

**Merrimack School Board Meeting
Merrimack High School Cafeteria
May 2, 2011**

PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

PRESENT: Chairman Vaillancourt, School Board members Barnes, Markwell and Thornton, Superintendent Chiafery, Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin, Business Administrator Shevenell and Student Representative McLavey. Board Member Ortega was excused.

1. Call To Order

Chairman Vaillancourt called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Chairman Vaillancourt led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. School Board Reorganization

Board Member Thornton moved (seconded by Board Member Barnes) to nominate Jody Vaillancourt as Chairman of the School Board.

Board Member Markwell stated that he would have preferred to nominate Jennifer Thornton as Chairman of the School Board.

Board Member Barnes spoke in support and appreciation of Chairman Vaillancourt's leadership in this last year.

The motion passed 3-1-0. Board Member Markwell voted in opposition.

Board Member Thornton moved (seconded by Board Member Barnes) to nominate Board Member Ortega as Vice Chairman.

The motion passed 4-0-0.

3. Approval of April 18, 2011 Minutes

Board Member Barnes moved (seconded by Board Member Thornton) to approve the minutes of the April 18, 2011 meeting.

Board Member Markwell requested the following clarification to the minutes.

- Although not at the meeting, he asked to clarify Board Member Barnes question about the out of district placement as being a private education as opposed to public.
- Board Member Thornton added that Board Member Barnes' question was regarding out of district scores placement in our test score results.

The motion passed 2-0-2. Chairman Vaillancourt and Board Member Markwell abstained from the vote.

4. Public Participation

There was no public participation.

5. Acceptance of Gifts/Grants under \$5,000- Business Administrator Shevenell

- a) From Gate City Electric, LLC for \$2,000

Business Administrator Shevenell reported the money would be used by the First Robotics Team.

- b) From GT Solar Incorporated for \$2,000

Business Administrator Shevenell reported the money would be used by the First Robotics Team.

Board Member Thornton moved (seconded by Board Member Barnes) to approve the Gifts/Grants under \$5,000.

The motion passed 4-0-0.

6. Commitment to Board Code of Ethics

The School Board Code of Ethics was read out loud by Board Member Thornton.

Each member of the School Board dated and signed the Merrimack School Board Code of Ethics.

7. Consent Agenda

- a) Teacher Resignation/Retirement

Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin announced the following teacher retirement.

- Debra Shorey Packard, First Grade Teacher at Reeds Ferry Elementary School

- b) Teacher Nomination

Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin announced the following teacher nomination. He noted that the teacher is being recalled.

- Courtney Manolis, Language Arts Teacher at Merrimack Middle School

Board Member Barnes moved (seconded by Board Member Thornton) to approve the consent agenda.

Board Member Markwell questioned if the teacher leaving her position was part of the early retirement.

Superintendent Chiafery stated that Debra Shorey Packard was not part of the early retirement requests. The ten requests for early retirement had already been approved by the board.

The motion passed 4-0-0.

8. Formal Signing of the Master Agreement Between the Merrimack Teachers' Association and Merrimack School Board

The Agreement was signed by Chairman Jody Vaillancourt, Superintendent Chiafery and Debra McLaughlin, President of the Merrimack Teachers' Association.

9. First Reading of the Memo of Understanding with the Merrimack Police Department

Police Chief Doyle and Lieutenant Roy were present.

The policy was read by Board Member Thornton, Superintendent Chiafery and Business Administrator Shevenell.

Superintendent Chiafery noted that the updated policy was a work in progress between the school district leadership team the Merrimack police department and the Town Council's counsel, Attorney Upton.

Chief Doyle thanked the School Board for allowing him and Lieutenant Roy to attend the meeting. He stated that the lines of communication between the schools and the police department continue to be open. He added that the Memo of Understanding sets the ground rules for The Safe Schools Act which states the requirements of the schools and police in terms of safety in the schools.

Chief Doyle stressed that if information is confidential, the police are allowed to share information with the School District, stating that this document "holds our feet to the fire".

Board Member Barnes commented on the information on page 3, section 1. She asked that since 16 years of age is the age of consent, then why is "under 13 years of age" specified in the Memorandum, and asked if it should read instead "sexual conduct on school grounds or during school functions, children under the age of 18" in order to quantify all children in the school district.

Lieutenant Roy responded that sexual contact is considered a "lesser crime".

Chief Doyle stated that the statute breaks it out by age and is a separate offense altogether. He added that the exact language is from RSA 632-A and cannot be changed.

Board Member Markwell clarified that all the RSA's cannot be changed.

Superintendent Chiafery explained that the school board will go through three separate readings of the Memorandum before it is approved. The second reading of the policy will be May 16th. The final reading will be in June.

Chief Doyle asked if it would be necessary for the police department to be in attendance at the upcoming meetings, to which Superintendent Chiafery responded that it is not necessary for anyone from the Police Department to be in attendance at further meetings to discuss the Memorandum.

Board Member Markwell asked that if the statutes change, will the memorandum be updated. Chief Doyle responded that they do not anticipate any statutory changes regarding any of the categories in the memorandum, but if there are, amendments would be made.

Chairman Vaillancourt asked about the reduction of one police officer and how it might affect the School Resource Officer (SRO) position at the high school.

Chief Doyle responded that the department is awaiting the state budget, but he assured the board that he is one hundred percent behind keeping the School Resource Officer (SRO) at the high school.

Chairman Vaillancourt thanked Chief Doyle and Lieutenant Roy for attending the meeting and asked if something were to change, that they please inform the board.

10. Update Regarding Online Payment Plan for School Lunches

Business Administrator Shevenell explained that the online payment system was hoping to be rolled out by early spring. However, there have been several problems with various servers coordinating the information. The plan is to begin the testing of the system in the final weeks of the school year, with the hope of rolling out the plan at the beginning of the 2011-2012 school year.

Board Member Thornton noted that the Parent District Group was looking forward to being the trial group for testing the plan.

Business Administrator Shevenell assured the board that the plan has just been delayed and still is in the works.

11. Update on Reconstructing School Entrances at Reeds Ferry Elementary School and Thorntons Ferry Elementary School

Superintendent Chiafery explained that the information being presented at this meeting is informational only. A decision will be made at the meeting on May 16, 2011, since Business Administrator Shevenell had previously stated that May 15 last date for a decision.

Business Administrator Shevenell explained that the funding for this project is in the budget. The plan is to provide air locked door entrances in both schools. This would entail adding a second set of entrance doors. The first set of doors would be opened manually. A reception desk would be located before the second set of doors, which could only be opened by the receptionist.

Business Administrator Shevenell explained that the budget amount was \$200,000. However the new estimate has come in at \$360,000 due to changes in code.

Board Member Barnes suggested that perhaps the project needs to be brought before the School Planning Building Committee.

Board Member Markwell questioned how the architect “missed” these code requirements that resulted in the increased estimate.

Business Administrator Shevenell explained that different code issues were not in place when the original estimates were received. He suggested that perhaps the original estimates were based on square footage rather than taking the new codes into account.

Board Member Markwell asked if Business Administrator Shevenell had confidence in the architects. He also wanted to know when the plans were drawn up.

Business Administrator Shevenell replied that the original plans were submitted around four years ago. However, the detailed level of drawings was not done until now. He added that the construction manager asked several contractors to bid on the job, and then he submitted the bid.

Board Member Thornton asked if another firm could be contacted for a bid. She also asked if one building could be reconstructed instead of both. She suggested that this may be a way to stay within the budget.

Business Administrator Shevenell suggested the Planning and Building Committee look at this issue, since they are in the process of looking at the parking issues at Reeds Ferry School. He concluded that the situation merits further discussion and investigation.

12. School Board Committee Assignments for 2011-2012

A document entitled Explanation of School Board Assignments was given to each board member.

Any questions should be directed to Superintendent Chiafery.

Board members were told to E-mail Chairman Vaillancourt with their first five preferences for committee assignments. She will try to assign each person at least one of their first choices.

The committee assignments will be finalized at the May 16th meeting.

Board Member Barnes stated that she had made a three year commitment to the Grater Woods Committee. Chairman Vaillancourt stated that Board Member Barnes would remain on the Grater Woods Committee.

13. Other

- **Correspondence**

There was no correspondence.

- **Comments**

Chairman Vaillancourt thanked Student Representative McLavey for her commitment and attendance at school board meetings, including those that occurred immediately after a game.

Student Representative McLavey announced that Merrimack High School won the lacrosse game that she had just come from.

Chairman Vaillancourt asked Student Representative McLavey to bring the Memo of Understanding with the Police Department to the student council for their review.

13. New Business

Board Member Markwell stated that he was approached by members of the Town Council about holding the school board meetings at the Town Hall meeting room.

Chairman Vaillancourt responded that Superintendent Chiafery had discussions with Nick Lavalley of Merrimack TV regarding having the meetings in the meeting room. There are several factors that need to be weighed. This will be a future agenda item.

Board Member Barnes questioned the location of non-public meetings if the school board meetings were to be held at the Town Hall meeting room.

Board Member Markwell responded that there are several areas to hold the non-public meetings.

14. Committee Reports:

Board Member Barnes reported that the Grater Woods Committee signed the first final draft of the report which will be presented to the Conservation Committee and then it will go before the Town Council for discussion. She added that there has been a conflict with meeting dates of the school board and the conservation committee and suggested that the conservation committee have an earlier start time so that she and Business Administrator Shevenell could attend both meetings.

Tracy Bull attended two meetings as the co-representative to the Master Plan Committee on April 19, 2011 and April 26, 2011. She noted that the committee is comprised of about thirty members. She reported that the state requires communities to update its master plan every two years. The Town of Merrimack hired the consulting firm of Vanass, Hagin and Bresslin (VHB) who will conduct the meetings and leading the project. The project will be handled in three phases, with funding across three fiscal years.

At the first public forum on April 26, 2011, members looked at a statistical snapshot of Merrimack.

The next regular meeting will be held on May 17, 2011 at the Town Hall meeting room.

15. Public Comments on Agenda Items

Raquel Perez of 48 Bean Road stated that she is very disappointed with the present meeting area for the school board, as the room is not "user friendly". She suggested that the meetings be moved to the Town Hall meeting room.

16. Manifest

The Board signed the Manifest.

At 8:50 p.m. Board Member Markwell moved (seconded by Board Member Thornton) to recess to non-public session per RSA 91-A:3, II (a),(b),(c).

The motion passed 4-0-0 on a roll call vote.

At 9:35 p.m., Board member Markwell moved (seconded by Board member Barnes) to adjourn.