JOINT SPECIAL MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
AND THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

MINUTES

Tuesday, September 11, 2018
7:00 p.m.
Lincoln Center Hearing Room
494 Main Street, Manchester, CT

BOARD OF DIRECTORS PRESENT: Mayor Moran, Deputy Mayor Hackett, Secretary Gates, Directors Castillo, Eckbreth, Floyd-Cranford, Galligan and Jones.

BOARD OF EDUCATION PRESENT: Chair Chris Pattacini, Peter Conyers, Tracy Maio, Peter Meggers, Tracy Patterson, Melanie Stefanovicz and Darryl Thames, Sr.

ABSENT: Deborah Hagenow and Jason Scappaticci.

ALSO PRESENT: General Manager Shanley and Superintendent Geary.

1. Meeting Called to Order.

Mayor Moran called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. He asked for a moment of silence to remember those who lost their lives in New York City, Pennsylvania and Washington D.C. 17 years ago today. After observing a moment of silence, all present participated in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

2. Adoption of Minutes of August 28, 2018 Joint Special Meeting of the Board of Directors and the Board of Education.

Gates/Pattacini

14 Voted in Favor
(Director Eckbreth abstained)

APPROVED – Motion to suspend the rules to move item 4. Public Comment to the agenda at this time.

Jones/Hackett

15 Voted in Favor

4. Public Comment.

Keren Prescott, 75D Farm Drive, has two children, one at Illing School and one at Cheney School. Manchester is changing, socioeconomically and racially. The Town and the schools need to be more proactive about racial equality with the staff in the schools and with after school programs. Her children recognize that the schools are changing but the staff doesn’t represent what the community looks like. Her daughter was discouraged last year when she didn’t make the soccer team, which had no Asian, black or brown students. This year, her daughter tried out but no other girls of color tried out because they felt only the white girls would make the team. This is heartbreaking for our students to see. The school activities, programs and staff should be representative of what the Town looks like and should be about inclusion, not exclusion.
3. Approval of Resolution to solicit feedback and advice from residents and taxpayers on the initial proposal from SMARTR2 and report back.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, SMARTR2 has met a number of times and applied the principles, guidelines and education specifications for SMARTR1 in its analysis of a Phase II of the elementary rebuilding initiative looking at six different alternatives; and

WHEREAS, the Committee has developed a draft proposal presented to the Joint Board of Directors/Board of Education meeting on August 28, 2018 which achieves equity, parity, sustainable racial balance, and class sizes of 17-22 and allows for expected population growth over the next 15 years in a way that optimizes State funding giving some relief to property taxpayers; and

WHEREAS, the draft proposal suggests funding for planning, researching and particularly funding those efforts for the repurposing of Nathan Hale, Washington, Robertson, and Martin School if the Boards eventually choose the option presented.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the combined Board of Directors/Board of Education ask that SMARTR2 proceed to public meetings for input and advice to allow the Boards to be fully informed of the public’s thoughts on Phase II; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that SMARTR2 is asked to meet again to recommend a committee structure to develop repurposing plans for the above mentioned buildings, to include a preschool option at Martin.

Board of Education Chairman Pattacini made a motion to accept the resolution as stated. Director Eckbreth seconded the motion.

Director Castillo asked if a schedule has been set up for the community meetings.

General Manager Shanley stated once the Boards have adopted the resolution a schedule will be set up.

Superintendent Geary indicated members of both Boards should make recommendations on where to hold these community meetings.

Mayor Moran stated communication is imperative. We need to advertise the meetings as much as possible to ensure all residents are aware of meetings dates and locations.

Superintendent Geary indicated the parent/guardian community is relatively easy to reach.

General Manager Shanley replied we will communicate the meetings through the Town website, on Facebook, advertisements in newspapers and through as many other means as we can.

Ms. Stefanowicz wants to ensure the community understands what the resolution is for. The resolution is to take the proposal to meetings throughout the Town to solicit community input. She asked for clarification on a timeline for this process.
General Manager Shanley explained that the resolution is to create and follow a process to make recommendations for each of the affected facilities. The committee will determine the timeline. The timeline for Robertson, for example, is 2026-2027. We need to have an idea of what work the Boards would like done at each location so we can determine the cost. It may not make sense to ask for the funds now that we won’t need for 6 or 7 years. The most important thing is to identify the use for each location, determine what the cost would be and then make a determination on when we ask the voters for the funds to do the work. Washington School will be vacant next year, so it should be included in the next referendum.

Director Eckbreth stated we are looking for community suggestions on what would be positive reuses for the vacant schools. The Board of Education will determine the repurposing of Washington, Robertson and Martin Schools, as they are currently still under the BOE, whereas Nathan Hale is under the Board of Directors’ discretion. She asked if a community meeting schedule could be sent out with the upcoming water bills, which is a Town wide mailing.

Director Jones, taking into consideration the community input from the last meeting, proposed an amendment to the resolution with the following changes:

The third paragraph would read:

**WHEREAS**, the draft proposal suggests funding for planning, researching and particularly funding those efforts for the repurposing of *those facilities that may be impacted*.

The fifth paragraph would read:

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that SMARTR2 is asked to meet again to recommend a committee structure to develop repurposing plans for the *facilities that may be impacted*.

She thinks this would better communicate to the community that we are open to their recommendations.

**AMENDED RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, SMARTR2 has met a number of times and applied the principles, guidelines and education specifications for SMARTR1 in its analysis of a Phase II of the elementary rebuilding initiative looking at six different alternatives; and

**WHEREAS**, the Committee has developed a draft proposal presented to the Joint Board of Directors/Board of Education meeting on August 28, 2018 which achieves equity, parity, sustainable racial balance, and class sizes of 17-22 and allows for expected population growth over the next 15 years in a way that optimizes State funding giving some relief to property taxpayers; and

**WHEREAS**, the draft proposal suggests funding for planning, researching and particularly funding those efforts for the repurposing of those facilities that may be impacted.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the combined Board of Directors/Board of Education ask that SMARTR2 proceed to public meetings for input and advice to allow the Boards to be fully informed of the public’s thoughts on Phase II; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that SMARTR2 is asked to meet again to recommend a committee structure to develop repurposing plans for the facilities that may be impacted.
APPROVED – Resolution as amended this evening.

Jones/Hackett 15 Voted in Favor

Vice Chair Hackett appreciates that the feedback from the last meeting was incorporated into the resolution. The resolution is an initial proposal and demonstrates open-mindedness to listen intently to the public.

Mayor Moran asked for clarification on a timeline if we decide to have a spring referendum.

General Manager Shanley suggested the Board of Directors act on a question in early February, which would leave the remainder of February, all of March and part of April for development of information and communication to the community.

Mayor Moran wants to ensure the public understands this is a resolution, not a specific plan. Coming off the hard work of SMARTR2, tonight’s vote is to take the recommendation from SMARTR2 out to the public for its input. A plan will be determined after community feedback is considered.

5. Adjournment:

Castillo/Pattacini 15 Voted in Favor

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

lgl

APPROVED: ATTEST:

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Secretary, Manchester Board of Directors