

Merrimack School District Budget Committee
February 14, 2019
Public Hearing
Minutes

Present: K. Bobbitt, J. Guagliumi, S. Heinrich, A. Hyde-Berger, C. Lang (by phone), G. Savitch,
C. Mower, B. Stisser and School Board member N. Schoenfeld

Excused: D. Illg, M. Murphy and S. Jacoby

Absent: L. French

Also present: Superintendent M. Chiafery, Assistant Superintendent Dr. M. McLaughlin, and
Assistant Superintendent for Business M. Shevenell

S. Heinrich opened the hearing at 7:33 P.M.

S. Heinrich explained the purpose of the Public Hearing was to give members of the public an opportunity to make comments on the proposed operating budget and any monied warrant articles before the Budget Committee finalized its recommendations.

S. Heinrich explained the Budget Committee had reviewed all the monied warrant articles but had not yet voted recommendations on them.

Teachers Contract

S. Heinrich summarized the article. He said the School Board and the Merrimack Teachers Association are in support of this article

S. Heinrich asked if there were any comments or questions. There were none.

Emergency Repair Capital Reserve Fund

S. Heinrich summarized the article. He said the School Board voted 5 – 0 – 0 in favor of this item.

S. Heinrich asked if there were any comments or questions. There were none.

Mastricola Complex Paving

S. Heinrich summarized the article. He said the School Board voted 5 – 0 – 0 in favor of this item.

S. Heinrich asked if there were any comments or questions. There were none.

Operating Budget

S. Heinrich summarized the article.

S. Heinrich said the Budget Committee added \$200,000 to the Operating Budget. He said while this is technically a bottom line addition to the budget, the Committee put the money in the budget to be used to demolish the “Red Building.” He said there is \$22,000 in the operating budget for insurance purposes to minimally maintain the building, but the building cannot be used. He said the School Board may not agree with this addition and may decide not to spend it, but the Committee felt demolishing the building now is the responsible thing to do.

S. Heinrich said the Committee met with the Administration and all Department Heads who he thanked for putting together a budget that should appeal to the voters.

S. Heinrich asked if there were any comments or questions. There were none.

Turf field

S. Heinrich summarized the article. He said the School District Planning and Building Committee has been discussing a turf field at the high school for a number of years. However, he said this was a petitioned warrant article and he asked Carrie Chaisson to speak to the article.

Carrie Chaisson (Powers Circle) said there is a lot of community interest in installing a turf field at the high school. She said that the safety of the students is a big issue. She said a turf field can also be used for multiple sports, not just football. She said a group of parents is working to obtain donations/sponsorships to help defray the initial installation cost and so far, there are 15-20 local companies who have indicating a willingness to donate to the project.

B. Stisser asked how the current field situation has affected children. C. Chaisson replied that there isn't a soccer field at the high school so students have to go off-site for practices and games. She said that transportation to off-site practices is not available which stresses students who have to secure transportation on their own. She also said this stress affects their concentration levels for both academics and sports participation.

C. Lang asked if the District is offering advertising to companies who donate toward the field.

Brandi Nunez (Powers Circle) said she was working with the parent group and they are working on a defined structure for sponsor advertising. She said that there are District procedures and limitations that must be followed.

G. Savitch asked if there was an estimate of possible rent income. Ms. Chaisson replied no estimate is available at this time.

There were no further comments.

S. Heinrich urged everyone to go to Deliberative Session on March 5th and to vote on April 9th.

S. Heinrich closed the Public Hearing at 7:54 P M.

Respectfully submitted,

Pat Heinrich