

MILFORD SCHOOL BOARD
MINUTES
Monday, September 21, 2015 – 7:00PM
Milford High School – Lecture Hall Room #182

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7 1. Call To Order:

8 Chairman Paul Dargie called the school board meeting to order at 7:00 PM in Milford
9 High School room # 182. Board members present included Mr. Kevin Drew, Mr.
10 Robert Willette, Mr. Len Mannino and Mr. Ron Carvell. Also present were
11 Superintendent Robert Marquis, Business Administrator Jennifer Burk, and school
12 board minute's recorder Diane Scott.

13
14 2. Board Member Comments:

15 Ron Carvell thanked administrators for allowing Paul Dargie and him to tour the
16 schools on Wednesday September 9th during the heat wave. Mr. Carvell feels that we
17 need a mitigation plan for hot days, such as portable air conditioners.

18
19 Paul Dargie reported that the schools were all very hot that day, but not unbearable.
20 There were many fans in use throughout the district to help move the air around and
21 to cool things off. He was impressed with the diligence of the students and staff.
22 About a dozen classrooms in the various buildings were viewed, and the teachers
23 and students were all actively engaged in learning activities. The Bales school was
24 the hottest building in the district.

25
26 Len Mannino reported that he is concerned about the heroin epidemic in the state,
27 and that he and Superintendent Marquis have been discussing different drug
28 programs. Mr. Mannino reported that he has had discussions with Police Chief Viola
29 regarding instructions that the Chief has had in his experience. Mr. Mannino will
30 report to the board at a future meeting regarding these discussions. He did not
31 believe that there would be any budget implications.

32
33 3. Public Comments:

34 None.

35
36 4. Reports and Presentations:

37
38 a. Superintendent's Report:

39 Superintendent Marquis reported to the board that the Boys and Girls Club of
40 Souhegan Valley had contacted him last Wednesday, September 16th, requesting
41 space for their students due to a power outage at their facility, and further needing
42 our assistance to contact parents. Superintendent Marquis wanted to thank Principal
43 Chantel Alcox and her staff for providing that assistance.

44
45 Superintendent Marquis reported to the board that the New England Association of
46 School of Colleges, will be visiting October 25th through October 28th. This

47 accreditation process occurs every 10 years. The high school staff have been
48 preparing for this for the past two years. At some point the board may be invited to
49 participate. Superintendent Marquis feels the school is ready for the visit. Chairman
50 Dargie reported to the board that he had spoken with Dr. Craven and that Sunday,
51 October 25th at 2:00 is the time that is tentatively allotted for the board interaction with
52 the review group.

53
54 Superintendent Marquis reported to the board that the Smarter Balanced test results
55 from the test that was taken last spring will be available after November 8, 2015, and
56 that the schools will be sending out letters to parents to help explain the test results.
57 The district is also planning on putting information on the school's website. Teachers
58 are being trained on how to interpret results.

59
60 Superintendent Marquis reported to the board that the Fletcher Super Fund work will
61 begin on October 2, 2015 and will last through December 2016. The Superintendent
62 told the board that this would affect students that walk to Jacques, and some bus
63 routes will also be affected. Access to the sports fields in Keyes Park will be via 127
64 Elm Street instead of via the current access road from Elm Street. This access from
65 127 Elm Street will allow the continued use of the athletic fields.

66
67 Mr. Mannino questioned if there were any precautions the school needs to take with
68 regards to recess at Jacques due to potential airborne contamination. Superintendent
69 Marquis stated that he did not believe the school needed to take any
70 precautions. Mr. Mannino requested to Superintendent Marquis that we be proactive
71 on the safety of air quality in that area and ensure that dust levels remain low.

72
73 b. Annual Report from Director of Building and Grounds:

74 Buildings and Grounds Director Bill Cooper reported to the board that the buildings
75 and grounds department completed projects at each building during the summer. He
76 also reported that district wide the main focus this summer was improving the field
77 turf. The fields were aerated, fertilized, over-seeded, and given time to rest and
78 recover. Mr. Cooper stated that new fencing was purchased to go around the track
79 and will be installed in October.

80
81 Mr. Mannino questioned Mr. Cooper as to the condition of the vehicle fleet as we
82 prepare for the winter months. Mr. Cooper stated that he has been having problems
83 with one dump truck and a sander.

84
85 c. Annual Report on Test Scores:

86 Director of Curriculum and Instruction Michael Tenters reported to the board that
87 there will be significant changes to the SAT test this spring. These changes will align
88 the test with the common core, and make the SAT more similar to the ACT test. Mr.
89 Tenters stated that although SAT scores for Milford High School students may look
90 like they are declining, these scores do not represent the super score values that
91 colleges use. Furthermore, Mr. Tenters stated that when looking at the super scores,
92 Milford High students are improving quite well.

93 Superintendent Marquis stated that the state has requested a waiver from the federal
94 government, to exempt high school juniors from participating in the Smarter Balanced
95 test so they can take the SATs instead, beginning in the spring of 2016.
96
97

98 5. New Business:

99 a. Budget Development Parameters:

100 Mr. Carvell stated to the board that he still feels that the board should incorporate
101 language that forces the administration to prioritize.

102 Mr. Willette stated that he is not in favor of providing upfront budget direction to the
103 administrators. Mr. Willette stated that the board would lose their ability to see
104 programs that may otherwise be eliminated. Mr. Willette stated that this procedure
105 would take away the board's authority to determine what they felt was important.
106

107 Mr. Carvell questioned Superintendent Marquis as to how the budget process is done
108 in other districts. Superintendent Marquis stated that some districts have to set
109 parameters due to tax caps, some districts use a similar budget building process that
110 is similar to Milford's, and some districts are asked to prepare a budget based on
111 operating expenses for their building and then are requested to pare them back.
112

113 Mr. Drew stated that he is not opposed to try something new, but he would like to see
114 the list of items that we may be sacrificing, in order to meet our budget needs.
115

116 No motions were brought forward, so Mr. Dargie stated that the district would use the
117 same process as last year whereby the administration will present a budget that
118 achieves desired learning objectives while keeping the needs of the taxpayers in
119 mind.
120

121 b. Discussion of Potential Non-Budget Warrant Articles:

122 Chairman Dargie reported to the board that there are two contracts being negotiated
123 this year that will be on the warrant if agreements can be reached. Mr. Dargie
124 reported to the board that he had received an email from Town and School District
125 Moderator Peter Basiliere requesting that the board put something on the warrant this
126 year that is similar to the 2015 town warrant article 25 that updated the charge to the
127 town budget committee, but this one would be for the school budget committee. This
128 will be a topic for a board meeting discussion. There is also the possibility of a bond
129 article for capital improvements.
130

131 c. Capital Improvement Plan Recommendations:

132 Superintendent Marquis reported to the board his recommendations for capital
133 improvements so that the board can make an informed decision with information
134 provided from multiple sources. Superintendent Marquis stated that it is also
135 recognized that the board in its deliberations will make a decision which ultimately will
136 be decided upon by the community.
137

138 Superintendent Marquis stated that it is believed that the amelioration of some of our
139 building improvement needs is best addressed by the utilization of a comprehensive
140 three-pronged approach.

- 141 • Developing a CIP and addressing some of the items through a warrant article
- 142 • Working through a 5 year plan within the context of the Annual Operating Budget
- 143 • Providing some relief via monies placed in a capital reserve fund

144
145 Superintendent Marquis reported to the board that exhibit 1 represents an itemized
146 listing of capital improvement projects by school building. This list was developed in
147 consideration of past discussions of building concerns that needed to be (but have
148 not yet been) addressed, as well as additional areas of concern that were raised by
149 board members, building administrators, and the central office team.

150
151 Superintendent Marquis stated to the board that in order to orient the board, the
152 categories, included in the exhibit – infrastructure, bond and budget were used in an
153 attempt to provide some organization. “Infrastructure” is used to denote those items
154 which are believed (by the building administration as well as the central office team)
155 to be of the highest priority: areas that are needed to be addressed for the “integrity”
156 of the buildings – which would be included in the bond. “Budget” includes those items
157 that could be addressed within a 3 – 5 year plan (also included in the board packet as
158 being exhibit #4). The school’s principals were asked to provide their input; so noted
159 by the “rankings”.

160
161 Superintendent Marquis stated to the board that exhibit #2 represents his
162 recommendations (relative to a CIP plan) to the board for deliberation and
163 consideration knowing that in all likelihood that it would be infeasible to attempt to go
164 forward to attempt to address all of the items listed in exhibit #1.

165
166 Superintendent Marquis reported that the central focus of school building
167 environments that integrates the items noted within the areas of “Infrastructure, Bond
168 and Budget”: prioritizing and balancing the following:

- 169 • Safety and security (physical, psychological and network)
- 170 • Remediation of infrastructure concerns (physical plant as well as technology)
- 171 • The amelioration of some of the more longstanding concerns raised by the
172 administrators.

173
174 Superintendent Marquis reported to the board that exhibit #3 represents a 5 year
175 longitudinal plan that would address some of the remaining items listed under
176 “Budget” that may not be addressed within the context of the CIP. Superintendent
177 Marquis stated that it is recognized that items may need to be shifted and re-
178 prioritized due to unforeseen situations that may arise during the year.

179
180 Superintendent Marquis reported to the board that exhibit #4 represents a
181 longitudinal history of fund balances within the district. Superintendent Marquis
182 stated that although it is recognized that it is important from an accounting
183 perspective as well as from the board’s desire to return monies to offset the tax rate,

184 it is suggested that the board deliberate and consider putting forth a Warrant Article
185 that establishes a capital reserve fund. Doing so would allow some of the fund
186 balance monies to be used to address building needs that would not be folded into a
187 warrant article – particularly in light of the fact that we oftentimes are faced with
188 unanticipated expenses that adversely affect our ability to work on maintaining our
189 buildings and grounds.

190

191 Chairman Dargie requested that Superintendent Marquis review his recommended
192 CIP and come back with a request that represents five million dollars instead of the
193 6.6 million in the current proposal.

194

195

196 6. Old Business

197 a. Discussion of School Calendar:

198 Chairman Dargie reported to the board that after discussions with Superintendent
199 Marquis they were not in favor of having a committee to review the calendar options
200 again. Mr. Dargie stated that he has studied many different options for the calendar
201 and he is not in favor of changing. Mr. Dargie would like to see any information that
202 shows that changing the calendar improves student learning.

203

204 Mr. Willette noted that the District is able to use hours at the end of year if needed.
205 Chairman Dargie stated that the current practice of the board is to try to have the last
206 day of school not move into the last full week of June.

207

208 Resident Carla Boudreau thanked the board for visiting the schools. Ms. Boudreau
209 suggested to the board that we research other districts to identify whether changing
210 the calendar has an impact on the students' learning. Chairman Dargie stated that it
211 is his belief that extra days are more valuable for student learning than extra hours in
212 fewer school days.

213

214 7. Housekeeping Items

215 a. Approval of Nominations:

216 Mr. Drew moved to approve the listed nominations:

217 Matthew Govoni MHS Social Studies Teacher

218 Mr. Willette seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

219

220 b. Approval of Minutes 9/8/15

221 Mr. Drew moved to approve the minutes of 9/8/15. Mr. Willette seconded. Motion
222 passed 5-0.

223

224 c. List of Classified Appointments (information only)

225 d. List of Email Correspondence (information only)

226 e. List of Co-Curricular Appointments (information only)

227 f. List of Employees Leaving Service (information only)

228

229 8. Public Comments

230 None.
231
232 9. Nonpublic Session RSA 91-A: 3II (a)
233 Mr. Willette moved and Mr. Drew seconded to enter non-public session at 8:50 PM.
234 Motion passed 5-0.
235
236 The board discussed a personnel issue.
237 The board discussed collective bargaining.
238
239 Mr. Willette moved to exit non-public session at 9:40 pm. Mr. Drew seconded. All in
240 favor 5-0.
241
242 10. Adjournment
243 Mr. Willette moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:41 pm. Mr. Drew seconded. All in
244 favor 5-0.
245
246
247
248 _____
249 School Board Chairman Date of signing