

1 MILFORD SCHOOL BOARD  
2 MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 19, 2016 MEETING  
3 MILFORD HIGH SCHOOL, LECTURE HALL #182  
4

5 1. Call to Order

6 Chairman Paul Dargie called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM in Lecture Hall #182 at Milford High School.  
7 board members present were Mr. Ron Carvell, Mr. Len Mannino, Mr. Bob Willette, and Board Vice-Chair Mr.  
8 Kevin Drew. Also in attendance were Superintendent Robert Marquis and Business Administrator Jen Burk. The  
9 recording secretary was Dana Laviano

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11 2. Board Member Comments

12 There were no board member comments.  
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14 3. Public Comments

15 There were no public comments.  
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17 4. Reports and Presentations

18 a. Superintendent's Report

19 Superintendent Marquis offered his congratulations to art teachers Diane Varney Parker of Milford Middle  
20 School and Lisa Rancourt from Heron Pond Elementary School. Both were selected to participate in the  
21 National Leadership Conference in Washington, DC this summer. Mr. Marquis expressed his appreciation for  
22 their hard work and achievements.

23  
24 In response to Governor Hassan's conference call with Town Administrators regarding the drought  
25 throughout the state and her subsequent recommendations, Superintendent Marquis announced the  
26 following changes:

- 27  
28 1. No more car washes will be held as fundraisers from this point on.  
29 2. A month ago, Superintendent Marquis requested adjusted watering times from the town of Milford for  
30 the athletic fields. But in light of the fact that people in the area are losing their wells, he has withdrawn  
31 the request and stopped all watering of athletic fields until the drought conditions have improved.  
32

33 Mr. Marquis commented on the use of technology in the district. He noted that some staff members had  
34 attended Google training during the summer. The district is aggressively moving to implement a google  
35 environment, and has provided google user accounts for staff and for many students. Gmail, Google calendars,  
36 and Google docs are all being implemented. The initiative has been embraced by most people that have been  
37 exposed to it. Academies are being held after school to help with the training of the Google environment.  
38

39 Mr. Dargie stated that a car wash fundraiser was held this past weekend, and that all car washes this year had  
40 received an approval from the Town of Milford water department prior to being held, so they were all in  
41 compliance with the town water ban.  
42

43 b. Young Kasamas

44 Ms. Alice Daines, President of the student club, Young Kasamas, along with student members Mr. Adam Hamel,  
45 Ms. Andrea Visco and Ms. Daniella Visco, spoke to the board about the Young Kasamas Club and the work it  
46 does. In the club, student volunteers work to give back to the community specifically by visiting and interacting  
47 with the residents of Crestwood Nursing Home on Crosby Street, not too far from the high school. There are  
48 about 40 members in the Young Kasamas and they give their time via such events as "Senior Senior Prom",

49 “Movie Days”, and Community Service Day. Students from other MHS clubs are also invited to lend their special  
50 talents to some of the Young Kasamas’ work, for example, by making cribbage boards for residents. The group  
51 provides excellent opportunities for students to connect with members of the community by providing valuable  
52 community service as well as enhancing their resume for college applications. The club advisor is Mr. Steven  
53 Scannell. The club was named after Mr. Scannell’s dog, and the word kasama means companion in the Tagalog  
54 language.

55  
56 Mr. Dargie congratulated the students on their work in the Young Kasamas club and spoke of its value to the  
57 residents of Crestwood. Mr. Willette also expressed his appreciation for the club presenting to the board and  
58 sharing the good things that students do.

59  
60 c. Presentation on Solar Power

61  
62 Mr. Ryan Bolson, an energy consultant and broker from Standard Power of America (SPA), presented a proposal  
63 to the board for the installation of solar panels at different locations on school district or town property, to  
64 benefit SAU 40. SPA is the licensed electricity broker that has been in contract with SAU 40 and the town since  
65 July, 2016. Part of their supply contract stipulates the inclusion of New Hampshire hydropower which allows for  
66 a greater savings on electricity rates. His main points of contact are Ms. Jen Burk (Business Administrator) and  
67 Mr., Bill Cooper (Director of Buildings and Grounds).

68  
69 In order to further decrease costs and increase savings, SPA is proposing that solar panels (either flat, single-  
70 canopy, or double-canopy) be installed in one of four potential locations:

71  
72 Area 1: A long stretch of the road on West Street (location is actually town property) covering over  
73 parking places.

74 Area 2: Corner of West St. & Osgood Rd. (This location calls for a “tracker” panel which follows the sun  
75 and is self-adjusting according to current weather conditions.)

76 Area 3 & 4: At Milford Middle School: single or double canopies installed like roofs over the parking  
77 spaces utilizing “wasted” space.

78  
79 Mr. Bolson spoke about the history of SPA, its previous projects, its client list, the benefits of “going solar,” and  
80 a review of his preliminary cost estimates for the proposed solar panels. (See Exhibit). He also discussed  
81 potential options for decreasing costs including renewable energy rebates, grants and local benefactors.

82  
83 Board members asked several questions of Mr. Bolson regarding the life span and maintenance of the panels,  
84 the availability of federal tax credits, and the length of time before a return on investment could be realized.  
85 Mr. Mannino also asked about the effect, if any, that solar panels would have on planes flying to Manchester  
86 Airport, and any zoning problems these panels might present with the town.

87  
88 Mr. Bolson concluded by outlining the next steps if he is asked by the board to move forward with this project.

89  
90 During public discussion of the proposed solar panels, Ms. Jennifer Siegrist asked if any of the flat roofs of SAU  
91 40 buildings had been considered. Mr. Bolson explained that these were the first options explored, but they  
92 were removed from consideration since it was determined that the roofs might require costly repairs before  
93 they could be used, they might not be able to support the weight of the panels, and/or the roofs were sloped  
94 away from the sun thus decreasing the operating efficiency.

95  
96 5. New Business

97 a. Discussion on Student Transportation to Souhegan Valley Boys and Girls Club (SVBGC)  
98 Mr. Dargie explained that the board had received a letter from Mr. Michael Tule, President of the Board of  
99 Directors of the SVBGC regarding busing issues between the Milford Middle School and SVBGC.

100  
101 Ms. Susan Taylor, Executive Director of the SVBGC, spoke to the board, expressing her thanks for the  
102 transportation support that SAU 40 has given to the club in the past, and outlining the mission and value of the  
103 Club. Changes in family stress in recent years has made the club's services all the more critical to younger  
104 children and teens, and that the rescinding of bus transportation privileges to the club for Milford students puts  
105 them at risk. The expectation is that losing bus transportation privileges for seventh and eighth grade students  
106 will result in some students cancelling their membership. It is also expected that for those students that keep  
107 their membership, there will be less use of the memberships, and there is the potential for students to get into  
108 trouble while walking to the club. Walking to the club is not seen as a practical solution, especially when winter  
109 comes. Some parents have already expressed their intention to withdraw their children from the club instead  
110 of allowing them to walk.

111  
112 Michael Tule spoke briefly on the need for young people in the community to have a place that is their own,  
113 which will provide them with homework support, enriching activities, and a connection to a caring community.  
114 This is why the new Teen Center and Gymnasium will be opening at the SVBGC this fall. Mr. Tule asked the  
115 board to find a solution to the problem of busing the students to the club.

116  
117 Superintendent Marquis read from a memo that he had written, outlining the history of the situation and its  
118 context for tonight's discussion. The original decision to cancel the buses to the SVBGC for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders  
119 was made last year by Mr. Marquis after one bus was eliminated due to decreased ridership during 2013-2014,  
120 and the fact that the club lies within the approved "walk zone" from the middle school and the high school. He  
121 had assumed that the decision had been communicated to all parties last year, including the club, but it had  
122 only been communicated to the bus company, not the club. Since no complaints about overcrowding had  
123 reached him last year, he was unaware that the club remained uninformed until August 31, 2016 when the bus  
124 company phoned the SVBGC and told them of the change, and Ms. Susan Taylor contacted him with her  
125 concerns.

126  
127 In his memo (See EXHIBIT), Superintendent Marquis outlined some options for the board to consider:  
128 1. Add a bus at a rate of \$309/day (roughly \$34,000/year)  
129 2. Stick to board policy in order to be consistent and fair. Mr. Marquis explained his rationale in  
130 making the original decision to eliminate the buses for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders.

131  
132 Mr. Carvell expressed how vital the SVBGC is to the community and SAU 40, and that this qualifies as  
133 extenuating circumstances that should merit an exception to the original decision.

134  
135 A discussion ensued regarding how crowded the buses are now, and how crowded they will become as the year  
136 progresses. The legal limit is 77 students per bus. This limitation is based on three students per seat which is  
137 really only practical for elementary school students. A practical limit is two students per seat for older and  
138 larger students. It is hard to determine exactly how full the buses are at this time. Once fall sports are finished,  
139 it is expected that there will be an increase in older students riding the buses. Also, winter gear takes up more  
140 space.

141  
142 The reason that last year seemed to be okay, with no complaints, is that the bus routes and changes to roads  
143 due to construction projects hadn't happened yet. After this summer, these changes were in place resulting in  
144 different routes and more complicated timing issues with getting the buses to Heron Pond and Jacques on time.

145

146 Mr. Willette asked if the SVBGC had any vans that could be used to bring the students to the club. Ms. Susan  
147 Taylor said there are no vans available for SAU 40 at this time as all the vans that they have are used to pick up  
148 students from other nearby towns such as Amherst, Mont Vernon, and Wilton.

149  
150 Mr. Dargie floated the idea of first-come-first-served for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders on the bus that now goes to the  
151 club. Once the bus is full, then the remaining students would have to walk. Mr. Carvell disagreed with this  
152 proposal saying it left parents unsure each day whether their child had “made it.”

153  
154 Mr. Mannino asked if we have the funds to add another bus and if so, is it within our contract with the bus  
155 company to negotiate the addition of buses? Jen Burk explained that we can make it work in the budget if it’s  
156 approved by the board.

157  
158 Mr. Don Razinski spoke to the board and pointed out that once the new Teen Center opens at the club the  
159 numbers of students going to the club are likely to increase. Mr. Dargie asked if the club had done any  
160 forecasts on increases in teen enrollment as a result of the new Teen Center. Ms. Susan Taylor said that a  
161 minimum increase of 30% of teen membership over the next three years is expected.

162  
163 Mr. Ken Eaton addressed the board to say that kids who don’t normally walk to school but will now need to  
164 walk to the club is a concern. Safety and concern for the kids should be a priority and the money should be  
165 found to fund an additional bus.

166  
167 Mr. Alan Wolfson, Board of Directors Member of the SVBGC and Milford resident, stated that there is a big drug  
168 problem in NH and in Milford as well. If kids are not coming to the club then they will be exposed to the  
169 possibility of using drugs, especially with the proposed route through Keyes Field.

170  
171 Ms. Joelle Martin addressed the board to say that losing one child is too much, and that we as a community  
172 must take care of our children.

173  
174 Mr. Carvell made a motion to instruct the superintendent to add another bus. Mr. Mannino seconded the  
175 motion. The motion passed 4-1, with Mr. Willette in opposition.

176  
177 b. Capital Needs Plan

178 Superintendent Marquis reviewed the cover memo and spreadsheet outlining the updated list of capital  
179 projects. The items on the list which were updated are shown in yellow highlighter, including those that were  
180 recommended in the recent New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) assessment report for  
181 implementation in the high school. High School Principal Dr. Brad Craven will be presenting the NEASC report  
182 at the next board meeting.

183  
184 There is roughly \$18 million dollars of projects that are identified on the list as being potential needs. The goal  
185 is to find \$3 million dollars of projects that are the highest priority on the list, along with an additional \$1  
186 million dollars of projects that are of secondary priority but could potentially be done if the higher priority  
187 projects do not cost as much as expected. There are some items that were on the list last year that we will not  
188 move forward with this year due to the concerns of some members of the public; air conditioning at the high  
189 school is one of those items.

190  
191 Superintendent Marquis also pointed out the items highlighted in gray for each property and the updated  
192 information provided for each item. Several of the items involving LED updates are a result of the LED study  
193 which was conducted. Other items can be done in increments at a cost savings.

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Update on the Bales property

Superintendent Marquis explained that a search had been conducted for another appropriate property to replace the Bales site which is being used for Project Drive. A preliminary exploration of properties in Milford did not turn up any with the required space of about 15,000 square feet that is necessary to best serve the age range of students currently enrolled in Project Drive. If the board and the community decide to continue using the Bales property, it requires roughly \$3M in necessary repairs and renovations. Superintendent Marquis indicated that if the board wishes to include the cost of repairs to Bales in the CIP, then other items from the list at other locations will have to be removed.

Mr. Mannino asked Superintendent Marquis to give a brief description of Project Drive. He then asked how the return on investment with the LED project compares to the ROI of the proposed solar panel project. The answer to that is not known yet. Mr. Dargie commented that the ROI on the solar project seems long and that the LED is likely to offer a better return on investment.

Mr. Dargie asked Superintendent Marquis to speak to the Clerk of the Works item in the CIP list. Mr. Marquis explained that for some of the projects Bill Cooper can be considered the Clerk of the Works but there are other projects that are outside his area of expertise and will require someone else. The costs for those items have been separated out to reflect this. This sheet was determined to be missing from the packet and will have to be submitted later.

Mr. Dargie stated that he is in favor of \$3M being earmarked for the primary projects and then, once final job quotations come in, setting priorities at that point. Last year's CIP plan almost passed with only a difference of 20 votes so it is fair to assume that taxpayers are in support of the proposed projects. An updated list is needed by the end of the year in time to prep for a warrant article for the \$3M bond.

c. Discussion of Potential Non-Budget Warrant Articles

Mr. Carvell asked what is going to be done with Bales. To fix it properly, a separate bond article specifically for Bales should be submitted to the voters to let them decide. It is cheaper to keep the kids in Project Drive, instead of sending them out of district, but the building needs our attention once and for all.

Mr. Dargie stated that in his opinion we will continue to use Bales, but renovation of the doors and windows is all that we can afford at this time. Further renovations need to wait until Heron Pond is paid off in 2020. Also, if we do too much to the building now, it will require the installation of an elevator due to ADA regulations which is expensive.

Mr. Carvell reiterated the need to address repairs at Bales. He pointed out that the board had \$300k that it returned to the taxpayers which could have been used for repairs which would have eliminated the need for an additional bond now.

Mr. Dargie mentioned a recommendation by NEASC for setting up a separate contingency fund for the school district with discretionary funds to make needed repairs. A vote would be needed to set it up and another vote to put money into it.

Mr. Dargie stated that one potential warrant article is the creation of the authorization for a contingency fund, and the authorization for initial funding of it.

Mr. Dargie stated that full-day kindergarten is a potential warrant article.

243 Mr. Dargie stated that the board is currently negotiating with two bargaining units for successor contracts, and  
244 they are potential warrant articles.

245

246 6. Old Business

247 a. Custodial outsourcing was discussed extensively at the last meeting. Mr. Dargie stated there is nothing new  
248 to discuss at this time. Ms. Jennifer Siegrist, Milford resident, asked the board if it took into consideration the  
249 possibility of theft by employees at other school districts (namely Chelmsford, MA) who had outsourced their  
250 custodial needs. Mr. Dargie explained that Mr. Cooper had consulted with several other school districts  
251 regarding custodial outsourcing, and theft problems were not an issue that was reported from the ones that he  
252 had spoken with.

253

254 Ms. Paula Durand, taxpayer, asked the board when it plans to discuss this item further and take a vote on it.  
255 Mr. Dargie explained that it won't be on the agenda going forward. Ms. Durand asked if the discussion is linked  
256 to negotiations. Mr. Dargie answered that while the two issues are not really related, there is a need to be  
257 careful about how it is discussed as the two issues are about the same subject. Ms. Durand then asked if all  
258 custodial and grounds employees were covered by the contract negotiations, and Mr. Dargie answered yes.

259

260 b. Full Day Kindergarten

261 Superintendent Marquis referred everyone to the handout (See EXHIBIT) which has been revised after feedback  
262 from the community regarding potential inequity and the limited amount of students addressed in the original  
263 proposal. The new proposal is now for 80 students in five full-time sessions, and 64 students in four part-time  
264 sessions. The cost was calculated by 60 students instead of 80 in order to account for students in need of free  
265 or reduced tuition. Mr. Marquis also said that we would need to communicate with the Boys and Girls Club of a  
266 possible increase in membership with kids going there after full day kindergarten.

267

268 Mr. Dargie said he likes this proposal better than the previous one, and that it seems in line with other districts'  
269 experiences (e.g. Brookline). He asked for clarification of the transportation costs of \$50k. Jen Burk explained it  
270 would be an elementary-only route.

271

272 Mr. Dargie recommended recalculating the cost per student based on 80 students, so that the paying students  
273 did not subsidize the non-paying students. The monthly cost would be rounded to \$350 per month, or \$3500  
274 per year for the paying students. The remaining \$53K for the students receiving a waiver of fees if they qualify  
275 for free or reduced price meals would be paid for by the taxpayers. There would also be fit-out expenses that  
276 would be added the first year and be included in the warrant article. These costs are still being calculated but  
277 will be available in time for the generation of the warrant article. He also said that he had met with Principal  
278 Nancy Maquire to discuss the proposals. He noted that in his opinion, due to the average number of students  
279 per grade dropping in recent years to levels that are much lower than they were the last time it was reviewed  
280 about seven years, that it now appears that the district will be able to offer full-day kindergarten to all students  
281 with only the addition of some portable classrooms at the back of the Jacques building and some  
282 reconfiguration inside the building. The number of needed classrooms has dropped to the point where a full  
283 addition to the building to create the space needed to meet the needs of a complete full-day kindergarten  
284 offering is no longer required.

285

286 Mr. Willette asked about the cost listed associated with school lunch. That program is already in the red and  
287 this line item means an additional \$3800 more in the red.

288

289 Mr. Drew said he agreed with Mr. Dargie about the recalculation so that the 60 students don't end up paying  
290 for the other 20. He said this would need to be put in the warrant article.

291

292 Ms. Paula Durand spoke about the importance of increasing the time for math for the kids in the full day  
293 sessions. A response to her was that the programming schedule was a rough draft at this point and is subject to  
294 change.

295  
296 Mr. Mannino asked if full-day kindergarten would be a warrant article. Mr. Dargie said yes, that a public vetting  
297 is a good idea. He explained that the wording has to be authorized to appropriate and expend the money for  
298 the program, and then the cost for the program would be merged into the regular budget for future years. Mr.  
299 Dargie noted that in his opinion, if and when the state offered funding for full-day kindergarten, then the  
300 charge for it would be discontinued even if the state funding is less than the parent funding.

301  
302 Ms. Brenda Walker, a resident, asked about the absence of full time para-professionals in the full-day  
303 kindergarten. She expressed concern that the children would not have a consistent para with them throughout  
304 the entire day. Superintendent Marquis responded that the decision was made in light of the fiscal realities of  
305 the district. Ms. Walker stated that having different para-professionals during the day might be confusing to  
306 kindergarteners.

307  
308 Ms. Joelle Martin asked what happens if the warrant article does not pass. Mr. Dargie answered that the full-  
309 time kindergarten would not happen and that the regular, half-day kindergarten would continue. He explained  
310 that if a warrant article is defeated, the proposed plan cannot go forward, but if something is a regular budget  
311 item, it can still be done.

312  
313 c. NH School Board Association Resolutions

314 Mr. Dargie explained that this item is a follow-on discussion from the previous board meeting. Every year the  
315 New Hampshire School Boards Association (NHSBA) calls for resolutions. The Milford School Board has not  
316 previously submitted on in recent years. Mr. Mannino had asked for one regarding full-day kindergarten. Mr.  
317 Dargie stated that the NHSBA has an existing resolution regarding kindergarten, but it is silent on whether it  
318 should be full-time or not. Mr. Dargie made a motion that the board authorize him to submit a resolution that  
319 would add the phrase "full-time" to the existing kindergarten resolution. Mr. Mannino seconded the motion.  
320 The motion passed 5-0.

321  
322 d. Proposed Budget Parameters Discussion

323 As a follow-up to the discussion held at the last meeting of the board, Mr. Dargie made a motion to approve the  
324 proposed budget development parameters that were an exhibit on the agenda. Mr. Drew seconded the  
325 motion. The motion passed 5-0.

326  
327 7. Housekeeping Items

328 a. A motion to approve the minutes of the 9/6/2016 school board meeting was made by Mr. Dargie. Mr.  
329 Willette seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0.

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331 b. A motion was made to approve manifests 5, 6, 1011, 1015, 1019, 1020, 1021, 1022, and 1023 by Mr.  
332 Willette. Mr. Dargie seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0.

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334 8. No public comments were made at this time.

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336 9. A nonpublic session was not needed at this time.

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338 10. Mr. Willette made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Mannino seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0 AT 9:30PM.

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School Board Chair

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Date of Approval

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