

**MINUTES**  
**SPECIAL MEETING OF**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**September 26, 2006 – 7:00 p.m.**  
**LINCOLN CENTER HEARING ROOM**

**PRESENT FROM BOARD OF DIRECTORS:**

Chairman Howroyd, Vice-Chairman O'Neill, Secretary Zingler, Directors Hachey, Sheridan, Topping, Spadaccini, Peak, and Pelletier

**PRESENT FROM BOARD OF EDUCATION:**

Chairman Hackett, Secretary Rizzo, Members Crockett, Stafford, Marcano, Edwards, and Pohl

**ABSENT:** Huyler, Small-Miller

**ALSO PRESENT:** General Manager Shanley, Superintendent Ouellette, Business Manager Brooks, and Director of Operations Guarnaccia

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The meeting was called to order at 7:08 p.m. All in attendance participated in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, led by Chairman Howroyd.

**Superintendent Ouellette** has been pleased working with the new General Manager, as well as in her dealings with Louise Guarnaccia and Keith Epstein. With all the problems encountered and worked through over the last year, it has been a tremendously challenging, but rewarding year. She thanked the Fire Department, Police Department, and Town Attorneys for the services provided to the Board of Education.

**Chairman Howroyd** informed those present that Louise Guarnaccia will be retiring in October. It will be a great loss, as she has been in the center of the level of collaboration between the Town and the Board of Education. Mr. Howroyd wished her well in pursuing other opportunities.

1. Discussion of consolidation efforts per charter requirement.
  - A. Report relocation/co-location of Building and Grounds functions.

**Louise Guarnaccia** explained where various members of the Buildings and Grounds Department, previously housed at the Bennet complex, have been relocated, as well as where equipment is currently being stored. She thought the relocation went smoothly.

**Pat Brooks** noted that although employees were originally hesitant, everything seems to be working out. She would still like to see the supervisors with the plumbers and carpenters.

B. Status of major school construction projects.

**Ms. Guarnaccia** summed up the projects by saying that all schools opened on time. In just about ten weeks, between \$14 and \$15 million worth of work was completed on school buildings. That is a lot to accomplish in a small amount of time. Work was done on Labor Day weekend and she thanked everyone involved in making that final push to obtain the Certificates of Occupancy.

**Ms. Brooks** mentioned the auction to take place at Bennet. Most items have been removed and delivered to other schools. There will be a walk-through at 9:00 a.m. this Saturday prior to the Auction.

**General Manager Shanley** thanked the Principals of all the schools involved in the construction for their patience and flexibility.

**Director Hachey** was at Martin for the opening and the kids there were thrilled with their new rooms. He was surprised that the schools opened on time with all the work that was being completed.

**Chairman Howroyd** noted that the additions at Martin blend in very well with the original construction.

**Director Spadaccini** asked for an overview of the Bennet project and to what degree the plan has needed to change. Ms. Guarnaccia explained that the bids are not out on the street yet. The first bid will be for hazardous materials, the second bid (the main bid) will be out mid to late October, and the third bid will be for site work. She also explained that rising costs are a major issue. The cooling tower will be removed from the main bid and bid as an add alternate. The pool will not be done at all. The plan is to build a wood frame to enclose the pool tile to avoid damage.

**Steve Edwards** noted his main concerns in this project are the pool, the cooling tower, and the green space. He stated that given the restrictions, it did not make sense to proceed with the pool. It is still his hope to have the money for the cooling tower, and the green space issue has been resolved.

C. Future status and maintenance responsibilities – Firehouse, Boiler Plant, and “Cheney” building.

**Ms. Guarnaccia** explained that the oil tank at the Boiler Plant has been filled with 15,000 gallons of oil. The original plan called for using the plant to heat the four main buildings and the three across the street. That plan is currently under review and temporary units are being considered. The boiler plant will continue to run to keep a certain level of heat in the three buildings this heating season. At some point there will be a need to discuss long term plans. If heat is not provided, lead paint will come off the walls. The main source of power comes from the main Bennet building. This will be maintained this year, but will eventually be disconnected. She asked who is responsible for things like broken glass and vandalism at this site.

**Chairman Howroyd** suggested coming up with a short term use of the space, taking into consideration what will be compatible with a sixth grade academy.

**Director Peak** asked who would ultimately become responsible for this property if neither Board took action.

**Ms. Guarnaccia** explained that the Board of Education has no budget for maintenance and utilities at these buildings, nor does the Town. If the Board of Education needs to keep control and responsibility, it would need to budget, as would the Board of Directors. Responsibility equates to dollars.

**Chairman Hackett** asked Ms. Brooks to explain the budget issue and Ms. Brooks explained that the current budget was reduced by the amount needed to maintain those buildings because they were originally slated for removal.

**Secretary Zingler** asked about the ongoing maintenance costs and when the electricity will be cut off. He suggested boarding up the windows. Ms. Guarnaccia explained that the maintenance costs would include the basic utility costs and repair of damage or vandalism. If the buildings are used for something, the maintenance level will go up. The assumption is that the buildings will remain vacant until June of 2007. Electricity will most likely remain on until the end of April. Ms. Guarnaccia thought boarding the windows may send the wrong message to the neighborhood.

**Director Sheridan** stated that the Town has to assume control and ownership of these buildings. The Town should be the lead partner in capital renovations and the sooner those are done, the better. He suggested a full architectural survey, then renovate and put these buildings to use.

**Mr. Pohl** agrees with Mr. Sheridan and suggested creating a committee made up jointly of Board of Education and Board of Director members to determine the future of these buildings.

**Chairman Howroyd** agreed that each Board should designate members to meet jointly for long and short term solutions that are compatible with what we want to do with both the school and the neighborhood.

**Director Pelletier** thinks putting plywood over the windows is just inviting graffiti and would be a mistake. She suggested maybe using the buildings for cold storage. Ms. Guarnaccia explained that they have had experience with older buildings and these building need to be heated to a certain degree or there will be problems with the lead paint and the plaster. Ms. Pelletier suggested making the Boiler Plant a historical attraction open to the public. Ms. Guarnaccia suggested touring the buildings before brainstorming further. Each building has certain things that make it unique.

**Secretary Rizzo** suggested if a joint committee were to be formed, the Cheney Brothers Historic District should be invited. Chairman Howroyd agreed and suggested the Historical Society as well.

**General Manager Shanley** noted that he is aware of a grant opportunity should the joint committee form.

**Director Hachey** sees a trend to play up the historical features of the area. These buildings are assets. He suggested a public/private partnership or a cultural/historical center.

**Chairman Hackett** acknowledged that the public has great ideas. She would like to solicit some public input for fuel and inspiration. Committee members should meet to discuss various options.

**Director Spadaccini** thinks the public has been clear about preserving these buildings. He thinks the heat and utilities should stay on and the buildings should be kept in good repair. Mr. Spadaccini does not think it is a good idea to board the buildings up. The Board of Education is not in the business of holding buildings not being used for educational purposes. The responsibility of these buildings should revert to the Town. Mr. Spadaccini suggested this as a potential site for a community center, or possibly leased to a private tenant who will be a good trustee of the buildings.

**Mr. Edwards** agrees that plywood is not a good message although it would be cost effective. He suggested alternately using plexiglass to protect the windows and conserve energy. For the next one and a half to two years, the tenant would have to be compatible with construction across the street.

**Director Sheridan** suggested the contractors use the buildings instead of bringing in construction trailers. Ms. Guarnaccia will look into including that in the bid documents and making a formal agreement.

2. Executive Session: Labor Negotiations

Both Boards went into Executive Session for the discussion of labor negotiations at 8:07 p.m. and returned at 8:45 p.m. No votes were taken.

**Director Hachey moved and Director Sheridan seconded the motion.**

**Sixteen Voted in Favor**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

**Secretary Zingler moved and Director Hachey seconded the motion to adjourn.**

**Sixteen Voted in Favor**

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**APPROVE:**

**ATTEST:**

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**Secretary, Manchester Board of Directors**