

MILFORD SCHOOL BOARD
MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 6, 2016 MEETING
MILFORD HIGH SCHOOL, LECTURE HALL #182

Chairman Paul Dargie called the meeting to order in the SAU Conference Room at 6:30pm. Mr. Willette moved and Mr. Drew seconded a motion to go into non-public session under RSA 91-A:2 I (a) Strategy or negotiations with respect to collective bargaining. Motion passed 5-0. The board discussed collective bargaining in the non-public session. At 6:55pm, Mr. Drew moved and Mr. Willette seconded a motion to exit non-public session. Motion passed 5-0. The board then moved to the Lecture Hall for the public portion of the meeting.

1. Call to Order

Chairman Paul Dargie called the meeting to order at 7:00 in Lecture Hall #182 Milford High School. Board members present were Mr. Kevin Drew, Mr. Robert Willette, Mr. Len Mannino and Mr. Ron Carvell. Also in attendance were Superintendent Robert Marquis, and Business Administrator Jennifer Burk.

2. Board Member Comments

Chairman Dargie noted that he had received a letter from the Souhegan Valley Boys & Girls Club regarding transportation for Middle School students, and that this would be addressed further at the next board meeting on September 19th.

3. Public Comments

None

4. Reports and Presentations

a. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Marquis remarked that school began smoothly last Wednesday, and that there was excitement from both the staff and students as they began entering the buildings and reuniting with friends and reestablishing their routines.

Superintendent Marquis noted that there had been a scheduling conflict on February 9th with Deliberative Session and the High School's Open House – that conflict has been resolved as the Open House has been rescheduled to Thursday, February 16, 2017.

Superintendent Marquis recognized staff members who had achieved milestone anniversaries in their careers in Milford, reaching 20, 25 and 35 years of service in the District. He thanked them for their service and commitment to students in the community.

Superintendent Marquis notified the board that Manufacturing Day is on October 7th this year. Since this is a workshop day, the Middle School will be visiting Amherst Label on October 6th instead, and the 6th Grade practical arts classes would be receiving a tour along with meeting the workers and owners.

Superintendent Marquis stated that the first STEM (science, technology, engineering & mathematics) night will be on October 13th from 6-9pm. The focus will be 5th & 8th graders. Fidelity has reached out to the District and will continue to participate in these STEM nights.

48 Superintendent Marquis congratulated Max Ayotte who was a recent graduate of Milford
49 High School, and who had completed an internship while a student in the High School. Julia
50 Mazak, Human Resources at Hitchiner Manufacturing, wrote to Mr. Rich Paiva the Career
51 Counselor about Max's internship experience over the past summer. She noted in her e-
52 mail that everyone at Hitchiner was impressed with Max's performance. Max had explained
53 his internship had prepared him to be successful and the partnership between Hitchiner and
54 MHS was a testament to the value of the internship program at the school and the
55 program's preparation of students for careers beyond high school.

56
57 Superintendent Marquis thanked Mr. Brad Smith the High School's Band, as well as Ms.
58 Diane Varney-Parker and the Middle School Recycling Club for participating in the Town's
59 Labor Day parade.

60
61 Finally, Superintendent Marquis congratulated Jack Burnham who was a recent completer
62 of the Culinary Arts Program in the High School, as he earned the Pro-Start National
63 Certificate of Achievement recently, which is a nationally recognized credential awarded by
64 the National Restaurant Association.

65
66 b. Annual Report of Buildings and Grounds
67 Mr. Bill Cooper, Director of Buildings & Grounds, gave a report summarizing the work
68 completed over the course of the summer and the state of the buildings. First, Bill noted
69 that the staff worked hard over the summer to get the buildings ready for students come
70 back last week, particularly in the High School which had a number of projects going on
71 running late into the summer.

72
73 Bill outlined the two major projects in the High School – asbestos abatement and pipe
74 replacement – that had been completed. For the asbestos abatement, this represented 50%
75 of the hallways and 20 classroom areas that has been abated. All of the buildings & grounds
76 staff worked hard to take down the ceiling tiles & grids in the areas, and then put them back
77 up after the projects were completed. In addition, the work was completed on heating pipe
78 replacement with a focus on the ATC wing, main office and the gym. Bill also indicated that
79 fencing around the track would be finished up this fall, and that the athletic fields were over
80 seeded and fertilized, although the drought prevents the fields from being adequately
81 irrigated. In addition, they are trying to minimize damage to the track due to use of cleats
82 on the surface which causes divots.

83
84 Bill outlined other work that took place in the District, including painting that was done in
85 the Middle School bathrooms on the North side. Down at Jacques, a new storage shed was
86 erected as part of an Eagle Scout project by Dylan Lestico. Playground mulch was also
87 replaced with rubberized mulch at both Jacques and Heron Pond, but the Heron Pond
88 playground also had new composite wood materials installed to replace the aged plastic
89 edging. In addition, a new walkway was installed leading up to the ball field at Heron Pond,
90 which should help with erosion.

91
92 Mr. Drew asked how much of the pipe was replaced this summer, and Bill noted it was
93 around a quarter of the building, but focused on the areas with the most problems in
94 response to a question by Mr. Dargie. He also indicated that the system was fully flushed,
95 which removed a significant amount of contaminants in the overall system.

96 Mr. Dargie also inquired about the status of the card access system – Bill responded that the
97 systems had been replaced at the Middle, High, and Bales schools, and there were very few
98 issues, all of which have been addressed.
99

100 Mr. Carvell noted that he walked through the schools before the start of school, and the
101 Heron Pond crew did an outstanding job.
102

103 5. New Business

104 a. Self-Funded Full Day Kindergarten

105 Superintendent Marquis presented a proposal for a self-funded full-day Kindergarten
106 program, reviewing the four documents attached to the agenda related to this topic. The
107 proposal was to offer two full-day kindergarten classes next year. The limited availability of
108 physical classrooms was the limiting factor in being able to offer full-day kindergarten. Each
109 class would hold 16 students, for a total of 32 students in a full-day program, with the
110 remainder of the students being in half-day programs like today. The associated costs
111 would include making two part-time teachers full-time, including benefits, and adding in a
112 half-day assistant to provide additional support to the program. The total cost, estimated at
113 \$115,278, divided by 32 students would mean a tuition cost of \$3,602.43 per student or
114 \$360.24 per month for 10 months. Attendees would be determined based on a lottery, and
115 sections would only be run if sufficient students were available to meet the 16 per class.
116 There would need to be some consideration for undue hardships that could occur mid-year,
117 such as what would happen if someone in the family lost their job mid-year and they were
118 no longer able to afford the monthly payment. Parents of children chosen in the lottery
119 would need to make a down-payment to secure their child’s position in the full-day
120 program. The down payment would be refundable up to a particular date to be determined,
121 after which it would become non-refundable.
122

123 Superintendent Marquis presented some potential questions and answers on the program,
124 including the length of the day being equivalent to that of Grade 1 students, starting at 8:25
125 and ending at 2:45. In addition he noted that tuition would be charged because state aid is
126 only available for half-day programs, regardless of whether full-day is offered. Mr. Marquis
127 anticipates registration would begin in the spring, with students chosen through a lottery
128 process. The starting date and the ending date for entry into the lottery will be earlier than
129 the current kindergarten sign-up schedule to allow parents time to make alternative
130 arrangements if they are not chosen for the full-day program. Full-day kindergarten
131 students will be eligible for bus transportation at both ends of the day instead of just one
132 end of the day for half-day students as currently implemented, but the administration does
133 not anticipate that this will result in a cost increase to the district for transportation since
134 the increase in students transported will be distributed over all the buses, resulting in a very
135 small ridership increases for each bus. The proposed daily schedule would include time for
136 students to have lunch and recess, as well as additional time for project-based learning,
137 specials such as art and music, and dramatic play as part of their lengthened day. Mr.
138 Marquis outlined what other area districts are doing for kindergarten programming along
139 with associated tuition costs for parents.
140

141 Mr. Mannino asked about Milford in comparison to other districts in the state with regards
142 to full-day vs. half-day kindergarten. Mr. Marquis stated that he didn’t have specific
143 statistics, which he could provide at the next meeting, but he knew of many that had full-

144 day programs. Mr. Mannino also inquired about any data available to measure the
145 difference in learning for full- and half-day students. Mr. Marquis said that this came up
146 during the discussion with Hollis-Brookline, but they did not have sufficient data at this point
147 because they'd need to measure it over a period of a number of years, with a consideration
148 for the rate of growth for students. Mr. Mannino further asked about how the district
149 would handle parents with the resources to pay the cost vs. those without means and how
150 those decisions would be made. Mr. Marquis responded that if the board was intending to
151 have a fully self-funded program, then the decision would be made to support that concept,
152 or the board could offer some type of scholarship.

153
154 Mr. Rick Wood, Milford resident, asked if two part-time teachers would be made full-time,
155 then why is the proposal to hire another part-time paraprofessional to support the program
156 instead of making a current part-time paraprofessional full-time. Mr. Marquis noted that
157 the current program is supported by part-time staff, so this would provide equity within the
158 program, and in addition it is to help save costs to make the program as cost-neutral as
159 possible and to keep the cost to the parents as low as possible. Mr. Wood followed up
160 asking about a refundable down-payment and the impact to taxpayers in the situation
161 where the deposit was refunded and the slot was not filled. Mr. Marquis responded that if
162 by mid-summer a parent needed to withdraw and be eligible for a refund of any deposit
163 paid, then the school would go through a wait list for a replacement student. Mr. Wood
164 asked about the number of students who register in the spring and either don't attend or
165 withdraw within the first couple of weeks and the anticipated impact to local daycare
166 businesses, but Mr. Marquis did not have that kind of data on-hand. Mr. Wood also
167 inquired about the cost for the administrative services needed to manage this program,
168 since that was included in the pay-to-play presentation, but Mr. Marquis responded that he
169 believed this could be absorbed by existing staff in the building and in the SAU. Rick asked
170 about additional costs for program materials, along with what would happen if Grade 1
171 numbers increased resulting in a need for additional buses to transport these students. Mr.
172 Marquis answered that we had the necessary furniture & supplies to support the program,
173 and that if the needs for transportation changed, then those needs would be addressed as
174 required. Mr. Wood asked if there were any other groups or programs that we collect
175 money from to operate, entering into a "business arrangement" in essence, and how the
176 Food Service Program operated this past year. Business Administrator Jennifer Burk
177 responded that we collect funds from rental contracts, and that is managed in the SAU
178 Office, and that the Food Service Program did operate in the red this past year requiring a
179 general fund transfer to cover that shortfall which did include student debts from the end of
180 the year which can't be carried over into the next year. Mr. Wood noted that this would
181 create an inequity, especially with a lottery system – it could disenfranchise students, and
182 the board would need a plan if parents didn't pay.

183
184 Ms. Erin Warren, Milford resident, noted that her son is in pre-K now, and she is in favor of a
185 full-day program. She expressed concern that her child would be going from a four-hour per
186 day program down to a three-hour per day program with the current half-day kindergarten
187 model, but also that only 32 students would be eligible and asked if there were any other
188 options to increase that number. Mr. Marquis noted that he was comfortable
189 recommending the use of two classrooms based on how the rest of the space is used in the
190 building currently. Ms. Warren also asked how parents would be notified and if there was a
191 way to expedite the process so parents could make alternative arrangements if they weren't

192 admitted. Mr. Marquis noted that information would be put in the newspaper, in
193 newsletters, on the website, and whatever other methods were appropriate, and that they
194 would look for ways to expedite the process.

195
196 Mr. Bob Thompson, Milford resident, thanked the board for bringing this forward. He
197 doesn't currently have a child entering kindergarten, but he will in a few years and hopes
198 the state will provide funding for a full-day program, although New Hampshire and Milford
199 in particular are likely to be last in making these changes. He expects that the state will
200 mandate full-day kindergarten in the next few years, and that we should be preparing for
201 that mandate. He noted that the current half-day program lacks opportunities for
202 socialization that a full-day program could provide, and that Brookline took in around \$120K
203 in revenue for their similar program. He challenged the superintendent to provide
204 afternoon programming instead of just after-school care, and he suggested that the board
205 engage the services of the New Hampshire Administrators Association to conduct a space
206 needs analysis on building use. He feels that space may be unnecessarily utilized by Title 1,
207 ELL, Music, etc., particularly for part-time programs, and that it could be more effectively
208 used if it were used for full-day kindergarten instead. He encouraged the board to consider
209 making the program full-day for all students, as the kids who would benefit most are the
210 economically disadvantaged and minorities.

211
212 Ms. Jennifer Hannon, Milford resident, is currently a teacher in Brookline. She applauds the
213 concept of full-day kindergarten and noted that there are currently 107 full-day programs in
214 New Hampshire as of 2014/2015 school year. She went on to say that the board needs to
215 look long-term to assess performance, such as looking at high school test scores, graduation
216 rates, crime rates, etc. She also noted that the board needs to look at options for parents
217 who can't pay, and they need to look for additional space to increase the offering beyond
218 just two classrooms.

219
220 Ms. Joelle Martin, Milford resident, said that there is a plethora of data available on the
221 program's impact, and that a long-term plan needs to be developed. She feels the
222 community believes in investing in kids, so developing those plans and communicating with
223 the community will help pass needed warrant articles. She discussed the possibility of the
224 state changing the adequacy funding formula to allow for funding of full-day kindergarten
225 and not be limited to half-day funding as is the current law. A bill to allow full-day funding
226 was narrowly defeated last year, and the proposed bill will probably be reintroduced in the
227 coming legislative session. She asked if there were long-term plans to allow for the
228 expansion to full-day kindergarten for all students, not just for two classrooms. Mr. Dargie
229 noted that when the kindergarten addition was added to the Jacques school, it was
230 designed to allow a second floor to be added to it to allow for expansion of the school for
231 full-day kindergarten. This addition would be expensive and would require a bond to be
232 implemented. A short term solution to add a small number of classrooms would be to use
233 portable classrooms like were used at the school years ago. There is not enough room on
234 the site to add enough portable classrooms to handle a complete full-day kindergarten
235 program, but it would allow a few more full-day classrooms to be implemented. Mr.
236 Willette noted that it is unlikely that the state will provide funding, and that anything that
237 we do should be based on the assumption that the state will not help out with it. Mr. Dargie
238 noted that the adequacy aid bill that was being considered by the legislature did not
239 mandate that districts implement full-day kindergarten, but it only allowed adequacy

240 funding for it if the districts chose to do it, so the 28-A unfunded mandates law did not
241 apply.

242
243 Ms. Suzanne Schedin, Milford resident and teacher, thinks full-day programming is a
244 wonderful idea, and that the information presented is a great start. She recommended that
245 the board not focus on the program being net cost-neutral, as the benefits are far beyond
246 just offsetting costs.

247
248 Mr. Tim Catrell, a Milford resident who just moved to town last year, said that the
249 availability of full-day kindergarten was a factor in his decision on where to move. There will
250 be a cost for full-day kindergarten whether it's for the parents, or the community, or the tax
251 burden if home values drop. Having 32 students in this program isn't a large percent of the
252 overall student population in kindergarten, as compared to the other towns which have a
253 higher percentage participating in full-day programs. He encouraged the board not to focus
254 too much on the possible negative impact to local businesses, as they have other options in
255 their programs to cover losses in enrollments.

256
257 Mr. Matt Racicot, Milford resident, asked about the number of students enrolled in
258 kindergarten currently. Mr. Dargie responded that it is around 130 on average, but that it
259 fluctuates from year to year and can range from 100 to about 170. Superintendent Marquis
260 noted that kindergarten enrollment was at 137 as of this morning. Matt further noted that
261 teachers may know who would benefit from the program, and recommended that the
262 administration solicit their advice on choosing which students could most benefit from a
263 full-day program and not limit it to a lottery.

264
265 Mr. Rick Wood said that it was great to talk about this topic, but not in a vacuum. He noted
266 that there has been an increase in expenses, a drop in revenue, and a decline in enrollments
267 that needs to be considered in these decisions, against a \$40M budget.

268
269 Chairman Dargie stated that unless there were objections, then the next topic of discussion
270 would be agenda item 5 d.

271
272 5 d. Pay to Play
273 Superintendent Marquis walked the board through a presentation that was an update of a
274 previous presentation regarding Pay-to-Play, which is a program for charging students a fee
275 to play sports. Mr. Marquis noted that the presentation was updated by Business
276 Administrator Jennifer Burk, High School Principal Dr. Brad Craven, and Athletics Director
277 Marc Maurais. Mr. Dargie noted that the reason that this topic was being discussed was
278 because one of the board's goals this year was to review options for increasing revenues
279 beyond property taxes, and that this was one possibility for increased revenue. Mr. Marquis
280 indicated that the concept for Milford that was designed focused on high school athletics,
281 and that costs in those areas of the budget represented 0.69% of the almost \$40M
282 operating budget. Data presented included information for local area towns within 15 miles
283 of Milford, and other the other Division II school districts in which Milford plays sports. The
284 listing showed which districts have pay-to-play, and which do not have pay-to-play. It
285 included information on median household incomes in the handful of towns which do have
286 pay-to-play, and the basic structure of the programs in those towns. The design offered by
287 the administration to the board had fees at \$50-\$75-\$100 levels depending on the sport,

288 with an estimate of \$40,000 as total potential revenue that could be generated which would
289 be reduced by the cost of administrative support for the program at approximately \$15,000.
290 Free and reduced meal participation could be used to identify students that would be
291 eligible for a waiver of fee. There is currently about a relatively high 25% free and reduced
292 meal participation rate in the district, but that there are some students that are eligible for
293 free and reduced meal participation that choose not to enroll in the program due to pride
294 issues. Any pay-for-pay program that would generate revenue would not change the
295 fundraising practices that are currently being used to support the existing programs.
296

297 Mr. Mannino inquired as to whether this was informational only; Mr. Dargie indicated that
298 no decisions were required at this meeting, and that this information was being reviewed as
299 part of the board's goals for the year. Mr. Mannino asked if the Department of
300 Environmental Services was the correct reference on the median household income
301 information that was listed, which was confirmed.
302

303 Mr. Willette asked about where fundraising money went, as it wasn't part of the budget,
304 and if it went into the Athletic Trust Fund. Mr. Marc Maurais noted that fundraising went
305 into the student activities accounts to help with costs associated with extras not covered by
306 the budget, such as warm-up and practice uniforms and equipment, and gate fees go into
307 the Athletic Expendable Trust Fund to help with big-ticket purchases such as wrestling mats.
308 Mr. Maurais highlighted the family participation costs, which are on top of fundraising
309 efforts and amounts in the budget, and that families would still have those costs and
310 fundraising requirements to cover the cost to participate in addition to any user fees under
311 a pay-to-play design.
312

313 Mr. Dargie stated that he is not in favor of pay-to-play, as he is a strong proponent of
314 encouraging students to be involved with co-curricular activities, and instituting pay-to-play
315 would be a deterrent to students being involved with these activities. It would be an
316 especially large deterrent for those students that are economically disadvantaged, and that
317 co-curricular activities are of the most benefit to them. With regards to the administrative
318 support costs included as a cost for the program, he noted that this request for athletics
319 secretarial support has been part of the proposed budget for a number of years, and that he
320 anticipates it on the cusp of moving forward soon anyway, regardless of whether the board
321 instituted pay-to-play. Pay-to-play would definitely require additional secretarial support,
322 but if we are going to get it anyway, then it would be inappropriate to include it as a cost of
323 the program. Mr. Maurais noted that he didn't want to get administrative support solely
324 because of this concept, as the position is needed regardless. Mr. Dargie went on to
325 indicate that from his perspective \$25-40K in revenue was not enough to justify the
326 negatives associated with pay-to-play, and that it is more important to give students
327 activities they can participate in after school. If the total to be raised were over \$200K, and
328 almost all families could afford the fees as evidenced by a low free and reduced meal
329 eligibility level, then maybe it would be different, but he knows some families won't even
330 apply for free and reduced meals which just reduces the actual percentage of free and
331 reduced eligibility in the district, and potentially would further reduce participation in
332 athletics beyond what's seen in this first draft. Mr. Mannino and Mr. Drew also echoed that
333 they were not in favor of instituting pay-to-play.
334

335 Mr. Willette noted that we do have successful pay-to-play programming in Milford already
336 with the Mustangs and Legion teams, we just don't have it in the school district.

337
338 Mr. Rick Wood, Milford resident and Budget Advisory Committee Chair, noted that he had a
339 number of questions which may not be answered here, but asked why we had a 15-mile
340 radius for other districts and why we designed a program that was so much lower in cost
341 than the other programs? He noted the NHIAA survey results which showed 1/3rd of
342 respondents had fees but the presentation had such a long list of districts which don't have
343 pay-to-play. He also asked about fundraising in those other districts, and how
344 administration came to the family participation costs associated with the sports in the
345 presentation. In addition, he asked why there was a fee to participate in Unified Basketball,
346 considering the population that the program serves. He went on to outline the costs for
347 MCAA soccer as an example, in comparison to the lower fee level as presented, particularly
348 the max fee of \$100 when compared to others which have \$400+ as the max fee.

349
350 Ms. Paula Parker, Milford resident, noted that she and her spouse are both teachers in
351 Massachusetts. She believes in equal experiences for all students in and out of the
352 classroom. She noticed that the districts in this presentation were not the same as used in
353 the full-day kindergarten presentation. She asked why the administration targeted just
354 athletics and not all co-curricular programming. Mr. Maurais noted that Nashua charges for
355 middle school and non-athletics, and the fee structure was a starting point for discussion.

356
357 Ms. Carla Boudreau, Milford resident, agreed that the revenue number is small in
358 comparison to the students who could be lost as a result of instituting this program. Even
359 the loss of one student, who could become a statistic, would mean that the district failed
360 the community.

361
362 Mr. Don Brezinski, Milford resident, noted that even if the board charged more, that these
363 expenses represent less than 1% of the overall budget in expenditures, especially in
364 comparison to what would be lost for students who wouldn't participate. He further noted
365 that co-curricular activities play an important role on college and scholarship applications.

366
367 Principal Dr. Bradford Craven indicated that he was not in support of this concept. He
368 outlined his feelings that the skills learned provide the students with value beyond what
369 they learn in their regular classes, and that the students need this kind of learning and these
370 experiences. This is a point of pride in Milford, where we provide equal access to all
371 students. He also noted the investment of time by administration in putting together the
372 research and data, with a focus on immediate geographical and divisional comparisons for
373 data points. He asked the board to provide a final indicator as to whether this would be
374 pursued further or if it was off the table.

375
376 Mr. Don Gutterson, middle school physical education teacher and athletics director, spoke
377 to his experiences with students that try out sports for the first time. He felt that charging a
378 fee would be a big deterrent to those students that are on the fence about joining a team.

379
380 Mr. Carvell moved and Mr. Mannino seconded a motion to not pursue Pay-to-Play in
381 Milford. Mr. Rick Wood noted that this vote seemed premature since they didn't have all
382 information, and that the board should get the true picture of all revenue sources and not

383 to vote emotionally at this time. Mr. Carvell responded to Mr. Wood and stated that from
384 his perspective, providing co-curricular opportunities for students was part of the core
385 mission of the district, and that getting more information about additional districts or
386 modeling various fee levels would not change his mind about the overall undesirability of
387 pay-for-play. Mr. Willette stated that he felt the board should look at everything since taxes
388 keep increasing, particularly for those on fixed incomes such as him, where his taxes have
389 increased from \$400 initially up to over \$8,000 now, and that he would be voting against the
390 motion. The motion passed 4-1, with Mr. Willette voting in opposition.

391
392 Chairman Dargie stated that unless there were objections, then the next topic of discussion
393 would be agenda item 6 b.

394
395 6 b. Discussion Regarding Adding a Non-Voting Student Representative
396 Mr. Dargie asked Dr. Brad Craven, High School Principal, for his thoughts on the topic of the
397 board adding a non-voting student representative to the board, as was discussed at the last
398 board meeting as a follow-up to an email request from Milford resident and high school
399 student George Hoyt. Dr. Craven noted that high school students have representation
400 through their Student Council at all grade levels, plus a representative that serves on the
401 High School Principal's "Cabinet" which includes all the administrators in the building. That
402 student represents the perspective of students in general discussions regarding the building,
403 and participates in every discussion except for topics related to personnel or other
404 inappropriate matters. Overall, Dr. Craven is neutral on the board adding a non-voting
405 student member, but suggested that they could consider having the Principal's Cabinet
406 representative liaise with the board at meetings periodically to bring the perspective of
407 students to the forefront.

408
409 Mr. Willette noted that he sees the value of a student representative on the Principal's
410 Cabinet, and the value to the Board to have this representative on occasion. Mr. Dargie also
411 sees the value of the student attending every 2-3 months, as it's difficult to get a student to
412 commit to the regular meeting schedule. He suggested that Dr. Craven ask around to
413 students to see if there was any interest in the idea, and to pursue this idea further, and
414 then report back to the Superintendent with his findings.

415
416 Chairman Dargie stated that unless there were objections, then the next topic of discussion
417 would be agenda item 6 a.

418
419 6 a. Options Regarding Custodial Outsourcing Discussion
420
421 Chairman Dargie indicated that the board would not be taking any action on outsourcing
422 this evening, but that the intent of having this topic on the agenda was to allow for public
423 comment on the topic. There were no board member comments on the topic, and the
424 discussion was immediately opened to public comment.

425
426 Mr. Ernest "Butch" Ross, Maintenance/Grounds worker and Milford resident, spoke to the
427 hard work of the group and their performance above and beyond the basic call of duty. He
428 noted that they respond at 3 am if there is an emergency, and with more than half of the 23
429 workers living in town, they can be responsive. He expressed that the group feels hurt by
430 the idea that they could be expendable, and what would an outsource company do to help

431 teachers beyond the basics, like providing an escort to a vehicle at 7 pm in December. The
432 group works together as a team, with fast responses to any requests – how quickly would an
433 outsourcing company be able to respond to an emergency? He'd like to keep everyone in
434 the group working, as they are worth \$1M, not just saving \$450K.

435
436 Ms. Katelin Willette, Lead Custodian and Milford resident, mentioned that she has been
437 with the district for nine years, but the group overall has well over 100 years of service
438 together including one individual with more than 35 years in the district after graduating
439 from Milford High School. Many of the workers have children in the district as well, and feel
440 that the community would suffer if they lost this group, as they would likely be working
441 outside of Milford and taking their business such as grocery shopping out of town on their
442 way home from work. She provided an example of a time that she went to a restaurant
443 where she ran into a former student of Milford who recognized her from her time working
444 in the high school, and the lasting impression this group can have with students, staff and
445 community members.

446
447 Mr. Cort Maughn, Custodian and Milford resident, noted that he has been with the district
448 for over 13 years. He said that he was not able to go to college, but that the Milford School
449 District was kind enough to take him in after high school. He noted that he has done his
450 best for students, and that he likes to help kids and to be friendly with them so they will
451 enjoy their school years, and that he would echo what Dr. Craven said earlier about how the
452 students come first.

453
454 Ms. Suzanne Schedin, Teacher and Milford resident, talked about how Milford is a
455 community. She knows that she calls on this group a lot to provide assistance, and that
456 Charlie, her Lead Custodian, is always helpful. She outlined a scenario this year where she
457 had some surgery before summer break which meant that she was not able to pack up her
458 stuff to enable the custodian staff to properly clean her room. When she recently returned
459 to her room after summer break, she was very pleasantly surprised to see that her room
460 was properly cleaned, and it looked great, and that the custodians had moved all her stuff
461 for her to make it happen. She also noted that some things go beyond the bottom line to
462 make things better. The board needs to look beyond the bottom line to improve the overall
463 district.

464
465 Ms. Carol Chaplin, Teacher, noted that she is part of the faculty at Heron Pond, and that the
466 custodial staff is always helpful even after hours when she needs help with the music
467 program. She previously worked in a district with outsourced custodial services, Con-Val,
468 and that the custodial staff that was there was transitory with high turnover. Workers did
469 not have institutional knowledge, so workers oftentimes did not know what was trash or
470 what needed to be kept, so sometimes items would be kept when they should have been
471 thrown away, and sometimes items get thrown away that should have been kept. She feels
472 that a lot of care needs to go into this decision, and that it is not necessarily best for a school
473 environment.

474
475 Ms. Brenda Walker, Program Associate and Milford resident, spoke as a taxpayer and an
476 employee. She noted that the potential \$450K in savings could quickly be consumed by an
477 emergency like a pipe bursting in a school on Christmas Eve. She noted that she's been with
478 the district for a number of years and when she started, morale was very high, but a handful

479 of years ago the board starting looking for savings and this had a huge impact on staff
480 morale as employees were laid off or groups were reduced to part-time. She wonders who
481 may be next, the paraprofessionals? She noted that the custodial group is fantastic and the
482 staff trusts them because they are a part of the school community, which is more important
483 than any potential savings from outsourcing.
484

485 Ms. Helene Bureau, Teacher, indicated that she was in disbelief when she heard about this
486 outsourcing consideration. Her program works with the neediest kids, and not only do the
487 custodians understand the needs of the kids in the school, but that they also work with
488 them which means the world to these kids. She knows that she doesn't have to worry about
489 leaving items around in her room, because she trusts the custodial staff. The staff goes
490 above and beyond the call of duty and they are not expendable.
491

492 Ms. Paula Durand, Teacher and Milford resident, feels that this group works hard with long
493 hours some days, and are invested in where they work such as all the extra final touches
494 that were done at the start of school to make things nicer. She would hate to lose this staff,
495 considering a third party often has rotating staff, which concerns her about the kinds of
496 background checks that would be done as teachers can often be found working late or by
497 themselves and whether they can trust all of those in the buildings that they may not know.
498 She also expressed that if she needs help with something, she can leave a note and she can
499 trust that it will get done, such as fixing a wobbly desk. There is a common language in the
500 district which helps to improve communications. As a taxpayer, she would like to pay lower
501 taxes, however she does not feel that any of the presented options would be the way to go.
502 It may be attractive at first, but then what and in what ways would a third party company
503 try to cut costs? If the board does pursue these options, then she feels that the staff needs
504 to be involved in the discussions. She also noted that Bill Cooper's Director of Buildings and
505 Grounds position is not noted in the document, so would his position also be outsourced or
506 just everyone underneath that position? She knows that the board is in contract
507 negotiations with the bargaining group, but investigating these options doesn't seem fair or
508 if this is really negotiating in good faith. She stated that she is not in favor of going this
509 route at this time.
510

511 Mr. Carvell noted that he had toured the schools at the start of the school year, and that he
512 wanted to publically commend the Heron Pond staff for having the school in fantastic shape
513 at the beginning of the year.
514

515 5 b. Adoption of Budget Process Guidelines
516

517 Chairman Dargie reviewed the budget process guidelines and the timeline to be used in the
518 development of the 2017-18 operating budget, noting that the document was similar to the
519 guidelines from the previous year except that references to the default budget development
520 policy were removed since the policy was deleted. The first meeting in September, this
521 meeting, is when these guidelines are adopted, and the second September meeting allows
522 time for discussion on potential warrant articles and for budget development parameters.
523 By the second meeting in October, if not the first meeting, enrollment projects for the grade
524 levels is developed after updated numbers are received from Mason. The first meeting of
525 November is when the budget is initially presented by the administration. The board and
526 the Budget Advisory Committee provide questions to the administration by noontime the

527 week after the budget is presented, and the administration responds to the questions at the
528 Saturday session that is held at the end of that week. The second November meeting and
529 the December meetings are budget work sessions. The second December meeting is a joint
530 meeting with the Budget Advisory Committee, and it is the meeting where it is desirable to
531 finalize the budget and warrant articles to be presented to the voters. It is possible to
532 finalize the warrant articles early in January, but it makes the schedule tight and can lead to
533 missed deadlines.

534
535 Mr. Dargie noted that the budget is to be developed using zero-based budgeting
536 procedures. This involves doing a bottoms-up analysis of each budget line item where the
537 expecting spending is specifically identified, instead of just rolling forward the spending
538 from the previous year.

539
540 Mr. Dargie noted that proposed warrant articles and all new/expanded positions and
541 programs should show original requests along with the superintendent's recommendations.
542 Any salary increases associated with negotiations are reflected in the warrant articles
543 related to those proposed contracts. Articles are only placed on the warrant with a positive
544 vote by the board, with separate votes taking place by the board on whether or not to
545 recommend those articles. Documents that are to be presented at the Saturday session
546 should be made available ahead of time to the meeting attendees, so they can have time to
547 review the documents and have an informed discussion. Mr. Dargie also briefly outlined the
548 items included in the budget process, and in the voter guide.

549
550 There were no questions or comments about the budget process guidelines.

551
552 Mr. Drew moved and Mr. Willette seconded a motion to approve the budget process
553 guidelines. Motion passed 5-0.

554
555 5 c Preliminary Budget Discussion

556
557 Mr. Dargie noted that in the past, the board did not provide budget development guidance
558 to the administration, instead opting to have the administration provide a first-pass budget
559 that in the opinion of the administration, was a good compromise between the needs of the
560 students and the needs of the taxpayers. He noted that the first-pass budget that was
561 presented last year in the superintendent's first year with the district, was perhaps tilted
562 somewhat too much towards the needs of the students and that he would like to have the
563 first-pass budget this year be somewhat more conservative so that it will be closer to the
564 final budget. He noted that he is in favor of providing budget guidance parameters this
565 year to help the development of the first-pass budget be more conservative. He passed out
566 a handout to the board regarding the proposed budget parameters for the board's
567 consideration to be discussed and refined at the next meeting. Mr. Dargie read the
568 document to the audience; it said:

569
570 "Proposed Budget Parameters:

571
572 The first-pass of the proposed budget should come in at a bottom-line dollar-value that is
573 near the bottom-line dollar value of a traditional calculation of the default budget, using
574 normal definitions of one-time expenses. In other words, proposed eliminated positions are

575 not to be removed from the preliminary default budget. Any expenses that the
576 administration feels are important, but are not included in the first-pass budget, should be
577 separately identified.

578
579 A preliminary default budget calculation should be presented at the November Saturday
580 meeting. The preliminary default budget calculation should include the same assumptions
581 for any estimated expenses that were included in the first-pass proposed budget. For
582 example, if the change in the health insurance costs is not yet established when the budgets
583 are prepared, then there will be an assumed percentage change in the expense that will be
584 used for both calculations.

585
586 The incremental revenues and expenses for the proposal for self-funded full-day
587 kindergarten should not be part of the regular proposed budget, but should be separately
588 identified, as this will allow us to evaluate it on its own merits.”

589
590 Mr. Dargie noted that the board would not be taking action on the document at this
591 meeting, but would instead be reviewing it at this meeting and then taking action at the
592 next meeting. The purpose of discussing it today was to provide time for the board to
593 properly consider the proposal.

594
595 Mr. Mannino asked when would the board take a vote on the concept of full-day
596 kindergarten, to which Mr. Dargie responded that the board could take it up at any time
597 such as the next meeting if that is the preference. His reasoning in keeping the full-day
598 kindergarten separate from the budget is because the increased revenue related to full-day
599 kindergarten are not considered in the expense lines, and it would therefore require cuts in
600 other areas of the budget to offset the increased costs associated with full-day kindergarten.
601 Keeping it separate allows the net cost of the program (including increased revenues) to be
602 evaluated. Also, the board might want to have full-day kindergarten be a separate warrant
603 article instead of including it in the regular budget.

604
605 Mr. Carvell asked if the document was locking the board into a definition of the default
606 budget calculation. Mr. Dargie replied that it would not and that it would only be used to
607 provide guidance to the administration as to the desired first-pass budget bottom line
608 number. The board was going to be addressing these parameters as outlined now, but Mr.
609 Dargie noted that no action would be taken tonight as it was intended to be a first pass for
610 preliminary discussion purposes. In the past, the discussions about providing guidance to
611 the administration for budget development typically involved setting parameters such as a
612 maximum four percent increase in the tax rate or a maximum four percent increase in
613 spending, and the board had chosen not to provide such guidance. The problem with using
614 those types of parameters for guidance is that there are many unknowns at this time in the
615 process, including health insurance costs, which can have a huge impact on the budget.
616 These unknown costs are usually estimated conservatively at this point in time, and this will
617 result in a proposed budget that is unnecessarily low if an arbitrary guideline is established.
618 By targeting the first-pass budget to be similar to a default budget level using consistent
619 assumptions for estimated costs instead of using an arbitrary dollar value or arbitrary
620 percentage change, then these problems are removed from the discussion.

621

622 Mr. Carvell asked about the definition of “normal” one-time expenses in reference to the
623 default budget calculation. Mr. Dargie indicated this would be in line with what most
624 districts in the state do. He noted that the law is badly written, so that defining eliminated
625 positions as one-time expenses is legal, but that Milford is probably the only district that
626 uses that definition. Mr. Dargie is unaware of any other district that removes eliminated
627 positions from the default budget calculation. The actual default budget calculation will be
628 addressed separately by the board in December, and the issue of whether to remove
629 eliminated positions from the calculation will be considered at that time.

630
631 Mr. Willette noted that he’d like to strike the sentence in the memo that starts with “in
632 other words” referencing excluding position cuts in the operating budget from also being
633 cut in the default. Mr. Dargie wants the initial default budget to be developed keeping
634 positions in, which was more in-line with the RSA on the default budget build, and targets a
635 higher default number.

636
637 Mr. Willette made a motion to cut that line from the memo, and Mr. Carvell seconded the
638 motion for discussion purposes. Mr. Carvell asked was the goal was for administration in
639 building the budget – best case/lowest cost? Mr. Dargie noted that the board should
640 provide a target that is conservative, especially since last year was so far off. There was
641 extensive discussion about the definition of the default budget, with the consensus being
642 that the board would establish the definition of the default budget at a December meeting,
643 and that this preliminary calculation of the default budget would not tie the hands of the
644 board at that time, and that the board would be able to define on-time expenses any way it
645 chose to at the December meeting.

646
647 Ms. Paula Durand, teacher and resident, asked if full-day kindergarten would be just a
648 decision by the board or if the board would be looking to put together a warrant article?
649 Mr. Dargie noted that it is up to the board, but there are both pros and cons of putting it in a
650 warrant article. Mr. Dargie stated that he is leaning towards making it a separate warrant
651 article. Ms. Durand also had a follow up question on the default budget – wasn’t this more
652 formally re-defined? Mr. Dargie indicated that the board had created a policy on this five or
653 six years ago, but the policy was deleted last year, but that the board followed that former
654 policy conceptually when developing the default budget last year. Mr. Willette stated that
655 he needed to read the law again to see what it says exactly in what is considered a one-time
656 expenditure, and whether it is intended to continue the same service level or the dollar
657 level. Mr. Dargie stated that the RSA only addressed the bottom line dollar value, and that it
658 did not address the level of service.

659
660 The motion to eliminate the line from the proposed budget parameters language failed with
661 a vote of 1-4, with Mr. Willette voting in favor of the motion.

662

663 5 d New Hampshire School Boards Association’s Resolutions

664
665 Mr. Dargie noted that a packet was sent out by the New Hampshire School Boards
666 Association requesting resolutions for the upcoming legislative session. Mr. Dargie
667 indicated that the board has not put forth any recommended resolutions in prior years. Mr.
668 Mannino suggested asking the Association to put forth a resolution to support full-day
669 kindergarten and to support full funding and compulsory attendance. Mr. Dargie and Mr.

670 Drew expressed support for this suggestion. Mr. Dargie will write this up for the next
671 meeting.
672

673 6. Old Business

674 (The old business items were discussed earlier in the meeting, out of normal sequence.)
675

676 7. Housekeeping Items

677 a. Approval of Minutes 8/15/2016. Mr. Drew moved and Mr. Mannino seconded a motion to
678 approve the minutes of 8/15/2016. Motion passed 5-0.
679

680 b. Approval of Manifests 4, 1009, 1010, 1012, 1013, 1014, 1016, 1017, 1018. Mr. Willette
681 moved and Mr. Dargie seconded a motion to approve the listed manifests. Motion passed
682 5-0.
683

684 d. Approval of Treasurer's Report – April 2016.

685 e. Approval of Treasurer's Report – May 2016.

686 f. Approval of Treasurer's Report – June 2016.

687 Mr. Willette moved and Mr. Dargie seconded a motion to approve the Treasurer's Reports
688 from April, May and June 2016. Motion passed 5-0.
689

690 f. Approval of Nominations. Mr. Carvell moved and Mr. Drew seconded a motion to approve
691 the nomination of Sara Amato-Larabee. Motion passed 5-0. Chairman Dargie noted that
692 there was a correction to the salary listed for Tricia Shea from the nomination at the
693 meeting on August 15, 2016, reflected here for information purposes only.
694

695 g. List of Email Correspondence (information only) – no discussion.
696

697 h. List of Classified Appointments (information only) – no discussion.
698

699 i. List of Co-Curricular Appointments (information only) – no discussion.
700

701 j. List of Employees Leaving Service (information only) – no discussion.
702

703 8. Public Comments
704

705 Ms. Paula Durand inquired if there is a limit on how often someone can get up to speak on an
706 agenda item, or if there is a time limit on how long someone can speak. Chairman Dargie noted
707 that as the Board Chair he has been very liberal in allowing public comment, that there is no
708 specific policy limiting public comment, that it is at the discretion of the Board Chair to limit
709 discussion, and that the policy committee has considered adding a policy that would limit public
710 comment but has chosen not to do so to allow as much public input as possible. Ms. Durand
711 stated that many of the audience participants feel that allowing public members to speak
712 multiple times on a topic and for them to go on at length is a stretch. Mr. Willette also noted
713 that he appreciates the way we allow people to speak their minds on topics and that he would
714 prefer to not to set a limit, and recognized that the Chair does a good job of managing speakers.
715

716 9. Nonpublic Session under RSA 91 A:2 I (Strategy or negotiations with respect to collective
717 bargaining, and/or RSA 91 A:3 II (a) Personnel (if needed)

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729

Chairman Dargie confirmed with Superintendent Marquis that a non-public session was not required.

10. Adjournment

Mr. Willette moved and Mr. Drew seconded a motion to adjourn. Motion passed 5-0 at 10:15 pm.

School Board Chair

Date of Approval