

**Merrimack School Board Meeting
Merrimack Town Hall Meeting Room
August 12, 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. Student Representative Crowley was excused from the meeting.

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 July 15, 2013 Minutes

Board Member Schneider moved (seconded by Board Member Barnes) to approve the minutes of the July 15, 2013 meeting.

Vice Chairman Powell requested the following changes to the minutes:

- Page 12 of 20, paragraph 6 from the bottom, after “check” add “and cash”
- Page 13 of 20, paragraph 6, PMC should be P&C

Board Member Schneider requested the following changes to the minutes:

- Page 5 of 20, paragraph 3 from the bottom, should be Board Member Barnes
- Page 7 of 20, paragraph 1, the first sentence should read, “...that the cost to remove underground oil tanks...”
- Page 7 of 20, first paragraph after the bullets, should read, “Board Member Schneider asked about the energy savings with a new chiller and heat wheel.”
- Page 14 of 20, paragraph 3, last sentence remove “next election” and replace with “next budgetary discussions.”
- Page 17 of 20, add a hyphen to report-outs

Chairman Ortega requested the following changes to the minutes:

- Page 3 of 20, paragraph 1, remove “it is very much in the ballpark of conversation” should be replaced with “the recommendation is now feasible.”
- Page 5 of 20, paragraph 4 from the bottom, first sentence, change “high school” to “Upper Elementary School”
- Page 8 of 20, paragraph 5, change “departmentalizing” to “compartmentalizing”
- Page 8 of 20, first paragraph under section 1, second sentence should read, “A new statement was generated upon periodic review of the program.”
- Page 10 of 20, paragraph 3 from the bottom, sentence 3 should read, “Fifteen to twenty per cent of the students are in the Gateway program, but that fifteen to twenty per cent are not gifted students.
- Page 10 of 20, paragraph 3 from the bottom, the last sentence, change “object” to “objective”
- Page 18 of 20, first paragraph, sentence 3, should be “.....why they voted....”

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

3. Public Participation

There was no public participation.

4. Consent Agenda

Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin presented the following items for approval

- a.) Teacher Nominations
 - Lisa Beaudry, Education Technology Integration Teacher, James Mastricola Elementary School
 - Julie Doyon, Grade 6 Teacher, James Mastricola Upper Elementary School
 - Alyssa Foss, Math Teacher, Merrimack Middle School
 - Shaun Hastings, Math Teacher, Merrimack High School

- b.) Teacher Resignations
 - Richard Glatz, Science Teacher, Gifted and Talented Teacher, Merrimack Middle School

Vice Chairman Powell asked Dr. McLaughlin how many positions are still to be filled.

Dr. McLaughlin responded that there are three positions left to be filled in the district.

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

The motion passed 5-0-0.

5. Discussion Regarding the Modified Budget Process Used To Develop the 2013-2014 Budget

Cinda Guagliumi, Chair of the Budget Committee, and Gary Krupp, Vice Chair of the Budget Committee, came before the board to discuss the budget process for 2013-2014.

Ms. Guagliumi stated that the School Board and the Budget Committee had received feedback regarding the budget process, which seemed to be mostly positive. She added that the committee would like to set the calendar for this year's meeting schedule, and they would like to have the schedule by the October 8, 2013 committee meeting.

Mr. Krupp stated that the committee put two things before the board:

1. Start the first Budget Committee meeting one week earlier than last year. He stated this may cause a problem because the board meets after the Budget Committee meeting, so the district's budget would not be completed. He didn't feel this was a problem because they could begin with the Elementary Schools first.
2. They would like committee members to have their liaison meetings after the departments have come before the board.

Chairman Ortega stated that the board greatly appreciated the change in the schedule last year to accommodate the board with ample time to work on the budget. He added that the board had some changes in terms of when the administration would be answering questions from the Budget Committee. He added that the board has to work out these items with the administration. Starting things sooner when the board has not finished with their work may be difficult.

Board Member Schneider asked Business Administrator Shevenell if the calendar for next year's DRA budget deadlines have been set.

Business Administrator Shevenell responded that a calendar has not been completed, but he assumes it will be similar to last year.

Board Member Barnes wanted to know the turn-around time for the district's budget before it is presented to the Budget Committee for consideration.

Business Administrator Shevenell responded that any changes can be made very quickly.

6. Ongoing Discussion Regarding Future Capital Improvement Projects

Business Administrator Shevenell began the discussion by stating that maintaining the infrastructure, moving forward with technology and being proactive in our maintenance are key points of the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). There are many decisions to be made.

Tom Touseau, Maintenance Director, spoke in favor of the conversion from oil to natural gas (the conversion) at the Mastricola complex, the high school and the maintenance building. There needs to be some room in the upcoming budget for this project, if that is what the board decides to do.

Mr. Touseau spoke about the roofing project at the High School. Highlights included:

- Last year discussions revolved around repairing two large sections of the roof, i.e. the areas over the library and the gymnasium. This area will be pushed out one year.
- There is actually the need to do all three sections of the roof, but they should not be pushed out more than one year.
- At this point, the largest section of the roof, the area over the library, should be done first, at a cost of \$640,000. The section over the gym and cafeteria, which could be done over the next two years, will cost about \$900,000.
- The area over the library is the location of the chiller, which needs to be replaced or removed if the conversion is done. The following year the heat wheel would be done.

Mr. Touseau spoke about the asbestos removal in the district. Highlights included:

- Solid progress has been made over the last three years.
- Next year's abatement is scheduled for the High School, but Mr. Touseau would prefer working in the Mastricola Upper Elementary School (JMUES) first, because there is more of a need.

Business Administrator Shevenell added that it makes sense to tackle the conversion in this year's budget because the pay-back is three to nine years. He added that removal of existing underground oil tanks has to be done.

Mr. Touseau added that it would cost about \$50,000 to update the oil tanks to be in compliance, so it makes sense to put that \$50,000 towards the conversion.

Mr. Touseau spoke about the paving projects.

- There is a need to repave the high school bus loop.
- There is a huge need to repave the Thornton's Ferry circle, but not as big a need as the conversion. It could be pushed-out a year in order to go forward with the conversion.

Mr. Touseau spoke about the track at the high school:

- He would like to repair the track first, as opposed to the infield.
- Right now the track is in satisfactory condition. In a number of years, (three to five) something will have to be done. The cost would be somewhere in the \$150,000 range.
- If the base of the track is not good and another track is installed, it will cost around \$300,000 and it will last about fifteen years for the best track there is.
- In his opinion, the project can be pushed out three to five years.

Business Administrator Shevenell stated that if patch and repair is done to the track, instead of replacing it, the patch will only last so long. Inclement weather, such as rain or snow, will compromise the safety of the track if the repair, instead of the replacement, is done, since it is not known the materials that were used in building the original track. He added that there is a need for further investigation.

Mr. Touseau replied that the track project should be completed within the next three to five years.

Superintendent Chiafery stated that there is a need to discuss the consolidation of the SAU/SPED buildings. If they take the conversion at the high school and the maintenance building and the roof project at the high school, the cost would be about 1.2 million dollars, not including the asbestos abatement. The consolidation is important, but the conversion includes a payback that would be beneficial to the district.

Mr. Touseau explained that currently the order for the asbestos removal is a section of the high school first, another section of the high school second, a section of JMUES third and another section of JMUES last. He would like to change that to JMUES first, the high school second, the high school third and JMUES last.

Vice Chairman Powell asked if there would be a price difference if the schedule for the asbestos removal is changed.

Mr. Touseau replied that it would be a wash.

Vice Chairman Powell stated that he understood the need for the conversion before the consolidation, but added that the board has a responsibility to the working conditions for employees in the “blue” and “green” buildings. He added that the board cannot keep putting money into these buildings.

Board Member Schneider asked why there is such a dramatic increase in the cost of the roofing plan. Mr. Touseau responded that last year only one bid came in, but we would have been \$300,000 to \$400,000 short. More than one bid is needed.

Board Member Schneider stated that it is a more conservative threshold, not as aggressive budgeting number.

Business Administrator Shevenell added that last year the numbers were dead on. The roofing company that made the bid had worked with the district in the past. Their bid was the only one that was close to the budget numbers

Board Member Schneider stated that obviously the conversion is a priority. At the same time as the conversion, the chiller would be done.

Mr. Touseau responded that the gas conversion would be separate from the removal of the chiller.

Board Member Schneider asked if the two projects, the conversion and the removal of the chiller, should be done at the same time.

Mr. Touseau responded that the gas conversion is a savings that pays for the chiller.

Board Member Schneider asked if they have to do both conversions (high school and Mastricola) or can they be split up, and if so, would there be a cost decrease.

Mr. Touseau responded that the gas conversion from day one pays for the chiller, so even if the projects were split up, there would not be a savings in the cost.

Business Administrator Shevenell stated that whenever a project is done, more expenses need to be added, such as staging, so when the project is split up, there could be a greater cost. He asked if the cost was predicated on everything being done at once.

Superintendent Chiafery reminded the board that they had discussed having a representative from Liberty Utilities attend a meeting to ask them directly what they will do for the conversion. They are the ones to lay the lines, so it is important to bring them to the table.

Board Member Schneider asked if the track is replaced and the field is not done, will that be a problem. If the field is done at a later date will the new track be compromised?

Mr. Touseau responded that there could be a problem, but realistically they can do the track prior to the infield.

Business Administrator Shevenell added that this question had been brought up at the Planning and Building Committee when a representative from the turf company went before the committee.

Board Member Markwell stated that the ideal situation is to do the field first and then the track. The concern is inserting drainage which could cut through the track in order to repair the field. In an ideal world, the drainage for the field could be done prior to the track being redone.

Business Administrator Shevenell suggested that drainage could be put under the track to prepare the field for drainage in the future.

Board Member Markwell stated that if the track is going to be done first, the turf company should advise the board on the proper drainage system for the future.

Business Administrator Shevenell agreed that should be done.

Board Member Schneider wanted to know the status of the "blue" building at the present time. Fixing the drainage problem had been budgeted for as well as replacing the ramp to the building.

Mr. Touseau responded that the first step is to get the soffit done and add an additional gutter to the side, which would drain the water from the building. A commercial grade dehumidifier has been placed in the basement. If that dries up the area and no other employees are going to be working there, it will be okay.

If we go through the winter and find that the dehumidifier is not the remedy, more money will have to be spent to repair the building.

Board Member Schneider stated that the money is in the budget now, which is being spent between now and June 30, 2014. So the money will be in the budget and we have a winter to see if it all works. So it is a wait and see if more money needs to be put into the building.

Business Administrator Shevenell stated that two years ago there was water in the payroll office and major repairs had to be done. Since then, downspouts have been redirected. He asked if that was what they were planning to do in the SPED building.

Mr. Touseau responded that is what they plan to do.

Board Member Barnes stated that there has to be more discussion on the budget line. They talked about consequences – what if we do the project, what if we don't, what needs to come first. They have talked in part, but not in whole, which is important.

Board Member Markwell asked if the high school roof project is done in its entirety is there a chance the contractor would match the same quote, or close to it, as last year.

Business Administrator Shevenell stated that it is a different year, and he doubts if the price will be matched from year to year.

Board Member Markwell stated that he would like to have further discussions on the subject.

Library/Media/Technology Services

Nancy Rose spoke about what is being done this year in technology and how some of this will impact what will be done next year.

- Currently all the work stations at the middle school are being upgraded to a mix of desktops and laptops that convert to tablets. They are trying to become more innovative in instruction.
- Currently three teachers are using tablets.
- The middle school is being saturated with Wi-Fi expansion work planned. There is still a little Wi-Fi in the other schools to keep them moving forward in alignment with the plan.
- This is the second year of the project of installing projectors which will be used with the tablets and laptops.
- The electrical installation has been sub-contracted out which allows the project to move forward.
- The first Voice-Over IP was installed in the high school. The old system experienced several crashes. So they moved forward, rather than spending more money on an antiquated system.
- At James Masticola Elementary School and James Masticola Upper Elementary School, the intercom systems are not working and it is almost impossible to get parts for the phone systems. The question is do you keep pouring money into these old systems every year?
- Ms. Rose explained that she had planned on working on this project in 2014-15, but now it needs to be considered for this year.
- The Voice-Over IP involves upgrading the switches at the high school, replacing the servers at Thornton's Ferry Elementary School, Reeds Ferry Elementary School and Merrimack Middle School.

- Next year it is anticipated that hardware will be replaced, with a focus on the elementary labs. She spoke with the three elementary school principals about maintaining the desktops but moving to a more mobile solution. Consistency is needed between the three elementary schools.

Board Member Schneider asked, because of the unanticipated expenses, if they have gone over budget. Ms. Rose explained that the computers are a little more expensive than anticipated, but those figures did not change the bottom line of the CIP. She added that they are hoping to wait on the classroom phone at \$115.00 a phone.

Board Member Schneider asked if the increase in the phone system will still remain within the budget.

Ms. Rose responded that it would probably stay within the budget, but will probably get moved up two years.

Board Member Markwell asked about the number of servers in the district.

Ms. Rose responded that there are twenty-five to thirty servers in the district.

Board Member Markwell asked if there had been any thought of using desktop systems that have telephone capabilities.

Ms. Rose responded that every classroom has to have a physical handset that is separate from the computers. That conforms to the rules and regulations

Board Member Markwell stated that in the future, most companies will be moving to “soft” phone solutions.

Ms. Rose responded that the high school phones will be functioning as a two-way intercom system. It is a notification system for emergencies as well as a phone system.

Board Member Markwell asked if CISCO would be the service provider.

Ms. Rose responded that the goal is to have a unified system. It will be a four-digit call system between all the schools

Chairman Ortega thanked both Mr. Touseau and Ms. Rose for bringing the information to the board. He added that there is a lot to consider for the Capital Improvement Plan.

7. Competency-based Grading System at Merrimack High School and Alternative Credit for Physical Education

Principal Ken Johnson and Mark Merrifield made a PowerPoint presentation on Competency-Based Grading System at Merrimack High School.

Principal Johnson explained that it has taken them years to get where they are now.

Hybrid Grading System

Moving forward with a hybrid grading system preserves the look of the report card/transcript while still meeting the State mandate for competency-based grading. Formal implementation of the system will

begin this school year (2013-2014). During the summer of 2014 there will be reviews, revisions and amendments as deemed necessary.

What is the Hybrid System

- Student receives the traditional grades and competency grades for each course.
- Student earns course credit only when he/she meets the competencies.
- If a course competency is not met, the student receives an asterisk (*) in place of the final grade. This is the one thing that will be unique and different for every student/parent.
- The students will be offered an opportunity for remediation of a competency when he/she scores a one on a scale of one to four (with four being the highest).
- Attempts at remediation may be via teacher assistance, labs, credit recovery, Evening Academy, Nova NET, summer school, etc.
- If a student fails a course via the traditional grade and yet passes the competency, the student will be awarded a grade of MC (Met Competency). This grade will carry the weight of a “D” (65%)
- Competency grades will appear in the PowerSchool Parent-Student portal, only and will not appear on the report card or the transcript.
- Parents without internet access should contact the Merrimack High School Guidance Department or call the classroom teacher for competency grade data.

Principal Johnson and Mr. Merrifield showed and explained a report card which included traditional and competency grades.

Principal Johnson and Mr. Merrifield showed and explained a series of PowerSchool screens.

Principal Johnson explained that his intent is to send a letter to the high school parents/students as soon as possible which explains the competency/traditional grading system that will take place during the 2013-2014 school year. The information will also be inserted into the Student Handbook. For more information the website is www.merrimack.k12nh.us.mhs or parents can also contact the Merrimack High School Guidance Department or the appropriate department chair.

Chairman Ortega asked how a student fails a class, but still meets all the competencies.

Principal Johnson explained that perhaps the students does not complete his/her homework which is 10% of the grade and therefore fails the class but has met the competencies.

Vice Chairman Powell asked how this hybrid grading will affect the college application process. He questioned what the transcript would look like.

Principal Johnson responded that the hybrid grading system will have very little impact on the transcript. The only thing the transcript would show is the MC (Met Competency).

Vice Chairman Powell asked if the transcript was still going to show the traditional GPA (Grade Point Average) and will it still be weighted depending on the level of the course.

Principal Johnson responded that the GPA for a failed course is a 65%

Vice Chairman Powell asked how this would be communicated to the students.

Principal Johnson responded that information on this program has been ongoing. He added that he will send out communication as soon as possible. It is also on PowerSchool.

Vice Chairman Powell asked about semester grades versus quarter grades.

Principal Johnson responded that it varies. A competency score may apply in quarter one, but not in quarter two. There will be a key to the grades at the bottom of the report card.

Vice Chairman Powell asked about different districts and their implementation of the program as well as their process.

Principal Johnson answered that a lot of other districts are doing a lot of different things. He stressed that he would not put Merrimack students at a disadvantage regarding their further education. The transcripts will look “normal”. He added that he is doing what is best for the Merrimack students.

Vice Chairman Powell asked if the program had been shared with any college admission offices.

Principal Johnson responded that he has been asked by different schools to explain the Merrimack process. He has also been asked to explain it to Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU).

Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin added that colleges are waiting to receive information. Because it is State mandated, they know the transcripts will be different. It is too early to know for sure what will happen in the years to come. That is why the hybrid is being used. He added that one of the benefits of the competencies is that areas of strengths and weaknesses can be found. This system also allows that teachers to fine-tune their instruction.

Principal Johnson stated that the MC on the transcript will be easily explained. He added that he is very excited about this program because it benefits the students, parents and teachers.

Vice Chairman Powell explained that he is 100% behind the competencies. He is concerned how this all translates into what the colleges are looking for. He wants to make sure the students are not at a disadvantage. He would like Principal Johnson to share the system with the local colleges for their opinion.

Board Member Barnes suggested a separate parents’ night for juniors and seniors, since they are such important years in their education. She asked if a student can have a passing grade in a course by failing a competency.

Principal Johnson responded that this could be the case; the student has passed all the requirements of the course, but has not mastered the skills needed in that area.

Board Member Barnes asked how close to each other are levels one, two, three and four of the competencies.

Principal Johnson responded that the four numbers are tied distinctly to four different rubrics. When the parents/students see the asterisk on their report card they will understand what that rubric is.

Board Member Barnes asked if PowerSchool will have a traditional grade as well as a rubric.

Mark Merrifield responded that what parents have is additional information about their student's grades. There are tabs in PowerSchool that can be accessed. None of the traditional grades have been eliminated. Board Member Barnes stated that her concern is that they will not get the traditional grades in PowerSchool.

Principal Johnson assured her that both grades are available on PowerSchool.

Board Member Barnes asked at what grade the rubric begins.

Principal Johnson replied that the use of the rubric begins in grade nine.

Board Member Barnes suggested that understanding of competency grading can begin with grade five, so by the time they reach high school they will have a better understanding. She asked if any districts in New Hampshire have exclusive competency grading.

Superintendent Chiafery responded that she learned from the NH Scholar's Board that very few districts are using competency based grading totally. All districts in the state are at different levels.

Board Member Barnes asked if we could review the information from other districts that are using competency grading.

Superintendent Chiafery explained that everything is still evolving and everyone is doing their best. People are learning how to go from traditional grading to competency grading. In New Hampshire, each district is responsible to itself. Eventually there will be a sharing of information.

Principal Johnson explained that what they are going to be looking at this year is collecting all the relevant data to make a determination about the next step.

Board Member Markwell stated that the MC really concerns him. He added that he thinks it may be a tool to lower the bar and inflate the graduation rate.

Principal Johnson responded that the competencies are specific skill levels. Not every student is going to master the competencies at the highest level. That is why levels were established. He added that this program is not the students reaching the "lower bar". He stated that he would take Board Member Markwell's concerns under advisement.

Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin added that lowering the bar is the antithesis of what Merrimack has always been about. To demonstrate and apply a competency is a very rigorous thing to do. He added that teachers are working very hard to develop rigorous competencies and assessments. The upcoming August Academy will be addressing competency grading.

Board Member Markwell stated that there could possibly be some increased per-pupil costs due to longer hours of teaching, summer school, etc.

Principal Johnson stated that relevant data will be collected all through the coming school year. He added that it was a "quiet" pilot and the students were well aware of the program. He added that very few students needed to be remediated as a result of the pilot program.

Board Member Schneider asked if the information presented to the board would be the information the parents and colleges receive on the grading system. To him, the important part is the education of

parents and students regarding competency-based grading. He asked that within subjects are the competencies the same across all instances.

Principal Johnson responded yes.

Board Member Schneider asked if the “research” competency means the same across all disciplines.

Principal Johnson responded that they are different. Every teacher is different.

Board Member Schneider asked if there is a common method of remediation across one department, such as math.

Principal Johnson responded that each remediation is different, based on the needs of the student.

Board Member Schneider asked if all competency grades are updated so that remediation can be updated.

Principal Johnson responded yes, they are updated.

Alternate Credit for Physical Education

Principal Johnson stated that a total of one credit in Physical Education (PE) and one half credit in Health is needed to meet the graduation requirements.

- PE-1: 0.5 credits (1/2 semester)
- PE-2: 0.5 credits (1/2 semester, more specific)
- PE-3: non-required; 0.5 credit elective

Beginning this year, a student who completes two seasons of Junior Varsity and/or Varsity sports may be eligible to seek a one-half credit for a PE-3 elective.

- This will be designated as a PE-3 Athletics Pass/Fail on the high school transcript and is not factored into a student’s GPA
- This credit may be awarded retroactively
- This is a student inspired change. It came to Principal Johnson’s attention about two years ago by the Student Congress.

The Process

- Student meets with Athletic Director for initial approval to obtain an application.
- Student receives approval from the team coach
- Student receives approval from the Health/PE Department Chair
- Guidance Department adds credit to the student’s transcript.
- The direct benefit is the student who participates in sports does not have to take PE which opens space in their day so he/she can take another course.
- If a student quits the team, he/she does not receive credit for the season.
- If a student receives an injury while on the team he/she receives credit because an injury cannot be held against a student.

Board Member Barnes asked if a student can earn credit in the same academic year for participation in two sports i.e. cheerleader for the football team and the basketball team.

Principal Johnson responded yes, a student can earn double credit.

Vice Chairman Powell asked what happens if a student gets injured in a PE class.

Principal Johnson responded that accommodations are made. Time off for injuries can be made up.

Vice Chairman Powell asked about the student on a team who is injured and cannot make up the time because the season of the sport has passed. He added that he just wants to make sure there is equity between team sports and PE classes

Principal Johnson responded that determination is made on a case by case basis. He added that he will take the question under advisement.

Chairman Ortega thanked Principal Johnson and Mr. Merrifield for their presentation. He added that he felt very positive about the Hybrid approach to the Competency Grading System.

8. Planning for Future Joint Town Council and School Board Meeting

Chairman Ortega explained that the School Board and the Town Council met last summer. The intent was to meet every six months. There was no meeting in March, and no other meetings have been scheduled. Both he and Superintendent Chiafery met with the Town Council Chair and the Town Manager and another meeting is going to be planned. He asked for input on agenda items for this meeting.

9. Modification to School Board Meeting Schedule

Superintendent Chiafery sent a memo to school board members explaining that in reviewing board meeting dates for the next school year, there are two dates that fall on Mondays when the district is closed for holidays.

Monday September 2, 2013, is Labor Day. Superintendent Chiafery recommended the board meeting be held on Tuesday, September 3, 2013.

Monday January 20, 2013 is Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Superintendent Chiafery recommended that the board meeting be held on Tuesday, January 21, 2013

The recommendations were accepted by the board.

10. First Review of Revised Policy on Distribution and Display of Information

Superintendent Chiafery stated that at the end of the school year she received information about a Vacation Bible School that she was asked to distribute throughout grades K-6, which she did. There were some parents in the district who complained about the flyer.

The initial policy on Distribution and Display of Information stated that the only documents that could go forward other than school related material were from the Boy Scouts and Girls Scouts and the Youth Association, and only once a year. By adding additional wording to the policy, it would allow her to have told the Pastor the reason the flyer was rejected was because it included Bible verses that could have been offensive to parents and/or students

Superintendent Chiafery sought the district legal counsel for an opinion regarding the District's ability to modify its current policy on distribution of materials. Based on the research, our attorney, Kathleen Peahl, recommended amending the last paragraph of the current policy as follows:

B. Prohibited Material, paragraph 2 should be added, which reads, "In addition, the Superintendent may prohibit distribution or display of any material which he or she reasonably determines would be considered offensive to parents or students. This determination will be made objectively and will be based solely on the offensive content of the material, not the viewpoint(s) expressed in the material.

Board Member Barnes asked about the benefits of sending out flyers that were not associated with the school district.

Superintendent Chiafery stated that there could be better communication between the district and the outside groups. But criteria is needed to determine what could or could not be sent out.

Board Member Barnes suggested that all information sent out that has anything to do with the district should be able to be distributed without being approved first. That included sports teams, the library, etc.

Board Member Markwell stated that all communications should be reviewed.

Superintendent Chiafery stated that for five years everything has gone very smoothly, but at this point she needed some leverage. She does not want the district to be involved in a discrimination suit. She added that she only wants to modify the existing policy with the information Attorney Peahl has provided.

Board Member Markwell stated that the attorney mentioned Freedom of Speech, and felt it is a very tight line to walk. Our goal, he added, should be to ensure Freedom of Speech.

Board Member Schneider stated that it should be something appropriate, without changing the whole message.

Chairman Ortega stated that the district should be nondiscriminatory while also having some level of editorial check on what information is distributed. He announced that the second review of the policy will be at the September 3, 2013 meeting.

11. Other

a.) Correspondence:

Board Member Schneider received some correspondence from a parent to discuss "No Child Left Behind" and other educational issues.

b.) Comments:

There were no comments

12. New Business:

There was no new business to report.

13. Committee Reports

Tracy Bull reported on the Safe Routes to School. Highlights include:

- The Safe Routes to School Travel Plan Task Force met July 30, 2013.
 - They discussed the data outcomes from the June surveys. The first data draft was briefly described.
 - The results of the surveys will be given to Chairman Ortega once they are received electronically
 - The data as presented was a combination of Masticola Elementary School and Masticola Upper Elementary School, but it can be separated and cross-tabbed in a variety of ways.
- The committee anticipates a mid to late August meeting of the subcommittee following the full processing of data and travel plan draft distribution/review by the Safe Routes to School committee members.
 - The meeting date is pending completion of the travel plan draft and committee members' summer availability.
 - There has been some delay due to the extension of Round 6 of the funding process with the Department of Transportation
- The next meeting is scheduled for September 14, 2013. This meeting will include presentations of report findings anticipated for the Town Center Committee, the school board, etc., but specifics are to be determined.
- The activity report was issued to the NH Department of Transportation for the month of June. The July report is in the works.
- If an infrastructure project were to be applied for if the project is on School District property, the Merrimack School District would serve as the applicant. If it is on town property, the town would be the applicant.

Tracy Bull reported on the Town Center Committee

- The last meeting of the committee was August 5, 2013
- The Souhegan River Walk was discussed.
 - Chairman Ortega and Vice Chairman Powell have reviewed the proposed easement draft. The next step is to proceed with legal counsel and then bring the draft to the board for approval.
 - Committee member Andy Powell raised questions concerning the wording of the draft as it pertains to trails maintenance
 - He felt it should be reviewed for clarity and unintended restrictions, particularly in terms of handling necessary work during school hours.
 - A letter has been sent to the NPS requesting continued assistance into the second year. It has been received and is pending approval
- Church Street Closure
 - Nelson Disco met with Town Manager Cabanel and Deputy Director of the Department of Public Works, Kyle Fox, to review the closure proposal and plan. Ms. Cabanel recommended a public hearing before the Town Council. It is scheduled for August 15, 2013.

- The Town Manager, Fire and Police Chiefs, the Director of the Department of Public Works remain in support of the closure.
- There is a committee vacancy for a member-at-large. Jackie Flood may apply.
- The Town Center Committee plans to have an informational booth at the Fall Expo regarding projects
- The next meeting is scheduled for September 16 at the Duhamel Pavilion in Watson Park, weather permitting. Otherwise they will meet at Town Hall.

14. Public Comments on Agenda Items

There were no public comments on Agenda Items.

15. Manifest

The Board signed the manifest.

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

The motion passed 5-0-0.