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**MILFORD SCHOOL BOARD Minutes
(SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT No. 40)
November 2, 2009**

- 1. Call to Order** Chairman Bragdon called this meeting of the Milford School Board to order at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, November 2, 2009, in Lecture Hall Room # 182 at the Milford High School. Those present, together with interested citizens, were:

School Board Present Bert Becker, Peter Bragdon, Paul Dargie, Len Mannino, and Bob Willette.

Staff Present Robert Suprenant, Superintendent of Schools; Katie Chambers, Business Administrator; and Laurel Johnson, Assistant Superintendent of Schools.

Recorder J. Bradford Seabury.
- 2. Board Member Comments** Chairman Bragdon asked if there were any comments from Board members. None being brought forward, he continued to the next agenda item.
- 3. Public Comments** Chairman Bragdon asked if there were any introductory comments from members of the audience. None being brought forward, he continued to the next agenda item.
- 4. Reports and Presentations**

 - a. Superintendent's Report**

 - (1) High School Staff Recognition** Superintendent Suprenant introduced High School Principal Brad Craven, who recounted the story of Zack Harper's collapse during class on October 8, with the result that staff members responded with actions that were credited with saving the student's life by use of a defibrillator before EMTs arrived on the scene. He then introduced Assistant Principal Diane Doran, Marketing teacher Diane Bourassa, Nurse Mary Arrowsmith, and Assistant James St. Onge, the staff members concerned. Principal Craven read from an E-mail received from the head cardiologist at Children's Hospital, crediting the treatment received at the school as having saved Zack's life, reporting that no other such story of treatment in a public building was known. Principal Craven likened it to the "miracle on the Hudson" situation, saying it was part miracle, part training, and part good sense. General applause was expressed by all in attendance. Zack and his parents presented a bouquet of flowers to the staff members and expressed their appreciation. Superintendent Suprenant and Zack then presented individual recognition plaques to each of the staff members concerned.

State Representative Robert Willette, accompanied by State Representatives Gary Daniels and Stephen Palmer then presented the four staff members with proclamations from the New Hampshire House of Representatives, after which Senator Peter Bragdon presented individual proclamations from Governor John Lynch to the same four staff members.

Superintendent Suprenant reported that 86 Milford students and teachers had participated in the Southern New Hampshire Chamber of Commerce Business Expo at Hampshire Hills on October 22nd, noting that the Lions Club had donated \$180 to cover the cost for school bus transportation to those students who attended.

Superintendent Suprenant reported that the Heron Pond School had begun a new program in conjunction with the Wadleigh Library, whereby members of the Wadleigh staff would serve as guest readers to selected Heron Pond classes each month. He noted that the Wadleigh staff would have read to every child in the school by the end of the school year, stating that this program would help build a desire for reading among the children and a stronger connection to the Town's public library.

Superintendent Suprenant announced that the Heron Pond School would be honoring Veteran's Day with three assemblies next Tuesday, scheduled at 9:15 a.m., 10:15 a.m., and 2:00 p.m. He noted that School Board members would be welcome at these events.

Superintendent Suprenant reported that the School District was experiencing higher-than-normal absenteeism because of flu or flu-like symptoms. Chairman Bragdon noted that this was about 10%, meaning that the schools were not approaching the 50% that had been postulated.

Chairman Bragdon said he would skip to Item 6b, as four selectmen were present and there was a full Board present.

b. Selectmen Request for Paving

Chairman Bragdon then reiterated his motion from the previous meeting that the School Board would pay for the base-coat surfacing of the new municipal parking lot, with the understanding that the Board of Selectmen would not come back for more funding in the future. Mr. Mannino seconded the motion.

Mr. Willette said he still questioned why the School District should pay for a Town parking lot, expressing continuing concern about the fact that this had not been placed before the voters as a warrant article. Chairman Bragdon noted that there was a timing issue, as there was a desire to get the lot surfaced before winter set in. **Vote:** Mr. Dargie, Mr. Mannino, Mr. Becker, and Mr. Bragdon voted in favor; Mr. Willette voted in opposition. Chairman Bragdon declared the motion to have carried (4-1).

Chairman Bragdon then moved to Item 6c, taking that item out of order.

**c. ATC
Budget
Proposal**

*Decision
not to
establish
dedicated
fund for
ATC
replace-
ment
equipment*

Director Deloge noted that the Regional Center Advisory Committee had asked to set up a dedicated fund for the purpose of funding the replacement equipment for the Tech Center. Chairman Bragdon suggested that the correct thing to do would be either to have a motion to put it before the voters or a motion not to do so. Mr. Becker moved that the School Board put the question before the voters in March, to set up a dedicated fund for replacement of ATC equipment. Mr. Mannino seconded the motion. Mr. Dargie moved that new equipment also be considered. Both Mr. Becker and Mr. Mannino expressed agreement, and Chairman Bragdon accepted this as a friendly amendment. Chairman Bragdon said he would be voting in opposition, as he was opposed to dedicated funds, adding that he felt it was incumbent on the School Board to take care of these issues, and also that it was incumbent on the Advisory Committee to keep it in front of the Board. Superintendent Suprenant reminded the Board that within the next three years there were projects in the tech center that were embedded in the curriculum cycle. **Vote:** Mr. Becker and Mr. Mannino voted in favor; Mr. Willette, Mr. Dargie, and Mr. Bragdon voted in opposition. Chairman Bragdon declared the motion to have failed (2–3).

Chairman Bragdon said he would now return to the **Reports and Presentations** area of the agenda.

(2) Update on Portable Classrooms at Jacques

Business Administrator Chambers said the School District had heard unofficially from the State Fire Department that the portables would be inspected during the following week. She noted that corrections would still have to be made to the units, after which a third-party reviewer would again inspect the units, meaning that occupancy could not occur until the end of the calendar year.

(3) Title 2D ARRA

Assistant Superintendent Johnson noted that a proposal had been put out for competitive funding of \$450,000. She then introduced Justin Campbell, Assistant Principal at the High School, who discussed the details of the project, which would be used to implement one-to-one computing in science classrooms and to study the impact on science achievement. He provided details on the technology that would be used and how the teachers would monitor the students' progress.

Ms Johnson noted that there were special requirements associated with the grant, which drove the equipment listing to accommodate the definition of a tech-ready classroom. She noted that the grant request was due for submittal by Friday of this week, saying there was a chance for further expansion of the program because of the strong interest on the part of the companies concerned. Chairman Bragdon pointed out to the viewing

audience that "ARRA" was the less-common name for the federal stimulus program. Superintendent Suprenant said the presentation was designed for the Board's information, but acknowledged that a motion of approval by the Board might be helpful.

Mr. Willette questioned how much this would cost in the future, after the grant was done. Mr. Campbell said all equipment had a lifespan but much of this should be self-sustaining for a significant period of time. Assistant Superintendent Johnson noted that the Texas Instruments Inspire was chosen rather than laptops because it was smaller and much less expensive to maintain, as it used two AA batteries. Chairman Bragdon noted that at least two thirds of the grant was being used for hardware, so there would not be much recurring costs, adding that training and development would not have to be repeated. Mr. Campbell noted that one of the requirements of the grant was that the specified amount be spent on professional development.

Mr. Mannino asked if the text were saying that the full implementation of the tech program could not be realized without this grant. Assistant Superintendent Johnson explained that the Technology Plan required looking eight years out. Mr. Dargie noted that one of the main elements of the tech plan required a tech-ready classroom, but it was somewhat differently defined, as what was proposed here was significantly more extensive. Mr. Campbell said the abstract was attempting to provide a connection between the technology plan and the grant.

Mr. Mannino asked if the curriculum could be implemented without this plan. Mr. Campbell answered in the affirmative, saying things would be done differently in that case.

Mr. Mannino referenced the maintenance plan, suggesting that this equipment was not covered as part of that plan, and he asked if Mr. Campbell envisioned producing a maintenance plan to cover it. Mr. Campbell said many school districts had interpreted it as a laptop for every student, but he and Ms Johnson had opted to go for the more usable Inspire, which was significantly less likely to malfunction. Superintendent Suprenant advised that more tech support and help would be needed at some point in the future, with or without this grant. Ms Johnson said aging computers and aging equipment had been considered in the process of deciding what to choose for this proposal, and the designated equipment had been chosen under the presumption that these things would last the full eight years of the curriculum cycle.

Mr. Mannino asked if the equipment would be used in high school classes that were electives or required. Mr. Campbell said it was mixed, with some being required and some elective. Mr. Mannino asked if students who were required to take courses could be compared with students taking elective

courses. Mr. Campbell noted that there would be two different classes in each case, with some having the equipment and some not. Superintendent Suprenant pointed out that this was competitive, advising that the Special Education people would be coming in with another proposal at the next meeting.

Chairman Bragdon asked if the Board members were inclined to make a supportive vote. Mr. Mannino stated that he was not, at this time. No other comments being brought forward, Chairman Bragdon said he would treat this as a For Information Only item.

- b. Monthly Reports** **Milford High School Renovations Committee** — Business Administrator Chambers reported on the continuing floor issues, saying the firms involved had advised that this would be a long-term issue, with different types of tiles being brought in for testing. She confirmed that there was a bond, adding that the School District was holding back some funds.

5. New Business

- a. Enrollment Projections 2010/2011** Chairman Bragdon referenced the enrollment projections provided in the information packet for this meeting, noting that the Mason students were making things tricky. He then moved that the School Board approve the projections in the packet; Mr. Dargie seconded the motion. Mr. Dargie noted that predicting Kindergarten and First-Grade enrollments were always difficult, saying he thought the projections might be slightly on the low side and that budget considerations should keep in mind the possible impact in the event that these enrollments came in a little higher than projected. **Vote:** All members voted in favor, and Chairman Bragdon declared the motion to have carried unanimously (5–0).
- b. 2010/2011 Budget Presentation** Superintendent Suprenant said tonight's presentation was more a status report on where the Administration was at this date, as health insurance numbers were still not available—noting that 10% was being presented as a placeholder but the Local Government Center was predicting much higher percentages to other schools. He also pointed out that there was a major contract not yet decided. He said this year's budget presentation had been a discouraging process, as so much of the increases were tied to contractual obligations, leaving little or no room for working with the budget. He said that 79% of the increases were tied up in this way, with the cost of transportation and grant funding appropriations bringing it up to 95%. He noted that he had asked all principals to budget supplies at 95% of last year's accounts, adding that library expenses and other costs had been reduced. He then distributed the budget books to all members of the Board, as well as to attending members of the Budget Committee. Superintendent Suprenant noted that the yellow-covered document was backup, the blue-covered document was object code, the gray-covered document was the functional breakdown, and the fourth document was a key for the account numbers.

Superintendent Suprenant referenced the yellow-covered booklet, noting that it began with a summary page listing this year's budget, with expenses and revenues being provided. He noted that there was a \$942,401 increase (2.7%) for wage and benefit obligations, noting that it was followed by 7.1% increase for the New Hampshire retirement system. He pointed out that Row C pertained to 22 unaffiliated employees (including clerical staff and the SAU employees), representing a 2.5% increase, mirroring the wage increase of the teaching staff. He noted a decrease in new staff positions, as detailed on Page 2, saying that \$533,710 had been requested by the Administrators for new staff, but he was not recommending any of these to the School Board except for assuming the responsibility of a crossing guard at the Middle School for the mid-day shift, which was not being covered by the Milford Police Department next year. He noted 5½ Kindergarten teachers were used this year, but he was only recommending five next year, adding that the Spanish teaching position and three Building & Grounds positions would be eliminated.

He discussed curriculum budgeting details, including ATC equipment and grant program services. He noted that there was a total 4.1% increase over last year in expenses, with revenue not keeping up, as there was a total revenue increase of a little over \$9,000. He said the net assessment increase calculated to 6.5% with an impact of 84¢ per \$1,000 of assessed value on the tax rate.

Chairman Bragdon noted that this did not include the costs of a new contract with the Administrators, if an agreement were to be reached.

Superintendent Suprenant noted that he was asking for two full-time 1-to-1 assistants and a one-third position, which he was recommending to be paid for out of ARRA money, noting that there would be an increase in budget expenses next year if those 1-to-1 aids were still needed at that time.

Superintendent Suprenant noted that Pages 3 through 8 were all position requests, stating that he had really struggled with not recommending these, as some seemed well-justified, but the health benefits were too costly. He asked if the Board would grant him the flexibility to come back with possible changes with respect to these positions. Chairman Bragdon noted that the typical response from the Board was to establish a bottom line, which would give Superintendent Suprenant some flexibility. Superintendent Suprenant referenced Page 9, noting that there were some corrections to be made. He noted that Kindergarten enrollment was projected at 139, so that the associated staffing needs should read five positions, not 4½ (adding that this year was budgeted for 5½, but only 4½ had been used so far). He noted that an additional teacher was needed at the Heron Pond School, due to enrollment, which would be a transfer from Grade Six at the Middle School. Calling attention to Grades 7 and 8, he noted that the student-teacher ratios were below District guidelines, and he then discussed some

of the complexity involved, saying a teacher could not be eliminated without eliminating a program.

Business Administrator Chambers then discussed the information on pages 10 through 12, commenting on the new format for revenue projections and reviewing details of some of those projections. She noted that a \$16,000 increase on the budget would have an impact of 1% on the tax rate.

- c. Confirmation of Date of Budget/ Bond Hearings** Chairman Bragdon noted that the date for the budget and bond hearings had been set at the beginning of the year, along with the date for the School Deliberative Session. Business Administrator Chambers noted that the Town's Deliberative Session date was not yet known. Chairman Bragdon noted that the big budget discussion with the department heads would take place on Saturday, November 14th at the High School library, saying that the School Board would propose a bottom line figure at its next meeting.

6. Old Business

a. Policy Proposal

(1) Policy #5016 Programs Involving Candidates For Political Office (2nd Reading)

Mr. Becker moved that the Board approve a second reading of new Policy #5016; Mr. Bragdon seconded the motion. Mr. Dargie asked if the items in the last sentence were the only things that could be considered by the principal. He then postulated a hypothetical situation, asking if the principal could prevent someone from coming based on a different political philosophy than that of the principal. Superintendent Suprenant responded in the negative, saying that would not be an appropriate basis for making a decision, but that it was covered under other policies. **Vote:** All members voted in favor, and Chairman Bragdon declared the motion to approve a second reading of new Policy #5016 to have carried unanimously (5-0).

7. Housekeeping Items

- a. Nominations** Superintendent Suprenant said there were no nominations to be considered this evening.
- b. Approval of Minutes** Chairman Bragdon addressed the 10-19-09 meeting minutes. Mr. Bragdon then moved that the Board approve the minutes as listed; Mr. Mannino seconded the motion. **Vote:** All members voted in favor except for Mr. Dargie, who abstained, as he had not been present at the meeting, and Chairman Bragdon declared the motion to have carried (4-0-1).
- c. Approval of Manifests** Chairman Bragdon addressed the manifests awaiting approval, listed as including Vouchers Nos. 11, 1066, 1067, 1068, 1069, 1070, 1071, 1072, and 1073. Mr. Becker moved that the Board approve the manifests as

listed; Mr. Dargie seconded the motion. **Vote:** All members voted in favor, and Chairman Bragdon declared the motion to have carried unanimously (5-0).

8. Public Comment Chairman Bragdon asked if there were any closing comments from members of the audience. None being brought forward, he continued to the next agenda item.

9. Non-Public Session Superintendent Suprenant confirmed that there was a need to go into nonpublic session to discuss personnel and real-estate related issues. . Mr. Bragdon moved to go into non-public session under the provisions of NH RSA 91-A:3 II (c), *Matters which, if discussed in public, likely would affect adversely the reputation of any person*, and (d), *Consideration of the acquisition, sale or lease of real or personal property which, if discussed in public, would likely benefit a party or parties whose interests are adverse to those of the general community*, as well as to discuss parameters for upcoming negotiations on collective bargaining issues. Mr. Dargie seconded the motion. **VOTE:** Messrs. Becker, Bragdon, Dargie, Mannino, and Willette all voted in favor of the motion, which carried unanimously (5-0). Chairman Bragdon then declared the Board to be going into non-public session at 8:47 p.m., and all members of the public left the room at that time.

Business Administrator Chambers updated the School Board with respect to a real estate issue.

Superintendent Suprenant provided the Board members with copies of a letter pertaining to a student disciplinary issue.

No further nonpublic business remaining before the Board, Mr. Bragdon moved to exit from the nonpublic session; Mr. Dargie seconded the motion. **Vote:** All members voted in favor, with the Board returning to public session at 9:00 p.m.

10. Adjournment

All scheduled items having been addressed, Mr. Bragdon moved to adjourn; Mr. Dargie seconded the motion. **Vote:** All members voted in favor, with this meeting adjourning at 9:01 p.m.

Chairman of the School Board

Date of Signing