

**Merrimack School Board Meeting  
Town Hall Meeting Room  
April 18, 2016  
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES**

**Present:** Vice Chair Barnes, Board Members Guagliumi and Schneider, Superintendent Chiafery, Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin and Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell. Board Member Powell and new Board Member Thompson were excused. Both were attempting to conference call; however, due to technical difficulties were unable to do so successfully.

**1. Pledge of Allegiance**

Vice Chair Barnes called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.

Vice Chair Barnes led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**2. Welcome New Board Member**

Vice Chair Barnes noted the addition of new Board Member Michael Thompson and stated that he would be welcomed at the May 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting.

**3. School Board Reorganization**

Board Member Schneider nominated Vice Chair Barnes (seconded by Board Member Guagliumi) for the position of Chair of the School Board. He noted her seven years on the School Board and her dedication and hard work.

The motion carried 3-0-0.

Student Representative Marcus voted In Favor.

Board Member Guagliumi nominated Board Member Schneider (seconded by Chair Barnes) to the position of Vice Chair of the School Board. She noted his leadership on the School Board and the Budget Committee.

The motion carried 3-0-0.

Student Representative Marcus voted In Favor.

**4. Commitment to Board Code of Ethics**

Chair Barnes noted that newly elected School Board Member Michael Thompson read and signed the School Board Code of Ethics prior to the meeting.

The School Board Code of Ethics was read aloud by the three members present each reading a portion.

Chair Barnes read:

As a member of the Merrimack School Board I shall promote the best interests of the District by adhering to the following ethical standards, and affix my signature to the same:

### **Trustworthy in Responsibilities**

- I will always remember that my first and greatest concern will be the educational welfare of the students in the Merrimack School District.
- I will be accountable to the public by accurately representing District policies, programs, priorities, and progress.
- I will be responsive to the community by seeking its involvement in District affairs and by communicating its priorities and concerns.
- I will work to ensure prudent and accountable use of District resources and never lose sight of the fiscal responsibility owed to the taxpayers of the District.
- I will make no personal promise or take private action that may compromise my performance or my responsibilities or those of my fellow Board members.
- I will avoid being placed in a position of conflict of interest, and refrain from using my board position for personal or partisan gain.

Vice Chair Schneider read:

### **Honor in Conduct**

- I will be honest, fair, just, and impartial in all my decisions and actions.
- I will encourage and respect open dialogue and listen with an open mind while working for consensus.
- I will respect the majority decisions as the decision of the Board.

### **Integrity of Character**

- I will consistently uphold all applicable laws, rules, policies, and District procedures.
- I will not disclose information that is confidential by law or that will undermine the District.

Board Member Guagliumi read:

### **Commitment to Service**

- I will focus my attention on fulfilling the Board's responsibilities of goal setting, policymaking, and evaluation.
- I will diligently prepare for and attend Board meetings.
- I will avoid personal involvement in activities the Board has delegated to the Superintendent.
- I will inform myself about relevant educational issues.

Student Representative Marcus suggested that the School Board Code of Ethics be shared with the new student representative in September.

## **5. Public Participation**

Merrimack High School sophomore Grace Corbett read from her written letter in support of repairing the track at the high school. She also read a letter from an alumni also in support of the track.

Other students speaking on behalf of the track and with some also reading letters written by alumni were Bailey Carrillo, Meghan Glisson, Michael O'Hara, and Elijah Gaumont.

Chair Barnes then read an alumni letter she had been given prior to the meeting.

All of the letters spoke of the importance running track had on their high school experiences, grades, social lives and college and career opportunities.

## **6. Middle School Year in Review**

Principal Adam Caragher and Assistant Principal Shawna D'Amour were invited to the table by Chair Barnes. Principal Caragher spoke on the theme of desirable difficulties and invited selected students to speak about particular subject areas.

Technology Education educator Sue Heimberg and students Marcus Herold, Madison Carrillo, Brenae Dubis, Adele Alexander, Andrea Hunt, and Daniel Bartus addressed the question "How can we design solutions to technological challenges?"

Marcus began by displaying a CO2 car he had designed and is experimenting with ways to increase its miles per hour.

Madison and Brenae designed a bridge using a triangle grid that weighed 28 grams that could hold 18 pounds hanging from it.

Adele, Andrea and Daniel used school supplied supplies and created a catapult. They explained in detail their trial and error process.

Family and Consumer Science educator Ann Bergeron and students Olivia Gage, Cole Camberlain and Brittany Fisher addressed the question "How do the modules prepare students for the future?"

Olivia shared that students learn basic financial skills such as bill paying and check writing in Money Management. In Cooking students learn kitchen skills. Sewing and Design provides students the abilities to create and repair clothes.

Cole added that he learned about nutritional values in Cooking and different stitches in Sewing and Designing.

Brittany shared that she learned a tremendous amount in all of the Family and Consumer Science classes.

Gateway educator Linda Mandra and students Harrison Faust and Julia Matte addressed the question "What's so cool about manufacturing?"

Harrison and Julia spoke about a documentary film they produced on local manufacturing. They chose the St. Gobain plant and then proceeded to research the company website to formulate their interview questions before visiting and interviewing the employees. Both students spoke of how they successfully stayed on goal as they went through the process.

Health educator Maggie Croteau and students Morgan Ottman and Casey Habegger addressed the question "How can we contribute to a greater cause?"

Maggie and Morgan shared that they will be holding an event on May 12<sup>th</sup> where hair stylists will cut and style hair of anyone wishing to donate their long hair in support of cancer patients. The hair will go to the Pantene Beautiful Lengths organization that collects the hair and uses it to make wigs for cancer patients.

Student Council advisor Diane Nocella and student Brittany Fisher addressed the question “What are the ways we can help our community?”

Brittany listed the many activities the organization has been involved in this past year. Elections were held in September, a dress-up day and dance in October, compliment day in November, The Giving Tree in conjunction with the Merrimack Lion’s Club in December, a Candy-Gram in February, a dodge-ball tournament in March with winners receiving King Cone ice creams as well as a student vs. staff basketball game, a school dance and Earth Day clean-up in April, a Food Drive for St. James Church in May and then in June there will be an Eighth Grade Farewell Gathering. All funds to support these events are from school dances and donations. Last year Merrimack Safeguard donated \$500.00.

First Lego League, STEM and Math Club advisor Merrimack High School senior Matt Spettel and student Olivia Gage addressed the question “How can we push ourselves to reach new heights?”

Olivia spoke about the advanced math and science she has learned in these clubs. She highlighted the First Lego League.

Advisor Matt shared why he gave his time to the middle school students. He reflected on his middle school years and the abundant opportunities available to him. He feels strongly that math and science are the future and that students need this exposure in middle school.

First Lego League coach and parent Chris Trimper and students Rohan Sreenivasan and Sean Trimper addressed the question “How can students work to find a solution to a global problem?”

Rohan and Sean spoke about the importance of teamwork and the robots they were able to create.

Chair Barnes asked the students why they chose this team over the other team and parent advisor Trimper stated that in grade five there were five teams made up of 10 students in each team. The teams were randomly assembled.

Quiz Bowl coach Merrimack High School senior Jack Landry and students Andrew Peyton, Scott Peyton and Alex Jobin addressed the question “How does working together benefit the whole?”

Coach Landry shared that as a member of the high school Quiz Bowl team he wanted to strengthen the team and expose the club to younger students.

Andrew shared that each member has an academic strength they bring to the team. Scott shared that they also learn from each other as questions are asked and answered. Alex shared that their mentor/coach Jack is the best part of Quiz Bowl as he will explain things in detail so they can be better understood. He makes connections between the middle school and high school curriculums.

Sewing Club educator Ann Bergeron and student Brianna Nolet addressed the question “How can we positively contribute globally?”

Brianna displayed pillowcases for cancer that were made in the club. They will be brought to local hospitals. They have also made dresses for girls in Kenya and will be working on making pants for boys. These items are for children who have experienced hard times.

Assistant Principal D’Amour spoke about two field trips that combined students from the middle school and high school. The Girls in Technology Conference was held on March 19<sup>th</sup> at Manchester Community College and the Science of Pixar was held at the Boston Museum of Science and attended by art and science students.

Principal Caragher thanked the Merrimack High School teachers and students for their willingness to spend their free time with the middle school students.

Vice Chair Schneider complimented the talented middle school students and questioned what might be added in the future.

Principal Caragher responded that new ventures come from student driven ideas.

Board Member Guagliumi asked about the possibility of Foreign Language Clubs. She asked specifically about Arabic and Mandarin.

Principal Caragher responded that if a student expressed interest he or she would be welcomed with open arms.

Board Member Guagliumi expressed interest in seeing the student documentary on St. Gobain.

Principal Caragher responded that he would provide her with a link to the video.

Student Representative Marcus noted that as a recent middle school graduate he was impressed with all of the student initiatives especially the charitable aspects. He commended the student council members for the volume of work they were able to produce.

Chair Barnes asked the Pantene members if anyone who has already cut their hair and still has it could bring it to the event and was told yes.

Chair Barnes applauded all of the presenters and then in consideration of the students in attendance she moved to agenda item #10.

## **10. Presentation of Proposed Budget Cuts to Develop the Default Budget**

Superintendent Chiafery stated the process employed in putting together the suggested additional cuts. The Leadership Team met and came up with additional recommendations. Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell read through the list and provided details when necessary. He noted that the track was not on the list.

Superintendent Chiafery clarified an earlier comment regarding the boys’ freshman soccer team. On the question of eliminating the soccer goals, nets and equipment, Principal Johnson has informed her that schedules can be adjusted to allow use of the equipment and that the team would not be eliminated.

Superintendent Chiafery further clarified the issue of introducing a volleyball team at the middle school. After speaking with Principal Caragher she discovered that fifteen teams already exist at the middle school and that when budgeting for them the possibility of their advancing to championships must be factored in to the transportation costs. Additionally, to add a new sport at this late date would come up against an already made Tri-County League schedule.

Vice Chair Schneider asked if this means that Merrimack would have to create their own schedule and was told yes.

Vice Chair Schneider commented that his goal was to make cuts that did not impact programs that affected students. He was pleased that there will still be a freshman boys' soccer team and accepts the decision to not add a middle school volleyball team at this time.

Vice Chair Schneider noted that the HVAC equipment on the cafeteria of the Merrimack High School is on the new cut list and asked how much longer the equipment is expected to last.

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell responded that there is considerable corrosion and that the unit functionality is on borrowed time.

Vice Chair Schneider expressed concern about delaying this project another year and stated that it should be a high priority next year.

Board Member Guagliumi asked about the safety impact if the unit fails and was told that portable units would be put in place until it could be replaced which would take about three months. She also asked what is available in Capital Reserves and was told there is not enough money available to cover replacement.

Superintendent Chiafery added that there are no longer replacement parts available and that the entire unit needs to be replaced.

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell added that even if parts were to be found that the unit is no longer up to code.

Board Member Guagliumi shared that she had the same concerns as Vice Chair Schneider in regards to freshman boys' soccer and middle school volleyball.

Superintendent Chiafery noted that the high school track was not put on the Cut List due to the strong support for it being replaced.

Discussion ensued among the members in regards to moving money from the transportation account to pay for soccer nets, forgoing nets, the consequences for other teams if no nets, and the importance that teams not have to fundraise.

Chair Barnes summed up the discussion by stating the Booster Clubs should be asked about the fundraising issue and then the vote will take place at the next School Board meeting.

Superintendent Chiafery requested approval at this meeting for Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell to move forward on signing the contract for the new middle school roof.

Board Member Guagliumi moved (seconded by Vice Chair Schneider) to allow the roof project to move forward as budgeted.

The motion carried 3-0-0.

Student Representative Marcus voted In Favor.

Board Member Guagliumi asked to have the Proposed Default Level Budget Cuts put on the District website.

Chair Barnes also asked that the cut list be amended to state that freshman boys' soccer will not be eliminated.

## **7. Approval of April 4, 2016 Minutes**

Vice Chair Schneider moved (seconded by Board Member Guagliumi) to approve the minutes of the April 4, 2016 meeting.

Student Representative Marcus requested the following changes to the minutes:

- Page 5, lines 193, 226 and 233 change "...Sarah..." to "...Sara..."

Chair Barnes requested the following changes to the minutes:

- Page 2, line 71 change "...the Harvard..." to "...Harvard's..."
- Page 13, line 622 change "...longevity of the charges..." to "...longevity of the second and third charges..."

The motion passed as amended 3-0-0.

Student Representative Marcus voted In Favor.

## **8. Acceptance of Gifts/Grants under \$5,000**

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell presented a gift in memory of former teacher Ruth Nobert to the James Masticola Elementary School library. The funds will be used to purchase books for the library.

Board Member Guagliumi moved (seconded by Vice Chair Schneider) to accept the gift.

The motion carried 3-0-0.

Student Representative Marcus voted In Favor.

## **9. Consent Agenda**

Assistant Superintendent McLaughlin presented the following for consent:

### **a) Educator Nominations for 2016-2017**

### **b) Educator Retirement/Resignation**

Lisa Leonard

Merrimack High School

Math

### **c) Approval of Charge for Planning and Building Committee**

Vice Chair Schneider moved (seconded by Board Member Guagliumi) to accept the Consent Agenda as presented.

The motion passed 3-0-0.

Student Representative Marcus voted In Favor.

Vice Chair Schneider asked how the Charge is to be presented to the Planning and Building Committee.

Superintendent Chiafery responded that she will e-mail the Charge tomorrow to the Chair of the Planning and Building Committee. They will be holding a meeting next Monday night and also plan to attend the next School Board meeting to dialogue the Charge.

Vice Chair Schneider will attend the meeting and formally present the Charge.

**10. (This item was moved up in the agenda and can be found under number six)**

**11. School Board Committee Assignments for 2016-2017**

Chair Barnes referred members to the list of assignments members were provided in their packets that were mailed to them prior to the meeting. She noted the changes and additions to the list. Academic assignments were eliminated, and Communications and Policies were added as separate committees.

Vice Chair Schneider requested an agenda item for the next meeting to talk through the purpose or role of each committee for the benefit of the entire Board.

Vice Chair Schneider recommended tabling the process until the next meeting when the full Board will be in attendance.

Board Member Guagliumi agreed.

Chair Barnes agreed and asked both Vice Chair Schneider and Board Member Guagliumi to share their top five requests for assignments before the next meeting.

**12. Other**

**a) Correspondence**

Vice Chair Schneider received e-mails in favor of replacing the track at the high school. He also received e-mails suggesting other areas to consider when creating the default budget.

Board Member Guagliumi received an e-mail in regards to the PFOA's in the water, and an e-mail from a constituent interested in serving on the Budget Committee.

Chair Barnes also received an e-mail about the PFOA's in the water, eleven e-mails in favor of the high school track and one e-mail on improving voter education prior to elections.

**b) Comments**

There were no comments.



### **13. New Business**

Assistant Superintendent for Business Shevenell updated the Board on the PFOA situation. All schools have sent water samples out to be tested. Ground testing will be paid for by the St. Gobain Company for those within a one mile radius of the plant and the Reeds Ferry School is 1.25 miles away, putting it outside the radius. Merrimack will conduct its own testing at Reeds Ferry School. All results will be made public and shared with the Department of Environmental Services and the Town of Merrimack.

### **14. Committee Reports**

Vice Chair Schneider shared that Merrimack Safeguard held a meeting on April 7<sup>th</sup>.

Board Member Guagliumi will be attending the Parks and Recreation meeting on April 20<sup>th</sup>.

Chair Barnes will be attending the Grater Woods Sub-Committee meeting on April 19<sup>th</sup>.

### **15. Public Comments on Agenda Items**

There were no public comments.

### **16. Manifest**

The Board signed the manifest.

At 9:22 p.m. Board Member Guagliumi moved (seconded by Vice Chair Schneider) to enter non-public session per RSA A 91-A: 3, II (a) (b) (c).

A roll call vote was taken. The motion passed 3-0-0.

Board Member Guagliumi voted In Favor.

Vice Chair Schneider voted In Favor.

Chair Barnes voted In Favor.

At 9:40 p.m. Board Member Guagliumi moved (seconded by Vice Chair Schneider) to adjourn the meeting.

The motion passed 3-0-0.