED buildings it would be a savings of about \$90,000 so we are looking at a two and a half to three year payback.

Board Member Barnes stated that she was referring to taking the high school out of the picture.

Mr. Lucy responded that Masticola is on its own. The high school will be relatively the same payback.

Board Member Barnes asked if it would then be a four year payback for Masticola.

Mr. Lucy responded that saving the \$90,000 for the SAU/SPED buildings will improve the payback a little. There is more usage at the high school because of its size.

Chairman Ortega stated that the purpose of the presentation was to get the board to look at all the possibilities. In September the Capital Improvement Plan will be pulled together and they would be looking at buildings, heating, roofs, asbestos removal etc. The work would be prioritized and the board will manage the financial impact. So having some sort of breakdown for the high school, Masticola complex and the SAU/SPED buildings would be advantageous.

Board Member Schneider stated that the cost to replace the underground oil tanks at the Masticola complex will be fifty thousand (\$50,000) dollars that needs to be spent over the next two years. He asked if there would be no cost from Liberty Utilities, only the cost to run and convert the lines minus the fifty-thousand dollars that has to be spent regardless.

Mr. Lucy replied that the board will receive all that information. Honeywell has included thirty-five thousand (\$35,000) dollars for cleaning and removal.

Mr. Lucy referred to the "Next Steps" in the proposal:

- Determine the Project Scope
- Determine Project Funding and Approval Steps
- Final Engineering
- Secure Financing (as applicable)
- Commence Construction

Board Member Schneider asked about the energy savings with a new chiller and heat wheel.

Mr. Howe responded that there would be cost savings in changing the chiller system. A new system would definitely be more efficient. If the new system is run the same hours as the chiller system there will be a cost savings. However, since the new system will run more during the year, the cost will probably be more.

Board Member Barnes spoke about the learning environment. With the old system, the temperature could not be controlled all year, which could result in a poor learning environment. She felt that this was something that could play into the board's analysis of the project.

Board Member Markwell was concerned that the estimate to convert the "blue" and "green" houses is \$45,000. Usually to put a new boiler in a house as well as to install central air conditioning, the cost would be around \$20,000. He wanted to know why there was such a difference in cost. He added that he wanted a more itemized proposal.

Mr. Lucy responded that there are construction and engineering costs built into the estimates, and they are just estimates.

Mr. Howe added that domestic hot water systems have to be added. Right now they can't say why the price is so high other than needing proper insulation, chimney work, etc. which add extra costs.

Board Member Markwell asked if the board wants to invest in these two old buildings.

Mr. Howe stated that if this is not done soon, the boilers in the houses are getting in worse shape all the time.

Superintendent Chiafery wanted to highlight that between now and the August 12th board meeting, she hopes a walk-through of the buildings could be scheduled, to see such things as the chiller at the high school as well as the boilers in the other buildings. She added that this is an ongoing conversation.

Board Member Markwell asked if there are any rebates from the government associated with the conversion.

Mr. Lucy replied that there may be an incentive for replacing the chiller, but he was not aware of any major incentives by the government. He added that rebates will thoroughly be investigated.

Business Administrator Shevenell asked with the current deregulation of utilities would this lock us into buying natural gas from Liberty.

Mr. Lucy responded that like oil, 20% of the bill is the delivery charge. The balance is supply. There is room for competitive competition.

Chairman Ortega thanked Mr. Touseau, Mr. Lucy and Mr. Howe for coming before the board and for the dialogue. He said that it holds a lot of promise for district cost savings. He would like to look at phasing and compartmentalizing costs.

7. Presentation Regarding Proposed Modifications to the District Gifted and Talented Program

Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin introduced the members of the staff of the Gifted and Talented Program. They were Linda Mandra, Merrimack High School and Middle School, Cynthia Cronin, Reeds Ferry Elementary School and Dennis Pymm, Mastricola complex. He also acknowledged Rick Glatz as a member of the team who could not be present as well as Sharon Putney who was a major influence in creating the plan.

Assistant McLaughlin presented the rationale for the modifications of the program:

1) Reduction in Resources

There has been a reduction of staff that has led to one fewer Gateway teacher. A new mission statement needed to be recreated. A new statement was generated upon periodic review of the program. The Mission Statement was read by Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin:

The Merrimack School District believes that Gifted and Talented students should be granted the time, direction, encouragement and resources to maximize their potential as independent life-long learners. In order to achieve this, the Merrimack School District will systematically identify Gifted and Talented students using multiple criteria. The Merrimack School District will ensure that Gifted and Talented students learn and achieve at levels commensurate with their exceptional abilities. Further, the Merrimack School District believes that the responsibility to serve all students all the time belongs to all parties, including the students themselves, classroom teachers, administrators, counselors, specialist and parents. The Merrimack School District Gifted and Talented Program supports a variety of settings, service options, instructional models and strategies that should combine to create programming that meets the diverse needs of all gifted learners. In addition, the Merrimack School District Gifted and Talented Program recognizes the multiple dimensions of learners' needs and further recognizes that no single program will meet the needs of all gifted and talented learners.

Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin noted certain parts of the statement worth noting:

- “Systematically identify Gifted and Talented students using multiple criteria: This is an improvement from the last mission statement. New criteria plays an important role.
 - “all students all the time”: There are all kinds of students with all kinds of abilities and fair expectations that provide rigor and enrichment opportunities to ALL students.
 - “a variety of settings” refers to the large variety of criteria that reflect student needs, interests, etc.
2. The second rationale for change needs to clearly articulate a primary, secondary and tertiary focuses.
 3. The third rationale has to do with addressing the imperative of the Gifted and Talented teachers serving as a resource to classroom teachers for all students, especially the gifted and talented.

Linda Mandra spoke about the Primary Focus:

- The primary focus is to work with that 2-5% after they have been identified
- Multiple criteria are used, including standardized tests, teachers or staff recommendations and input and portfolios of student work.
- That data will be put into a matrix to determine who the Gifted and Talented children are

- After identified, a fairly sophisticated needs assessment will be done.
- Based on that assessment, a program will be developed and designed and developed that is appropriate for the student, which may include small group activities, individual work within the classroom, etc. This is across the board for grades K-12.

Cynthia Cronin spoke about the Secondary Focus:

- The secondary focus will address the high ability students within the classroom setting.
- These students will continue to receive services through collaboration between the gifted teacher and the classroom teacher.
- The gifted teacher will consult with the classroom teacher to provide strategies, resources and instructional assistance to ensure the high ability students continue to be challenged.

Dennis Pymm spoke about the third rationale for the new Mission Statement:

- The tertiary focus is whole school enrichment. Currently, each of the facilitators is responsible for prioritizing enrichment opportunities for all students in the district. These activities tend to vary between topics and frequency among the various buildings, as the students are exposed to a variety of experiences.
- The plan is to continue this valuable component and also to improve it by incorporating help and assistance from the administrators and their staff to help align the activities in the respective buildings.
- Mr. Pymm thanked the board for their support and vision of the Gifted and Talented Program.

Board Member Schneider asked if the criteria is updated, would the parents be made aware of changes, so there is transparency and clarity.

Ms. Cronin responded that it is different at each level. She added that she has sat with parents to make them aware of the steps and she felt that every one of them was clear on the process.

Mr. Pymm added that most parents know very little about the program as it currently exists.

Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin stated that because this program has been in place for a long time with certain criteria, it will look different. Services are going to remain for all students, whether they are in the 2-5% or if they are the high achieving student that makes up most of the Gateway Program now and then through the whole school enrichment for everyone. He assured the board that there will be communication with all the parents.

Ms. Mandra stated that there is an identification matrix that will be put together as soon as all the scales they will be using are put together.

Board Member Schneider asked how students with disabilities are handled as far as the Gifted and Talented Program.

Mr. Pymm responded that sometimes students with disabilities do not meet the number criteria that they are talking about. The team tries to see if a student fits in the group or if they will need individual learning. The student will still receive the services they need as outlined in the matrix. He added that his is an issue that definitely needs to be addressed.

Chairman Ortega clarified that when they are talking about the 2-5%, they are talking about the students getting direct instruction. He wanted to clarify that being in the Gifted and Talented Program the students are getting instruction, not the full coverage the other students receive.

Ms. Mandra responded that if you look at the Primary Focus, yes, that is the definition. The direct focus will go to the 2-5%.

Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin explained that over time the students who are in the Gateway Program have not been subject to the strict criteria of “giftedness” as identified in the identification matrix. The challenge now is that there is a need to be clearer about who is being served. Fifteen to twenty percent of students are in the Gateway Program but that fifteen to twenty percent are not gifted students. The team is trying to make sure the teachers can primarily focus on that group, because that group is now smaller. This allows the teachers to provide more time for the students in the secondary group receiving whole school enrichment. By redefining the Gifted and Talented student, using objective norms to reduce the amount of per-student time, the teachers can work more broadly with the highly capable student, which is a research observed distinction.

Chairman Ortega explained he was trying to get percentages identified previously to where they are going to stratify in terms of service now.

Board Member Barnes asked if classroom grades would impact eligibility for the Gifted and Talented Program.

Ms. Cronin responded that it one of the areas on the matrix.

Board Member Barnes asked if there is a limit to the number of students in a classroom that are eligible to join the program and if the Gifted and Talented Program is broken down by subject matter or does a student have to be “overall gifted”.

Ms. Cronin responded that there is no limit and the students do not have to be “overall gifted”.

Mr. Pymm responded that the programs are very similar from building to building. He noted that he has students in the Gateway Program and he also does a Math Enrichment Program, which usually includes 90% of the Gateway students and also pulls in students who have a high ability in that area.

Board Member Barnes asked if there is a difference between the Gateway Program and the Gifted and Talented Program in future plans.

Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin explained that Gateway now is associated with students who are gifted, as identified in the 2-5% as well as a lot of other student. Gateway is a combination of the 2-5% and the highly capable students. What they are talking about in the modification is the district’s Gifted and Talented program’s primary focus which is that 2-5% of students. The Gifted and Talented Program provides support for other students. For the purpose of this meeting, Dr. McLaughlin stated that Gateway is the district’s Gifted and Talented Program.

Board Member Barnes explained that it made a difference between the Gateway Program coordinator and the Gifted and Talented coordinator as far as what their roles are and what they are doing in those roles.

Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin stated that the team has spent a lot of time on the math. Even under the best of circumstances, the classroom teacher spends more time with the students than the gifted teacher. The Gifted and Talented team has the time to sit in the classroom and evaluate the interaction with the students and offer suggestions. Providing additional support and the extra time that will be used to support the classroom teacher will make it a much richer experience.

Chairman Ortega thanked the team for coming to the board meeting and giving an update on the program.

8. Local Government Center's Payout to the Merrimack School District

Business Administrator Shevenell reported that a few meetings ago the board received a letter from LGC (Local Government Center) stating that they have been ordered to return the surplus that has compiled over the years. An audit of the LGS's 2011 books resulted in a surplus of a more than \$300,000 for the Merrimack School District. It is due to the district by August, 2013. The District received another letter on June 19, 2013, stating that there was an audit of the 2010 LGC books and it was calculated that we had been overcharged. Our share of that gross is around one million dollars, payable to us by September 1, 2013. He added that in his opinion, at the end of the year the money should be returned to the taxpayers and the employees who made the contributions that contributed to the surplus. However, there is a challenge from other communities that had paid into this fund for twenty years but are no longer members so they are not eligible to receive any part of the surplus. This entire process could take quite a while, adding that he would not tell the people in the district that this is "found" money.

Chairman Ortega asked, for clarification purposes, if the amount of money the District took from the LGC as a "contribution holiday" the amount of the 2011 surplus.

Business Administrator Shevenell stated that the District requested a check, but instead the LGC gave the District a credit which ended up decreasing the District's Healthcare costs by \$280,000. He assured the board that he would work with legal counsel and the NEA to make sure the funds go back to the employees and taxpayers properly and that there are no further complications.

Chairman Ortega agreed that the taxpayers and employees overpaid and should therefore get the money returned to them.

Superintendent Chiafery stated that when she and Business Administrator Shevenell met with Ms. Parker from the LGC, they spoke specifically about the 2011 surplus. That is not being contended. It is the 2010 surplus that will be contested.

Business Administrator Shevenell stated that the 2011 surplus was contended as well. When they spoke with Ms. Parker she guaranteed that the 2011 surplus would be due to us, even though the suit was still pending.

Vice Chairman Powell asked that if the check and cash and the litigation were to be resolved down the line, is it possible that the money would have to be paid back.

Business Administrator Shevenell responded that we could be asked to return the money, or a portion of the money, or we could be charged an excess on our bill to make up the difference for those who were not in the trust at that particular time. There are lots of scenarios, but there is nothing concrete.

Vice Chairman Powell asked if the check would be cut before the litigation is resolved.

Business Administrator Shevenell responded that it will not be resolved before they cut the check.

Vice Chairman Powell stated that he was surprised that the LGC didn't ask for some sort of "hold" on the funds until the litigation is resolved.

Superintendent Chiafery stated that since we are talking about a major surplus, Business Administrator Shevenell may discuss this topic with the board over the next few months. She added that the Board now has all the figures.

Business Administrator Shevenell stated that in his discussion with Wendy Parker, she made a verbal commitment that the surplus would be returned to the District.

Vice Chairman Powell stated that his concern was that the District would receive the money and distribute it to the taxpayers and employees and then be told the money has to be returned due to the law suit. He asked if there was anything like an escrow account where they could put all or part of the money.

Business Administrator Shevenell explained that there are different types of surpluses in budgets. Depending on how they feel this would turn out, they may or may not allow us to carry a reserve for potential pay back.

Chairman Ortega suggested the board speak with the New Hampshire School Boards Association because Merrimack is not the only district facing this problem.

Superintendent Chiafery explained that the letter, dated June 19, 2013, was the first formal correspondence the District has received regarding this matter. She added that the district has to be very transparent about what is being done.

Vice Chairman Powell asked if the P&C insurance is with this group.

Business Administrator Shevenell responded that the District has PRIMEX.

Board Member Barnes asked what the actual amount is to be returned to the taxpayers, specifically thousands or millions.

Business Administrator Shevenell stated that he does not know at this point. As far as the million dollars, it has to be broken down into different group and the different percentages that were contributed, based on either the 2010 tax rates or the current tax rates. That is where the problem is.

Board Member Barnes stated that after the surplus is returned to the taxpayers and employees, the District would probably turn around and ask for it back for the Capital Improvement Plan and/or the operating budget. She wanted to talk about what the impact on the tax rate would be and the operating budget and possible things like bonding.

Chairman Ortega agreed that we have to be transparent. He stated that this money was targeted for a very specific purpose, the health care premiums. It cannot be used for another project. What the taxpayers need to know is that this money came in and then went out. If that money is needed for other projects, the board should ask for it and note that it was money that had been returned.

Board Member Barnes stated that there was no deceit intended. Her intent was to stabilize the town's tax bill the public gets every six months. We hear from the taxpayers all the time that they cannot pay an increase in their tax bills. If we can stabilize the rate, that is important. With proactive communication, we can be transparent. Transparency can be done in different ways. We are hired to fix problems so they don't get more expensive. For that reason if we are clear, open and detailed with our intent, she did not think there would be a problem. The trust or lack of trust comes when they find things out after the fact.

Chairman Ortega added that as far as the tax rate being spiked or keeping it the same, we may want to consider lowering it.

Board Member Schneider stated that this discussion is like the discussion on the \$300,000 for the repair of the roof at the high school being put off and using the funds for another project. It cannot be done. He felt that as a board it should be discussed in the fall before the next budgetary discussions.

Business Administrator Shevenell stated that this is near and dear to his heart. The funds have to be used properly and responsibly.

Board Member Markwell stated that he is concerned that LGC has all this extra money from overbilling and wondered if the Board should continue using LGC as a service. This is a major overcharge.

Business Administrator Shevenell stated that the National Firefighters Association had the LGC open their books, which were previously secretive, when the surplus was found.

Board Member Markwell stated that he felt it was time to look at another plan, especially since LGC had been secretive about their books.

Business Administrator Shevenell stated that LGC had been sitting on a three hundred fifty million surplus. Now they are going through the courts and the legislature to divide the entities up to liquidate some of that major surplus to try and make things "right" and back like twenty years ago when they were a good and honest place to do business with. He added that the problem with not using LGC is that Anthem is only available through LGC and is not direct. School Care through CIGNA is the only alternative at this time. That is all that is out there.

Board Member Markwell said that now there is ObamaCare, so there is going to be a health pool. He wondered how that is going to affect us. He added that three hundred fifty million dollars in

surplus, and the secrecy of their books, makes him wonder if the Board wants to do business with LGC.

Board Member Barnes stated that we can't just "jump and dump". We have a responsibility to our employees and the taxpayers. If the LGC is not the right provider, then we can look at all the options and make changes in the future.

Board Member Schneider stated that we have to look at the whole picture to keep the well-being of the District, the employees and the taxpayers in mind.

9. Fifth Review of New/Revised Policy and Policy to be Eliminated

Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin explained that what he and Nancy Rose have said that in the case of employees who choose to use social media to communicate with students about school related matters, they must adhere to the following:

- Secure approval from building administrator or his/her designee prior to using social media to communicate with students.
- Setup a non-personal account on whatever social media site is being use. Employees must provide site and login credentials to building administrator or designee
- Maintain professional boundaries with students
- Not post to Social Media images, vides or any form of student likeness or identification without the express prior written permission of parents.

Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin said that one area has been broken up into two areas. There is a distinction between employees who choose to use Social Media for communicating with students and employees who use Social Media on their own. This change reads, employees who use Social Media for personal purposes must..." The rest remains the same as prior copies of the policy. It just puts it under a separate heading to make it a distinction for those who choose to use Social Media for communicating for school purposes and those who use Social Media privately and how they represent themselves in that context.

Chairman Ortega explained that in terms of the policy, this is the 5th review. We are now honing in on specific areas. He felt that the policy should be discussed and voted on at this meeting.

Board Member Barnes stated that she loved the adjustments to the policy. The only thing she didn't see was volunteer adherence to the policy; i.e. booster clubs, sports clubs, etc. It may be a training issue in the future. She added that this policy gets us to right where we want to be. If it can be tweaked, that would be great.

Board Member Schneider stated that this revision of the policy is definitely tightened up and that he can stand behind this policy. He would like to see a follow up on the checklists. All in all, the policy worked out great.

Vice Chair Powell moved (seconded by Board Member Schneider) that the board accept the new Employee Use of Information Technology and to remove the Employee Computer, Network and Internet Use Policy.

The motion passed 5-0-0.

Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin thanked the Board for its input and acceptance of the policy.

Chairman Ortega noted that it is not often it takes five readings to accept a policy. He thanked the board for their contribution to the process and a special thanks to Dr. McLaughlin and Nancy Rose for working on this policy.

10. Request to Increase the Part-Time Kindergarten Teacher to Full-Time at Reeds Ferry Elementary School

Superintendent Chiafery explained that in the 2013-2014 budget process, she projected the enrollment for kindergarten at the three elementary schools. That number was two hundred seventeen. As of July 12, 2013 there are two hundred twenty two kindergarten students registered in the district. Therefore the administration has made an internal adjustment. Even with the adjustment of transferring a part-time kindergarten teaching position from Masticola Elementary School to Reeds Ferry Elementary School, there is a need to make a further modification and so she requested that the part-time teaching position at Reeds Ferry be increased to a full-time position. She added that she conferred with Business Administrator Shevenell about the expenditure. The salary for a full-time kindergarten teacher, including benefits and would be \$54,820. She also asked that since the board is not meeting again until August 12th, that action be taken now, since parents of incoming kindergarten students want to know if their child is attending morning or afternoon classes. She added that increasing the part-time position at Reeds Ferry Elementary School to full-time will make the pupil/teacher ratio 14/15.

Board Member Markwell asked if this could be done by hiring two part-time teachers instead of one full-time so that benefits will not have to be paid and salaries would be less.

Superintendent Chiafery responded that you need to look at the part-time person and ask if they want full-time or if they are just interested in remaining part-time.

Board Member Barnes stated that she understands where Board Member Markwell wants to save, but the board needs to think of the longevity of the teachers. We do not want to be a training ground so a part-time teacher can take a full-time position in another district. She is therefore very supportive of increasing the part-time kindergarten position at Reeds Ferry to a full-time position.

Board Member Schneider stated that he did not feel it is healthy to have a part-time teacher just to save money on benefits. We are talking about educators who provide a lot of benefits by teaching full-time.

Board Member Markwell stated that in his opinion, kindergarten is not a rigid curriculum. He added that kindergarten enrollments vary from year to year, so next year this position could go back to part-time.

Superintendent Chiafery responded that yes, there are a lot of variables. Sometimes a teacher like this will move with the class into first grade. Elementary certification is grades K-6, so there is a lot of space for movement.

Chairman Ortega stated this is a moving target, year in and year out. Offering an employee the opportunity to remain with us is positive for long-term potential.

Board Member Schneider asked if would be feasible for a full-time teacher to move from one school to another for morning/afternoon classes.

Superintendent Chiafery stated that it would be very difficult. It could be done, but it would not be optimum.

Board Member Schneider stated that it was a balancing act.

Superintendent Chiafery stated that the kindergarten curriculum is vastly changing and now has Common Core Standards and requires ore time from the teachers.

Vice Chairman Powell moved (seconded by Board Member Schneider) to authorize Superintendent Chiafery to create a full-time kindergarten position at Reeds Ferry Elementary School for a salary of \$54,820, including benefits and that the two week rule be waived so this can be done immediately.

The motion passed 4-1-0 with Board Member Markwell in opposition.

11. Discussion Regarding New Charge for the Planning and Building Committee

Chairman Ortega explained that Chairman Hendricks of the Planning and Building Committee was at the last board meeting to discuss the vote on the warrant article that would have created a new Central Office and Special Services building. Through the course of that discussion:

- Board members talked about the cost being a large issue.
- There were discussions about trade-offs in floor space resulting in a lower the price of the project.
- They talked about getting a better understanding of the voters and the reasons why they may not have supported the project. He added that there are voters out there that fully support the project but would like to see Merrimack Middle School paid off first.
- Chairman Ortega noted the original charge to the Planning and Building Committee was from 2008. He added that this charge is being used as a reference in terms of what the Planning and Building Committee was originally charged with.
- Since 2008, the Board has received much information regarding the project. All of the information needs to be put into the mix. He stated that there is more work to do in terms of planning.
- One piece of data the board might consider is to ask the Planning and Building Committee look at some time, the potential trade-off of floor space to see what the impact would be.

Chairman Ortega stated that the Board could have a discussion and take the information to construct a new charge to the Planning and Building Committee. He stated that more work has to be done, including sequencing of the SAU/SPED office and other things on the table, such as running the gas lines.

Board Member Schneider asked if the report-outs of all the examinations were clearly articulated so the voters and residence and interested parties could see that the square footage for leasing

would cost much more. He stated that if the information from the original charge is taken, they need to make sure that all the findings are articulated.

Chairman Ortega stated that the former report covered all the areas of the charge clearly, concisely and comprehensively in some detail. He felt that the piece of Board Member Schneider's question was subjective in that it asked if the voters were informed of the details and fully understood them. He added that at the last board meeting all of the information was discussed and they talked about why people didn't vote or why they voted against the warrant article. So in terms of refining the charge to the Planning and Building Committee or amending the report, a much smaller charge will be made. The Planning and Building Committee has done the exploration of other options such as looking at space utilization, buying or leasing a building, etc.

Chairman Ortega stated that the only question he had is if there are potentially adjustments that can be made to the project that might further reduce the cost. He added that the remaining questions have to do with district priorities and projects, the will of the voters and timing.

Board Member Schneider stated that the prior charge was spread over a multi-year period of time. A certain proposal was chosen to be put on the warrant. Reports were done but they did not go back to previous reports to remind people of the figures. He stated that his point was to not go back and do everything that was done before, but to look at the analysis of the buildings and look at the square footage and the proposed timing of the project. He added that as a part of the board's diligence they have to remind themselves and the voters of the information they already have and how to get it where the board is now. As long as the data is available it does not have to be redone.

Chairman Ortega asked Board Member Schneider about his using the word "report" in his discussion.

Board Member Schneider stated that what he meant was "report out".

Chairman Ortega commented that the Planning and Building Committee had done a formal report that includes all the questions and answers, but it seemed that communications are the key. He stated that when these communications occurred and how complete and if they were sent over and over, they would be valuable information to have in order to prepare the next report.

Board Member Schneider stated that many voters went to the polls knowing how they were going to vote, but there was a large group who went there with assumptions that may not have been complete. He added that voters need to be reminded of the data previously presented.

Chairman Ortega stated that a communication strategy is needed.

Board Member Schneider stated that it needs to be part of the charge. The information has to be articulated between the school board and the Planning and Building Committee.

Board Member Markwell spoke about the previous charge. He suggested removing the impact on the courthouse (e). He added that many items are still relevant such as space utilization (c),

the requirements that are needed (a), and consideration of the four options (d). He did not feel, however that an inventory of current sites is needed.

Board Member Markwell added that it makes no sense to him to use a building, such as the old site of the Mastricola Elementary School, to be used as an office in that if enrollment increases over the years once again that building would be used for classrooms.

Chairman Ortega stated that in charging the Planning and Building Committee with a communication plan, as well as the original data and revising a number of the relevant questions, there needs to be an update. He added that it is important to remember that the members of the Planning and Building Committee are volunteers who have worked on this project since 2008. He would like them to update and modify where applicable so that the plan can be considered by the school board.

Board Member Markwell stated that he would like the school board to be the “communicator”.

Board Member Barnes stated that the members of the Planning and Building Committee are idea people. They are not money people, so their concern is more the plan than the cost.

Board Member Schneider stated that he wanted to make sure the data that is used is current and accurate.

Chairman Ortega stated that there had been a good discussion regarding the new charge to the Planning and Building Committee and thanked everyone for their participation.

12. Other

a.) Correspondence

Chairman Ortega received a request to invite the newly elected Budget Committee Chair and Vice Chair to a school board meeting to review the budget process and share the Budget Committee’s feedback and share our feedback with them.

b.) Comments

There were no comments.

13. New Business

There was no new business

14. Committee Reports

Vice Chairman Powell reported that he and Chairman Ortega took a walk around the parcel that was in question as the easement. He reached out to the athletic director and girls’ track coach and got a very positive response from them. There is going to be another walk on July 21st at 3:30 p.m. with them. He added that they would love to hold a cross country meet next year but have not been able to do it in the past. He added that it looks like it will happen quickly in the next couple of months.

Chairman Ortega suggested that Vice Chairman Powell forward these points to the administration and get some of their thinking on it and bring it back to the board.

Chairman Ortega reported that he attended the Town Center Committee meeting. Highlights of his report included:

- They met in the pavilion.
- The Safe Routes to School monthly updates were submitted to the Department of Transportation (DOT).
- They are presently in round seven of the proposal process for the grant money. Letters of intent are due by October, 2013.
- There is a letter from the Town Manager and Conservation Chair to the DOT to seek potential interest in having the Conservation Commission purchase that land.
- An easement would work, but the Conservation Commission also wants to pursue a purchase.
- A sign is going up on the Merrill's Marauder's Bridge.
- There was also a lot of discussion on the proposed Church Street closure regarding sidewalks and safety. Local residents had a lot of valuable feedback in terms of things to consider.
- Peter Flood was elected Chair of the Town Center Committee, Deb Huffman and Andy Powell were appointed to serve three year terms. There is one vacancy on the committee and Chairman Ortega asked the board if they know of anyone interested in serving they should let him know.

15. Public Comments on Agenda Items

There were no public comments

16. Manifest

The Board signed the manifest.

At 10:30 p.m. Board Member Barnes moved (seconded by Board Member Schneider) to recess to non-public session per RSA 91-A:3,II (a), (b), (c).

The motion passed 5-0-0 on a roll call vote.

At 10:51 p.m. Board Member Barnes moved (seconded by Board Member Schneider) to adjourn the public meeting.

The motion passed 5-0-0.