



**DOVER SCHOOL  
DISTRICT**

## DOVER SCHOOL BOARD – MINUTES

Meeting Type:	Workshop Meeting
Meeting Location:	City Council Chambers
Meeting Date:	<b>Monday, July 27, 2009</b>
Meeting Time:	<b>6:30 pm</b>

A workshop session of the Dover School Board was called to order by Chairperson Marjorie Fisher on Monday, July 27, 2009 at 6:30 p.m. in City Council Chambers

**A. ROLL CALL:** Present were Marjorie Fisher, Dorothea Hooper, Audra Lurvey, Beth Setear, Carolyn Mebert, Britt Ulinski Schuman, and Doris Grady.

Also present were Superintendent John O'Connor; City Manager, Mike Joyal; and Parks Christenbury.

**B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Britt Ulinski Schuman led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**C. CITIZENS' FORUM:** No one addressed the Board.

**D. CABLE ACCESS REQUEST:** Dr. O'Connor opened the workshop, reviewing some of the history and then, most recent updates to the City's request for the School District to take over the Government Access Channel. "All of you received copy of an email that Mr. Joyal, City Manager sent to School Board member Grady, last Friday. There was an update of a document that had been distributed earlier but it was further refined and revised. Basically, we have been looking for over a year now, the possibility of the School District taking over the public television station channel 22 with the possibility of expanding on that to include an educational channel and a third channel provided by our citywide internet and cable television company, COMCAST. During that time, we've looked at the feasibility of introducing a Career Technical Center Program involving media, animation, and a variety of electronic technologies. There's been a great deal of support, both from members of the Board as well as members of the community, about the possibility of introducing that type of programming into the Career Technical Center Course of Study. The Ad Hoc Cable Access Committee put together a description of how this would all come about with the School District taking responsibility of hiring and supervising administrators and operators to run the Government and Educational Access."

Dr. O'Connor then read from the Ad Hoc Committee's description: "'To the extent possible, we're looking to have the School Board provide opportunities for students to participate and learn from involvement in producing governmental and educational content for playback on access channel.' One of the questions that has come up repeatedly over the last year or so centers around the funding for this type of a takeover. Basically, it's been outlined in a variety of areas and I'll briefly share some of these with you. 'We're looking at a multi-year City Council commitment for the duration of the cable franchise agreement to provide annual funding to the School Board based upon the franchise fee and other available sources.' That franchise fee is paid on a quarterly basis, and represents approximately \$225,000 a year, \$56,000 a quarter."

Dr. Mebert asked the Superintendent if the information he was providing had been reviewed with the Board previously. "May I ask a question? Is any of this new? Haven't we gone over this multiple times?"

The Superintendent stated that it had, but some of the numbers have changed.

Dr. Mebert asked, "Can we just talk about the numbers that have changed?"



**DOVER SCHOOL  
DISTRICT**

## DOVER SCHOOL BOARD – MINUTES

Meeting Type:	Workshop Meeting
Meeting Location:	City Council Chambers
Meeting Date:	<b>Monday, July 27, 2009</b>
Meeting Time:	<b>6:30 pm</b>

Dr. O'Connor noted he was also providing some of the highlights of the agreement, and reviewing some of the questions that had been raised by Board members about the possible takeover, for the television viewing community. He noted he was also waiting for Mr. Joyal to arrive.

The Superintendent asked to continue and indicated he would try to keep it "short." "We would be looking at approximately \$225,000 per year. However, there would be a deduction out of that of approximately \$20,000 which would leave approximately \$200,000 on a yearly basis. The budget, with its appropriation coming from the cable franchise fee would be approved by Council and passed on to the cable access special revenue fund which the School Board would have complete oversight over. One of the questions that has come up deals with who would be responsible for deciding what would be (shown) on these television channels. The agreement calls for the formation of a standing committee that would develop and implement operational policies, providing ongoing oversight and report to the School Board. These would be members, possibly chosen by representatives of the School Board as well as representatives of the Council to serve on this oversight committee. They would have responsibility for content, determining our budget, etc. The agreement lasts for ten years. The agreement was signed and went into effect in the 2008 year and would run through 2018. We're looking at a ten year agreement with the City Council on this."

Dr. O'Connor asked if there were questions regarding state reimbursement for the retro-fit of the three rooms in the McConnell Center, he could answer them.

Ms. Fisher stated, "In the letter we received from Jim Amara, the CTC director, he said that student participation would be very, very limited to begin with. Having said that, how are we to get our 40% state aid...how could we submit something to the state saying it's going to be an educational project if it's not an educational project."

Dr. O'Connor stated, "I think there's been a little misunderstanding in terms of our application for state aid for this project. This project went in as an expansion of the SAU. It would provide School Board an opportunity for its meetings; it would provide space for us to conduct additional workshops; it could also be used, and this is where there was some confusion, because as we're talking about the takeover of this program, we've always built it around the possibility of a Career Technical Center program. As Mr. Amara indicated in his letter, it doesn't look as though we can get that up-and-running right away. It will take us some time to do that. We need curriculum; we're going to need some additional funding, etc. The application that is in for the 40% reimbursement is based on an expansion of the SAU office."

Ms. Fisher asked, "I'm on the School Board to educate the children, not to run a cable access program. If we're not going to do the cable access for the children right now, why get involved in a cable television channel? I would rather spend any extra money we have or any time trying other CTC programs that we know we can start up right now."

Dr. O'Connor responded, "I think one of the reasons why we've been looking at this, for at least the last five years, there has been discussion about the possibility of adding a second channel in Dover that



**DOVER SCHOOL  
DISTRICT**

## DOVER SCHOOL BOARD – MINUTES

Meeting Type:	Workshop Meeting
Meeting Location:	City Council Chambers
Meeting Date:	<b>Monday, July 27, 2009</b>
Meeting Time:	<b>6:30 pm</b>

would be the educational channel. As you saw in memos going as far back as Mr. Latchaw in 2003, we talked about, as we were developing the contract with the cable company that there was always the possibility of a television studio built right in to Dover High School. Unfortunately, since 2003, we've had some program changes there, we've had increased enrollment, and as a result, we do not have the space today to build a television studio. We may have that space five or six years from now when we start looking at the possibility of renovating Dover High School. Filling that space between now and five years, we thought about a Career Technical Center program that could be done off-site like we are doing some other programs now. Thus, the McConnell Center entered the equation. We talked about having additional classroom space over there that could be used for dual purposes – SAU training when we bring staff in and so forth, as well as classroom space for this type of a program.”

Doris Grady spoke, “John, I disagree with you a bit in that preliminary application. If you go to page 1, it states, the project scope is for high school. It isn't only the SAU office – it's the high school, the SAU office, and the Regional Career Development Center. Those are the three things that are checked off. When this was approved, it says that District Council approval of the School Board was September 26. I have the minutes of that particular meeting and at the very end, it said that we were asking for approval only; that we weren't okaying the project. The commencement date was October 2008 (that hasn't happened); the anticipated project completion date was March 2009 (nor has that happened). I'm having trouble with an application to the state no longer being a legal document. The total square feet planned was 3,411 feet. We don't have that now. We have 2,000+ feet so therefore, that's an incorrect statement to the state. The facilities says there will be classrooms, auditorium, and offices... In addition, we told the state we would have four rooms. We no longer have four rooms. It's my opinion that we would have to reapply and an honest statement because it isn't going to be this educational project under the project part of (the application) that we told them that it was. Under other information, it says, 'to approve preliminary approval, please forward the following documents'. I didn't get a copy of that even though they approved the preliminary. There were no educational specifications put in here. The preliminary drawings, I don't think any of us have seen those. So if the state got those, that's fine. I just have trouble with the proposal.”

Ms. Grady continued, “Then it goes on to give a description of the whole proposal: 'There will be four rooms to be used for cable access programming, cable access administrative office, a conference room, a cable access production facility, and a board room.' We don't have four rooms so we can't tell the state we have four rooms, will you give us \$120,000 for four rooms when we don't have it. Then, there's a statement that says, 'The School District is not in a position to, nor is offering to, supplement the project.' With all of the things we've been presented, we are supplementing the project. We're supplementing it with borrowing that money. Originally in the original contract, the first one, it said it was supposed to be at the high school. At that time, we decided it would be in that room down by the cafeteria – it would be big enough to start at that point. But that never came to fruition. When we're saying we're not offering to supplement it, if you read the information given to us, we're being told that if we do CTC, we are totally responsible for that ourselves. Now to establish a CTC program with equipment, a staff member, a program, classrooms; we're going to go into \$100,000-\$150,000. I'm foreseeing big money in the School District put in here with really, not that much return. What we're doing is servicing the whole community. If we added up what we would need over there, plus what we



**DOVER SCHOOL  
DISTRICT**

## DOVER SCHOOL BOARD – MINUTES

Meeting Type:	Workshop Meeting
Meeting Location:	City Council Chambers
Meeting Date:	<b>Monday, July 27, 2009</b>
Meeting Time:	<b>6:30 pm</b>

would need at the high school, we're going to be running into about a million dollar investment...and I don't think there's money right now and I don't think there's enough here that specifies exactly where we stand. In the application, we would get \$24,000 back each year...that goes into our kitty. Now, that may be a \$120,000 savings as far as the City assumes, but at \$24,000 a year that we're going to get over five years. Then, we've got the remainder of that that we're going to put in a debt service, that we're going to be paying for 20 years! So, the School District is being charged a strong amount of money. Then when I looked at the rent, it appears that even though the city figures were showing at about \$2,000 for rent, \$2,300 for rent...actually it would have to be, if we spent out \$41,000, we're going to be spending more than that per month. We're going to be spending roughly \$4,000 a month for rent. So, if it's \$2,000, are they going to subsidize our rent like they're subsidizing the SAU rent, that will come out of taxpayers money? It also says, 'the individuals hired to manage and set up this space can come under the School District.' We're not running it under the School District. We're running it under cable money. Most likely, it would be individuals beyond the salary schedule of Dover's Collective Bargaining pay schedule...because once we start bringing somebody in beyond the pay schedule, we could be in trouble."

Ms. Grady added, "And a motion on September 22, 2008, (from minutes of the meeting) 'a motion was made and seconded to give Ms. Verville approval to submit an application for state building aid only. An oral vote passed 7/0.' The key word there, is building aid only – only. I had that entered into the minutes of the meeting so that would be very clear should we run into this situation. So I think our first problem that has to be researched, do we have a legal document with the state of New Hampshire Department of Education. I don't think we have because I don't think it's only SAU. They're telling us we have to have an educational program. That's not three or four kids going down."

Dr. Mebert spoke next. "One thing I'd like to know is why three or four kids are not an educational program. Second issue is, we've had the journalism folks tell us about these great new programs. I don't know why it has to be CTC. Why can't it be part of the curriculum of the whole of Dover High School and not just the CTC? But, I'm actually getting tired of this discussion. We've been discussing this issue for a long time and we don't seem to be getting anywhere on it, and we have a lot of other really important issues in this District to discuss and to deal with. We are a District in Need of Improvement in reading and in math, maybe still in some schools? We've got a lot of issues. We've got a very low college bound rate here. Whether we've got a television station that's attached to the school seems like a really trivial issue to me at this point. I'd like to make a motion that we just stop discussion of this and say 'we're not going to do it.'

Carolyn Mebert moved, Doris Grady seconded for discussion only, to stop discussion and tell the City the District will not take over the cable access stations.

Dorothea Hooper stated, "I feel like Carolyn does – I don't want to beat a dead horse. I'd just like to say 'ditto' to Mrs. Grady. I am very concerned about the amount of money that this would cost. Forgive me if I don't always believe statistics that are given to me. You may remember that somebody told me that doing away with the mid-day busing was going to pay for all-day kindergarten. That didn't happen so I've become extremely skeptical about money. I agree, there are a lot of other things I'd like to see done



**DOVER SCHOOL  
DISTRICT**

## DOVER SCHOOL BOARD – MINUTES

Meeting Type:	Workshop Meeting
Meeting Location:	City Council Chambers
Meeting Date:	<b>Monday, July 27, 2009</b>
Meeting Time:	<b>6:30 pm</b>

for the kids. And, I think right now, this would be a frill. Spending money on this would be a frill. I don't think the idea's bad – I just think that at this particular time, we don't have the funds to do this. So, I will not support this.”

Dr. O'Connor clarified that the District received a January 21, 2009, memo from the Business Administrator, Laurie Verville, accompanied with the approval form from the Department of Education saying the District had been approved for the project for that reimbursement. Ms. Grady clarified, “Preliminary.” Dr. O'Connor agreed. It was noted that was no longer the project that is being put forth to the state.

Dr. Mebert stated, “We set up this workshop meeting to further discuss what we were discussing the last time Mr. Christenbury was here. I really do appreciate all the work you and your committee have done. But it doesn't seem like we've got sufficient new information – and the paperwork that we've got here – that would leave me to say, 'I'm fully supportive of this thing.' I'm not anywhere near fully supportive of this. I see this as a plan that has some potential should we decide to, for example, develop a Foundation for Education in Dover...Barrington has a foundation where they raise money to do things that are extra curricular in the true sense of extra curricular. That is, they're not mandates but they are things that the community wants to have. If the community really wants to have this, then maybe we could raise the money, but, I don't see taking money out of our already strained budget to do this at this time. Again, I don't see anything new in all the material that I got for this meeting that would sway me in any other way – even though, I think, having kids involved in the cable production is a great idea! But, financially this just doesn't seem to be the right time.”

Beth Setear noted, “I guess I would say that I'm agreeing with Carolyn and in looking at the letter that we got from Jim Amara in our packet on Friday, it's his belief that he can't do it for the money that's there right now. He's done a very good job for us to this point, and if he says he can't do it for the amount of money that's available now, I would believe he can't do it for the amount of money that's available now. And, that he doesn't want to be running a negative balance. If we were to say, 'Go ahead with the project and run a negative balance,' my question would be, where is that money coming from? Because I wouldn't want Jim to be in the position of doing less than what he thought he needed to do in order to stay within the budget he has. So, my question would be, if we move forward and there's a difference between what he needs and what we have, where does that money come from?”

Dr. O'Connor responded, “That money would come from our local budget. We would have to add that to our budget. Remember, if you look at the Ad Hoc Access Committee recommendations, on page 2, item 3. We talked about Career Technical Center participation in this program, and it would be at the sole discretion of the School Board to incorporate those kinds of things into the program. In other words, if we want to expand this to our Career Technical Program, more than likely that's going to be on our nickel.”

Dorothea Hooper stated, “This letter from Mr. Amara is what swayed me also. I think the key thing here is high quality. I'm used to very high quality programs from Mr. Amara and I think those are the kind of programs he runs. I would hate to see us go into something that was less than quality. I think he's



**DOVER SCHOOL  
DISTRICT**

## DOVER SCHOOL BOARD – MINUTES

Meeting Type:	Workshop Meeting
Meeting Location:	City Council Chambers
Meeting Date:	<b>Monday, July 27, 2009</b>
Meeting Time:	<b>6:30 pm</b>

indicating in his letter that that would be the case. I, too, would like to assure the committee that's worked very diligently on this that we do appreciate their time! I think it's just a really bad economic time and this is something I don't think is an absolute necessity for the Dover School District to spend money on."

Britt Ulinski Schuman addressed Mr. Christenbury, "I know one of the things we brought us last time was the fact that money is continuously going into this account. Is there a penalty if we wait to accumulate the money that we need?" Mr. Christenbury stated there is no penalty. There are only time limits associated with building aid, but, outside of that, there are no time constraints. Ms. Ulinski Schuman added, "If we wanted to wait make sure we had sufficient funding to do the project the way Mr. Amara feels it should be done, we could sit back and wait till we accumulate the funds that we feel would be sufficient?"

Mr. Christenbury stated that was correct. "I think Mike and I said at the last meeting, you can do it in steps... The only thing we have to be aware of if the School Board does go forward would be the time constraints that would be within the building aid. Outside of that, if you accepted the program, it's at your pace and when you want to."

Britt Ulinski Schuman went on to state, "As far as the building aid, it was a preliminary application that got approved. I'm guessing that preliminary means that they understand that we might have changes that we need to make?"

Dr. O'Connor stated that was correct and added, "Usually when the scope of the project increases, the state has a very difficult time. When it decreases, which is in this case we're looking at three rooms and the application was based on four rooms. So, the square footage is decreasing. The state is more likely to support that. They've penciled in a number now for us in a future budget. Reducing that downward is something that they don't necessarily shy away from and will not raise a lot of questions. We just have to satisfy the requirements for the 40%, which is SAU related, and on both the application and the preliminary approval letter, it does talk about SAU/office recording studio in all of these."

Ms. Ulinski Schuman added, "Before we have the whole CTC program come into it, I kind of would want somebody responsible for this that actually has knowledge of what we truly need for equipment so that we know what type of investment we truly need to make. I'm sure Mr. Amara gave us a good approximation, but it's not really his expertise." Dr. O'Connor and Ms. Fisher clarified that Mr. Amara had consulted with staff from Channel 11 in a meeting that took place a week ago. There was someone with that background in attendance. Dr. O'Connor added, "In addition, both Mr. Amara and Dr. O'Connor have reviewed documentation from a number of school districts that currently have taken on the responsibility of access television."

Ms. Ulinski Schuman stated, "I'm just guessing what we use right now for broadcasting this and everything else isn't quite up to the standards of Channel 11, but, it serves its purpose. I think that as far as anything the CTC students or journalism kids would do, we don't need professional quality equipment doing some of that." Audra Lurvey added, "There's got to be a middle ground between



**DOVER SCHOOL  
DISTRICT**

## DOVER SCHOOL BOARD – MINUTES

Meeting Type:	Workshop Meeting
Meeting Location:	City Council Chambers
Meeting Date:	<b>Monday, July 27, 2009</b>
Meeting Time:	<b>6:30 pm</b>

equipment...”Ms. Ulinski Schuman agreed, “There’s a middle ground between the two and we can do what we can do for the money. I think it is a feasible thing to do if we take our time doing it and have the proper people in place to make the decisions.”

Audra Lurvey stated, “I can speak to – I’ve been on the committee since we did the cable franchise agreement – and I wanted to share some of my observations. I work in Rochester. We have educational TV in Rochester. The kids don’t run it. Teachers are responsible. If you have something you want to put on, you record it and send the disk to the Superintendent’s office. There is a person there whose duties include uploading that stuff. It’s kind of similar to how the discussion is going for this to start up. If the first year there’s someone who’s responsible for running the actual station and the scheduling and that kind of thing – when Woodman Park has a band concert, one of the teachers can send a recording over and it will show up on the TV...I think for the start, that’s kind of the possibility of the way that this could move forward and I think Britt made a lot of good points. I do know and I do agree that right now, for the School Board to jump in full board and try to get a program off the ground is not feasible, obviously. I think that continuing to pursue it or wait till there’s more money, or any of those things are good options because I can see this as potentially having a lot of positives in the future.”

Ms. Grady added, “I agree with John in that the state did okay the preliminary application we submitted. I don’t think that it is what we are doing. Therefore, I still say, I don’t think that we can accept that money, unless we truthfully put on paper exactly what it’s all about. And it’s not just in the SAU. This whole thing is for a cable station. I’m having trouble with contracts. The contract with COMCAST is not what was signed and agreed to. It’s entirely different. The original okay from the state is what we applied for, but the program is not that program today. That’s a change. If you’re on the JBC and you change a contract, you pay for it. They don’t accept the contract for that. I was taught that if you change a contract, it’s not the same contract. I don’t think we can accept state money, particularly in their financial situation, if when we present it; it’s not the same issue. The other thing is, we’re constantly told, ‘You have \$200,000 a year. I’m looking at some of the figures and that’s not true. At the meeting the other day, we came to the conclusion that there wasn’t enough money and that we would have to wait, which could be January or later, before enough money is accumulated. And then they say ‘you’ve got \$200,000.’ No, you don’t have \$200,000. You’ve got \$200,000 from June of one year to June of the next year. And all’s you’re going to get every quarter, is \$30,000 some odd. And of that \$30,000 you break it down to what you’re paying per month, you’re going to be at about \$11,000 per month. If you think you can run that with a production manager far beyond the figures we have here, I don’t think that the figures agree. As I said, I’m not against the project. But I don’t think this City, and I don’t think the School District has this money. Actually, you’re looking at a program, we don’t even know how many kids would be interested. It’s like putting in a program for the band – and you donate (sic) \$500,000 to the band program and no kids have shown any interest yet. I just don’t think it’s an even-steven project. So I will probably not vote for it.”

Beth Setear asked Mr. Joyal or Mr. Christenbury, “If at this point in time Mr. Amara says there’s not enough money to do a program, but you believe there’s enough money for us to take over – at least the Channel 22 and broadcast both City business and School business – what is the advantage to the School



**DOVER SCHOOL  
DISTRICT**

## DOVER SCHOOL BOARD – MINUTES

Meeting Type:	Workshop Meeting
Meeting Location:	City Council Chambers
Meeting Date:	<b>Monday, July 27, 2009</b>
Meeting Time:	<b>6:30 pm</b>

Board to do that? Why is it to our advantage to take it over – take over broadcasting responsibilities from the City?”

Mr. Joyal explained what he believed would be advantages to the District: The District will have immediate access and control of the video production resources that would come with Channel 22. In addition, there are many examples of students in the high school doing productions today that would be wonderful content for Channel 22 if, under the guise of the School Board, there was some criteria set and someone to administer the program for receiving that information and then programming it. The immediate advantage is that the District would take on the operation of Channel 22 as it exists today with the creation of an additional meeting room for the District, as well as new production studios. There would be funding for at least one dedicated staff person. There is also an advantage because the District can access building aid to leverage the funds. Lastly, is the long-term vision. Mr. Joyal ended by stating, “You may not be doing things today, but you certainly can envision far into the future...the potential for some additional curricula or a particular program in the Career Technical Center has been envisioned, or whatever may come out of it.”

Ms. Setear noted, “It would be basically what Audra was alluding to that is occurring in Rochester now. There’s some person to which you can send tape and that person can upload it and put it on Channel 22 at various times during the week. People who could not go to a high school performance could see it, or if somebody wanted to see a performance from Woodman Park, they could see it at another time. That’s kind of like the immediate advantages. What would happen if teachers and administrators liked it so much that people were overloading that person with tapes to be put on the channel?”

Mr. Joyal answered, “I would say that’s no different than any other program that any one of our municipal departments operates. It’s about, you set some goals and you establish some priorities, and you do what you can with the resources you have.”

Dr. Mebert noted, “I think that just highlights the issue that we don’t have a plan. Why would we want to be in that situation where the person is overloaded with stuff and can’t handle everything that’s being asked of him or her? So, this all seems we’re coming at this from what seems to me to be a very interesting perspective. Do we want this responsibility and if we say yes, then we have to build a program that goes along with this responsibility. Why don’t we come up with a program and have it work with the potential that exists with this cable franchise?”

Ms. Fisher added, “What would happen if we did not accept the responsibility now? Say, when we do renovate the high school, we build a studio then. Would the City say to us, ‘we can’t involve the kids in the program’ now that we have the room at the high school to do it...at that point could we say we have a class that wants to learn about video. Could we be part of and have our kids learn from the City owning this program?”

Mr. Joyal stated, “I think that’s the case today, Unfortunately, because there isn’t a person to coordinate these activities and create some outreach into the schools, that isn’t happening.”



**DOVER SCHOOL  
DISTRICT**

## DOVER SCHOOL BOARD – MINUTES

Meeting Type:	Workshop Meeting
Meeting Location:	City Council Chambers
Meeting Date:	<b>Monday, July 27, 2009</b>
Meeting Time:	<b>6:30 pm</b>

Ms. Fisher clarified, “When we renovate the high school down the road and we have a teacher or a person to do it and we have our own program...would the City say we cannot be involved with it?”

Mr. Joyal responded, “As the City Manager, I would definitely not say that! Any opportunity that we can have to exploit this resource and get some value out of it for the students and the community, I would encourage that!”

Parks Christenbury stated, “I guess this is a point in time to lay out the alternative. As chair of the committee, and we’ve had some discussion because we know you ladies are struggling with this and we appreciate it. We know it’s a tough decision...We know there’s a lot of concern and a lot of unknowns. We tried to answer them the best we can but, ultimately it’s your decision...You can take an informal vote, and that’s all we ask tonight so we know where to go. My goal as chair of the committee is that, if the Board chooses not to proceed at this time, I’m going to do everything we can to try to find a way to involve students anyway. We will go ahead at some point and hire an individual to run the station. That’s a given – we’re going to get this off the ground. If it’s the City or the school, I still think that we laid it out why we think the School District is the best vehicle to do this. But, if the School District doesn’t pursue it at this time, I’m prepared to work with the City Manager and launch something on the City side. But, I’ll be honest with you – you asked a very good question and one of the things we’ve bantered about is that if it doesn’t work now, then the next logical place for it to work would be at the time of the renovation of the high school. At the time of the renovation of the high school...you know that gives you plenty of time to implement the program; that gives you plenty of time to capture the funds that would be available at that time. I’d hate to lose the time in between, but we’ll just make the best of it. We don’t involve students at this level right now because we don’t have a full time person. Quite frankly, there are individuals capable of running the studio that are willing to work at the pay scale Mike has suggested...We believe the path we take as a City would be the same path we’d ask you to take. Take it slow; get it off the ground with one individual. Work your way into, maybe the high school. Maybe you don’t implement the plan until a couple of years out with the high school, but you have control of the station. That makes it so much easier for you folks to implement or do whatever you want. If you take control of the station, I’m sure there’s a lot of staff and teachers out there who aren’t even aware of what we’re talking about that may have ideas that would come forward on a volunteer basis. There’s a lot of different exciting scenarios that could play out. As Britt alluded to, there’s that ability to capture community aid, the Children’s Museum, things like that. We’ve laid it all out. I don’t envision the School District, if they take control of this, doing any more than the City’s going to do, and that’s to start out slowly... But, I’m going to have to disagree with someone. I firmly believe that we qualify for the school aid – I’m going to trust staff on this one – and that’s a huge chunk (of money) that we’ll have to overcome on the City side, that 40%.”

Ms. Fisher noted, “If it was up to me and I took control of it, my thought would be not to do anything with the McConnell Center. Wait until we get enough money to renovate the high school and go right in there. Why do it in the McConnell Center if we have to wait anyway to get the program started, and I’m not for it because I think we have more important things to do, but if I was, I would not do the McConnell Center, I’d wait till we got enough money in the bank, and do the renovations in the high school. Plus, if



**DOVER SCHOOL  
DISTRICT**

## DOVER SCHOOL BOARD – MINUTES

Meeting Type:	Workshop Meeting
Meeting Location:	City Council Chambers
Meeting Date:	<b>Monday, July 27, 2009</b>
Meeting Time:	<b>6:30 pm</b>

we do the renovations in the high school and it's a CTC program and we do it in the CTC wing, won't we get more state aid for CTC, like 70%?"

Dr. O'Connor stated the CTC would receive a higher percentage of state building aid. He noted, "However, it's strictly on renovation. If we were to expand the footprint of the CTC, I believe that the current language says that cost would be on us."

Ms. Fisher continued, "Being a District in Need of Improvement, I think we have more important things right now."

Mr. Joyal asked to make a comment: "I don't want to beat a dead horse either. Audra participated on the committee that negotiated the franchise agreement and put in place what's in place today for the ability to expand the access channel. There's been a citizen's committee that's been two years now crafting a proposal and I appreciate the work they've put into it. Their recommendation is before you...If it's something you don't feel you can proceed with now, that's perfectly understandable and what I will do is go back to the committee and I'll recommend to them that we look at some other ways to try to put as many of these recommendations forward and in place as we can. First and foremost is, we've got to improve the operations of Channel 22 and it's sort of sitting in limbo right now because we've been holding off on getting the staff that would be needed to lead the growth of Channel 22. The thinking was the school would put the staff in place and then take the leadership role. In the absence of that, there is one outstanding question...I will need to confer with Dr. O'Connor and Laurie Verville, what do you want to do with the building aid? If we are not going to use existing franchise fee revenues to leverage the renovation of meeting room space and the production studios over at the McConnell Center, then more than likely we will put that money into a facility here somehow in City Hall. So, I need to get some direction; I think the committee will need some direction on, do you want to continue to partner, at least in the sense of renovating that space over there, by accessing your ability to get the state building aid. With obviously the intent being it would be for the SAU office, the administrative space. I don't know how the production facility would work in because that's really going to change. It was intended to be part of the school, so maybe it's just the meeting room. That, to me, is still going to be an outstanding question even if we decide to put this away for now."

Ms. Setear stated, "I guess my only question about that is, the School Board has been meeting in this room (Council Chambers) for quite some time and the City Council meets in here and various committees meet in here. What is the advantage to building a space at McConnell that is for School Board meetings only? What other meetings would happen in the space at the McConnell Center in addition to School Board meetings that can't happen here?"

Mr. Joyal responded, "That's probably what will happen. There will be a conflict in meeting spaces. This will be the only televised studio until we secure other space, either at the McConnell Center or the high school as is allowed by the franchise agreement. So we'll end up with meeting conflicts. We have an example tonight. We have a committee that, ideally, should be televised on TV tonight, but the School Board had priority. If we had an additional televised meeting room as envisioned at the McConnell Center, the School Board could be meeting next door and be on the meeting channel live and the other



**DOVER SCHOOL  
DISTRICT**

## DOVER SCHOOL BOARD – MINUTES

Meeting Type:	Workshop Meeting
Meeting Location:	City Council Chambers
Meeting Date:	<b>Monday, July 27, 2009</b>
Meeting Time:	<b>6:30 pm</b>

committee could be meeting in here, being either video taped or they could be broadcast live and the School Board could be broadcast on the education channel. That's an advantage, or a need, that the School Board could address for themselves."

Dr. O'Connor cautioned that the Board to consider the great potential for programming, community enhancement that would all be controlled and directed through the School Board. "I think when you're thinking about your decision here this evening you need to think beyond just today. We need to think about the future. Second of all, it was at least four years ago that I first encountered Councilor DeDe who talked about the absence of what he described it, a 'synergy' between the School District and the municipality. Looking for ways in which we can cooperate; looking for ways in which we can work together to save the taxpayer money. This was one way that "fit" that description of synergy for both the municipality and the School District and giving us the opportunity to work with them to outfit and establish this facility over at the McConnell Center and be able to access money, that quite honestly, the municipality is not going to be able to access. So, it turned out to be a win-win, not for the City of Dover, not for the School District, but basically for the citizens of Dover. And that's where I think the committee, Mr. Christenbury, and others were coming from when they approached us about the feasibility of this project."

Doris Grady concurred, "That's true John, but actually, at our September 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting in 2008, it said the Ad Hoc Committee has researched the use of the space and is offering an opportunity to the District to fit out the space at no cost to the District. It is a cost...can't get away from that! It states in the same meeting that as of August 2008, there was \$150,000 contributed by cable users as reported in the City of Dover's Financial Statements. It came from the Finance office. However, in the figures that we have, between 3/31 and 9/08, it's only reporting \$98,796. If this is delayed, like the last committee meeting that we went to, and we've already spent almost \$50,000 of cable money for rent with nobody in there, you're going to spend another \$50,000...you're going to have \$100,000 gone in rent with nobody in there! Definitely not a positive financial move."

For a straw vote, Chairperson Fisher indicated she had counted five Board members who do not want to take over cable access and two that do and asked if she was correct. Board members agreed.

Parks Christenbury closed by thanking the Board and noted that timing-wise, he understood it was a tough time. He complimented the City Manager and his staff and Dr. O'Connor and his staff. He added, "One thing I want to make clear is that we didn't close any doors tonight. This door is continually open to you so that if things change in a month, or six months, there is no time limit. This isn't 'if you say no tonight, it's all over,' I don't foresee that at all. As a matter of fact, I believe that no matter what we do, we're going to reach out to you folks anyway. Because I'm going to find one way or another to get students, teachers, and staff involved in this program. I still believe there will be a time, and hopefully a time very soon, that you folks will see fit that this does fit. That you will have a plan. I want to make sure that process is available to you when that time comes."

Ms. Fisher thanked Mr. Christenbury for all the time his committee invested in this proposal.



**DOVER SCHOOL  
DISTRICT**

## DOVER SCHOOL BOARD – MINUTES

Meeting Type:	Workshop Meeting
Meeting Location:	City Council Chambers
Meeting Date:	<b>Monday, July 27, 2009</b>
Meeting Time:	<b>6:30 pm</b>

Ms. Grady added, “Are we saying, then Parks, that if the door is not closed that the City is going to use cablevision cost to the public to continue to pay rent for three rooms with nobody in it?”

Mr. Christenbury stated that was a decision the cable committee would start discussing at the next meeting and, as the City will be taking charge of this, in the interest of the rate payers, they will make decisions as to when and where the City will go.

**E. ADJOURNMENT:** At 7:35 p.m., Doris Grady moved, Carolyn Mebert seconded, to adjourn. An oral **VOTE PASSED 7/0.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Beth Setear, Secretary