

**SPECIAL MEETING
BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN**

August 30, 2010

7:00 PM

Mayor Gatsas called the meeting to order.

Mayor Gatsas called for the Pledge of Allegiance, this function being led by Alderman Lopez.

A moment of silence was observed in honor of State Representative Ron Boisvert.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen Craig, Ludwig, Long, Roy, Osborne, Corriveau, O'Neil, Lopez, Shea, DeVries, Shaw, Greazzo, Arnold

Absent: Alderman Ouellette

Mayor Gatsas addressed item 4 of the agenda:

4. Discussion related to the School IT Directive from the Board of School Committee.

Mayor Gatsas asked was there something that came to the Administration Committee regarding this?

Alderman Lopez answered yes Your Honor. The request came before the Administration Committee and we tabled the IT trust fund. We tabled it is because we want to look at all of the trust funds. The Finance Officer is reviewing

it. At the present time some of the trust funds can draw down to \$5,000 which we approved in the 2008-2009 budget. The Finance Officer wants to review that and bring it back to the Committee and that is why we tabled the IT trust fund.

Mayor Gatsas stated there was a resolution or motion that was made at the School Committee meeting for a recommendation on IT that the City and School enter into what I would call a joint venture and the Superintendent is here so maybe he can address it from the School side. Are there any questions or is there any direction this Board would like to go in?

Alderman Lopez stated I have been laid up with a back fusion and I watched the meeting and read the documentation. First of all, I am disappointed to a degree. Second, I am thankful for the sub-committee of the School Board under the Chairmanship of Joe Briggs who did an outstanding job because of his knowledge of computers. It was a good report that they did. Of all the good the report brings, one of the most important things that I am sure will help...let's all see through the forest. The goals have to be met. I would like to share with you a couple of things for history for some of the Aldermen who weren't here back in 2008. In making the budget for 2009, Mayor Guinta gave them \$140 million. In my opinion that would have destroyed the School District but we were there and didn't let them down. You, Mayor, were an Alderman at that time, and you took time to work with the other Aldermen on an alternate budget. Along with that, we listened to the Finance Committee of the School Board and other School Board members as to some of the important things they had to do in order to move the schools forward. The Administration also impressed upon us what they needed to do and one of the items was the ASPEN Information System. Starting with that \$140 million just for the purpose of educating we put money into the athletic account, community partnership, band and orchestra, Ready for Success, Junior R.O.T.C., four administrative assistants, building maintenance, and an assistant

superintendent and it took two years to get one. The other item that I want to bring to your attention is replacement of old computers. That is another thing they really harped on and we gave them \$200,000 for that, \$126,000 for computer notebooks, and \$303,000 to restore math K-5. We were told that the student information system would cost us \$264,549. We put that in the budget. We put \$170,929, which was not enough for this Board at that time. We said keep the money for Gill stadium and you don't have to pay us for Gill stadium use which gave them \$304,929 for the information system. We stepped forward many a time. I don't mind and I think you are the first one to say we are one city and yes we are one city but it is not a one way street. You have to come back. They asked us for \$100,000 for free ice time. We did that. In moving forward, we came up with a situation where they needed \$3.2 million for books. We also did that. I know the Mayor is the first to say that we are one city as I indicated. However, it takes two to tango. The well is dry. You have the money on your side. They have made their decision to formulate an IT Committee. They have plenty of money over there in order to do whatever they want to do. I think one of the things that the report came out with is not the people who are there...the people are only doing what they are told to do. They have a job to do and they do the best they can with that leadership. Everybody needs leadership. I look at the School Board and the Superintendent and the Administration as the ones. Dr. Brennan, how can he or anyone in his position ever do anything? Dr. Brennan and the rest of the staff are going to leave and the next guy is going to come in and have the same problem. I have seen it with three superintendents and maybe four. Micromanagement has always failed and always will. This is why we are in the mess we are in three years later. No one is guiding the ship. As the old saying goes, "I thought you were going to do it; I thought you were in charge; I thought you were the chairman." It is not the employees' fault. I will be the first to say it. It is leadership's fault. All the elected officials on the School Board can stand up and say it is their fault and I think that they did. When they came to us for the

money everybody was guiding the ship, believe me. They made a decision, which was within their authority. The Committee cannot serve two masters. Therefore, there is no need for a joint committee. Teachers are important but a team is better. You had better get the people you need in order to do the job or the teachers will fail. The system will fail and guess what? When Dr. Brennan and others retire and move on they can say they tried. That is all they can say like the previous three superintendents. Thanks to the Committee for at least letting us see through the forest. Keep your eyes open because if you close them then the schools will fail on your watch.

Alderman Roy stated I agree with Alderman Lopez in that it is not the teachers' fault. This has been a School Board and Administration situation. The report spells out how to make the transition and that has to be handled by their Administration and not with one Committee of the School Board and Board of Mayor and Aldermen. We don't have a place in this in reality because the recommendation says that the District will be paying the existing IT personnel. That is the end of story right there. They will be paying and it is their situation. I don't believe we should be involved in any Committee.

Mayor Gatsas stated let me try to bring some clarity on how this became an issue. I think it is important enough. I think for you who were here for that meeting and for you who were home and up late after watching the meeting, Dr. Brennan came to me and we had discussions first and started looking at the actual website. I think you will all agree that IT on our side did an incredible job with our website. They totally changed it and got transparency in City government and put on all of the contracts we have for everybody to see. We looked at the School website, which needed some help. At the time I thought it would be appropriate and I asked Jennie if she could help them with a website that was more current and have the students and parents of the District able to follow what was going on on the

School side. I can tell you that our IT Department started working on it and within 90 days they had a website up and moving that you could at least see and it was individualized by school. Certainly every website must be developed and every school must put their information on it. I think that it is important that there was a starting point because when you looked at some of the websites...if you looked at the MST website you could see that Jim Schubert was still running the PASS Program and I think we all know that he is no longer there. What really brought it to the forefront is that I was going to Hallsville School for a fair night outside the building and we thought it was going to happen on a certain date and when I got there, there was no fair. I called the Superintendent and he said he had it on his calendar and I told him to not bother coming because it is not there. My assistant who was driving with me, Carrie Perry, looked on her Blackberry to see if there was something on the school website and the school website hadn't been updated since 2008. I can tell you that there was nothing on that website, so the conversation started. Dr. Brennan asked me would it make sense because he had been thinking about outsourcing the IT Department totally outside of the School District and not having it even run within schools. I said maybe we should have a conversation with our IT person because this Board thinks a lot of her because we appropriated \$1 million to change what we have to change in this city on our side when it comes to IT. I think we all agree that from what we have seen in the last seven months they have been making great strides. So that conversation started and it made sense that the transfer of employees would come to the City side and those employees would become City employees and we could then continue doing the work for 16,000 students. My decisions are based on what the students need and what their parameters should be. I think that as we walk through the City, every one of you, including the Board of School Committee, certainly has the best interest of students in mind in whatever we do. So the discussion started and I made a motion on May 4th or right around there that we move IT to the City side and move forward and give them what they need to constructively talked about

ASPEN or K2 or whatever the nicknames are that went around this program. We were told when we first took office in January that they would be up and running in January 2011. Well, there were a few hiccups in between and then we heard it would be February 2011 so that parents could go in and look at assignments and look at attendance. They would have the total view of the child that is in class. Well, four months went by and there was a committee set up and there was no movement on what was happening with the system. There was more concern about employees losing their positions or not losing their positions and going to the City side and what was going to happen. I think certainly employees are our concern but most IT Departments in the state that have ASPEN will tell you that they make their greatest progress during the summer when there is nobody around and they can do whatever work they need to do without having to run for the aid of a teacher. I think you all are pretty well aware that I am not computer literate. I turn it on, read my e-mail and delete it. I think today somebody asked me how many messages I have sent from my computer. We have another right-to-know request. There were only five sent messages from my computer in seven months. I don't send messages. I pick up the phone and call. I think it is important that as this discussion, and the Superintendent will tell you that this recommendation was to send the five employees to the City side and let us do what we need to do. I committed to the School Board that I would find the \$1.6 million so that we could change the IT as we know it in the School District. I think you all know when I commit to something I will make sure that it gets done, especially when it comes to students. I think this Board has taken probably as aggressive a position on students as I have ever seen in the past. I think I talked to every one of you about how do we get books and I will tell you that going through the schools in the last two weeks you would think that it was Christmas in a lot of these classrooms because these teachers are absolutely thrilled with what we have done and thanked us endlessly because they are opening boxes of books and they are thrilled to death that students will have a book in front of them. Certainly I thank you again and I

think it is important that people recognize that because it was not something that any one Board did. I think it was a combination of this Board and the School Board doing that for students. Again, when we talked about students we stepped up when it came to City Year. The City thought it was important enough that we put \$150,000 to fund City Year. The School District thought it was important enough and put in \$100,000 to fund City Year and then they put the obligation on me to go out and find another \$250,000 from the private sector. I had to go out and raise that money from the private sector to make sure that City Year went into the five lowest performing schools, which I think is going to change the entire picture of education in this city. I won't be surprised if we find one or two of those schools making AYP by the end of the year. I will be shocked if one of them doesn't. So we are back to the computers and this discussion should not be about employees. This discussion is how we do the best we can do with what we have for the students of this District? My belief is that if the five employees come to the City side we can integrate enough things on our side to get the systems up and moving. We have somebody who is in charge of IT who I believe is going to lead us in a direction so we won't fail. Maybe it is not going to happen February 1st and maybe it happens March 1st but I am more confident that it will happen with people leading the charge than where we are right now. I think it is important that we understand that and that we as a Board move forward in thinking positively on how we can fix this problem and what the resolution is. I think Alderman Lopez was absolutely right. I sat on this Board for ten years and I am getting a little long winded but I am almost at the end and I will let everyone take as much time as they need. The sub-committee that was put together that did the work on this project I can tell you worked tirelessly. They put in an awful lot of time and it is probably the most time I have seen a sub-committee in such a short time-frame come back with a report and made it clear. If somebody can find us \$1.6 million then the transition should be pretty easy. The transition should be that we move those employees to the City side. Let whoever finds the money find

the money and let's implement it. I think that is important. That motion never was a motion that was voted on by the School Board. There was an alternate motion that is before you as well as various other backgrounds and the study that was put together and the policy that came forward. I think that as you look at it if there are other questions you have I am sure that anybody here could come forward and address them. The recommendation that I would make is that we go back to where we were and make the transition of the employees back to the City side and let's get what we need to do and get it fixed and find \$1.6 million. I don't think that they can possibly spend \$1.6 million in the next eight months and we should make that commitment.

Alderman O'Neil stated I want to begin...and Alderman Roy touched on it, but the employees are not to blame for this. They seem to be in some ways the scapegoat for why this failed but I think that is wrong. I will be honest. I am going to take a guess that those IT employees are sitting on the far side of the room, correct? They are sitting over there and everybody else is over here. That is not a great sign for the community. What is the request before us tonight? Is it simply to set-up this joint committee? Is that the only request before us?

Mayor Gatsas responded I think the request before us...there is a recommendation, if you take a look the motion that came from the School District which talks about implementing various situations that they are going to co-mingle with our IT to do some of the work on our side. If you take a look at...

Alderman O'Neil interjected Your Honor, is that the request before us tonight?

Mayor Gatsas replied I believe it is because at some point we are going to have to make a decision.

Alderman Craig asked was that approved by the School Board?

Mayor Gatsas answered yes it was.

Alderman Craig asked it was that one on the agenda?

Mayor Gatsas answered that is correct.

Alderman Craig stated I heard differently. I just want to make sure that they approved that recommendation.

Mayor Gatsas responded this recommendation was voted on by the full Board.

Alderman Craig asked and approved?

Mayor Gatsas replied yes and approved. The first recommendation you see that starts with "Proposed Amendment to Recommendations of the Manchester Board of School Committee" which is on Page 4-1 has been passed and I will just remind everybody that these microphones are all live and if you push the button you can't turn off so be careful.

Alderman Craig responded I just wanted to make sure.

Mayor Gatsas stated that recommendation is before us. That recommendation says that our IT Department has to make sure that it functions in the same manner they are requesting.

Alderman O'Neil asked Your Honor, where do you see that on Page 4-1 or 4-2? I don't see that.

Mayor Gatsas answered if you go to Page 4-2 and look at Item 4 it says “immediate outsourcing of ASPEN hosting, district web-hosting, training and support...”

Alderman O'Neil interjected it doesn't say anything about the City.

Mayor Gatsas stated well, there is no place else for it to go, Alderman.

Alderman O'Neil replied outsourcing could be a private entity. All I see here is setting up the joint committee.

Mayor Gatsas responded I am sure it says right here it would possibly inhibit the responsiveness of the City to the District needs and it says it is outsourcing to the City I believe. That is Item 3.

Alderman Roy replied but that is right after it says that they will physically retain the existing personnel. They are not coming to our side.

Mayor Gatsas stated that is the amended version.

Alderman Roy asked that is what passed?

Mayor Gatsas answered yes.

Alderman Roy asked so that is what we are dealing with? Do they want to set-up a committee only? They have already decided about the personnel and they said they are going to outsource some stuff but it certainly doesn't say they are going to send the personnel to us.

Mayor Gatsas answered no, but it says we are going to outsource everything else. I guess this Board needs to decide if they are going to do it before school starts.

Alderman O'Neil stated let's get some clarification. Item 3 says "District will retain existing IT personnel (5), and outsource to city for managed services versus hiring new staff." Is that what they are...to be honest with you this is very poorly written.

Mayor Gatsas stated maybe the Superintendent can come up and tell me what is...

Alderman O'Neil interjected so what they are asking us to do is take on ASPEN hosting, District web-hosting, project management of remaining ASPEN deliverables, appropriate strategic planning and they are asking us to do that without any staff or resources, correct?

Mayor Gatsas responded and all future systems must be designed for remote/network management.

Alderman O'Neil asked and there is no staff or money coming along with this?

Mayor Gatsas answered that is absolutely correct.

Alderman O'Neil stated we should bring this discussion to an end pretty quickly here. In my opinion they don't know what they want to do. If Alderman Roy doesn't make the motion I will. I am not going to sit here for three hours talking about this hodge podge recommendation.

Mayor Gatsas replied I don't disagree with you, Alderman.

Alderman O'Neil stated if they want us to take over, we need to take over. I don't know who wrote some of this stuff because there is no name attributed to it...applying pay for school salary versus City salary. It doesn't say who wrote it. It says, 'I am recommending,' but it doesn't say who I is. A lot of things could be worked out here but the District has to make the decision on what they want and I don't believe from what I have read that they have made that decision. I don't want to sit here for another two or three hours.

Mayor Gatsas responded I agree with you. It would certainly be the same amount of time we talked about it on the School side.

Alderman O'Neil asked can we get Dr. Brennan up here? I am not really sure what they are asking for.

Mayor Gatsas stated this isn't Mr. Brigg's recommendation so I think the maker of the motion should be involved in the discussion.

Alderman Lopez stated I think this is going to get into a long...

Mayor Gatsas interjected if Alderman Roy or Alderman O'Neil want to make a recommendation I don't have a problem with that.

Alderman O'Neil moved to deny the request from the Board of School Committee to set-up a joint committee and to send the request back to the Board of School Committee for clarification. Alderman Roy duly seconded the motion.

Alderman O'Neil stated I don't want to get into the whole thing tonight.

Mayor Gatsas replied my question to you in the motion you are making is if the City side doesn't implement what they are asking us to do, they can't continue forward. If they can't continue forward...

Alderman Roy interjected that is why I have a problem with it, Your Honor, because they haven't asked us to take on those five employees.

Mayor Gatsas responded you are absolutely right. They haven't. The recommendation is that we do work to create ASPEN so it is functional and working on the City side. If you take a look at the items that are here, that is what they are asking us to do. We are then keeping the employees. I agree with you, Alderman Roy, that if we are going to do this we should be responsible for all of them. The employees should come over and we should be responsible whether it succeeds or not. Right now if it doesn't succeed and we participate in this, we could be the ones at risk for failure.

Alderman O'Neil asked can I get my question answered? What is the Board of School Committee asking us to do?

Dr. Thomas Brennan, Superintendent, stated my understanding is initially the Board of School Committee is asking to establish a joint committee similar to the Joint School Buildings Committee. They are also, on page 2 of the document, looking for the outsourcing and I do not believe they identified the City in terms of outsourcing and I keep looking to my right to the maker of the motion, that it would retain the five personnel as identified in line 3 and that is basically what we are talking about here. We sent an invitation to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen to establish that joint committee as I indicated earlier. This motion passed and I am setting about trying to implement it.

Alderman O'Neil stated I want to thank Dr. Brennan. In all of the years that I have known you, I still don't understand what you are talking about. I have understood you many times.

Dr. Brennan responded a motion was passed to establish a joint committee.

Alderman O'Neil replied stop there. Okay I understand that.

Dr. Brennan stated the next portion of that motion as I understand it is to approach the Board of Mayor and Aldermen and ask them if they would participate in establishing that joint committee so that we could, as it says, develop a strategic vision, programs, synergies and cost savings. We would then, as the motion reads, retain the existing IT staff and outsource to the City for managed service versus hiring new staff. That was another piece where it does address the outsourcing to the City.

Alderman O'Neil asked and it is your understanding, Dr. Brennan, that the items listed in #4 are items to be outsourced to the City?

Dr. Brennan answered yes, immediately.

Alderman O'Neil stated what the Board of School Committee failed to include in the motion is if they put a dollar amount that they are providing to carry these out.

Dr. Brennan responded no, they did not. They also indicated and I will draw your attention, as it has been pointed out to me by Committee Member Briggs, that it says at the very beginning that this is the implementation of a phased transition to alignment. That is the language used. What that meant to me is that eventually

there would be a transition to alignment but it was not clearly stated as to the time or the dollars involved.

Alderman Long stated I happened to be at the meeting so I got the full jist of it. First of all, the committee that wrote the report, I didn't see anything disparaging any work. I don't know where that sense comes from. I personally didn't get that sense at that meeting. The report stated nothing that put down any employees. Now the question that I had that Alderman O'Neil asked is was there any indication of cost and the answer was no. I would like to know the personnel structure and the organization chart. You have the City versus District employees. Where is the accountability? Who is going to be accountable? Is it the City? Is it the District? I don't know the answer to those questions and I didn't hear during the discussion. The Joint School Building Committee was mentioned. Well I sit on that committee. I listened to the Joint School Building Committee meeting on August 24th and we appropriated \$72,000 for the design of Parker-Varney. Now from that meeting I gather that in January it was clarified that it wouldn't be design; it would be construction. Now the Joint School Buildings Committee passed in June or July that it would be design. There wasn't any clarification. Now I don't have a problem with changing from design to construction but what I am saying is the Joint School Buildings Committee...there is one half and in this case the Board of Mayor and Aldermen and we are privy to that information if we happen to go to that Committee. Also, we have the West High School field drainage. The Athletic Department had \$47,000 but I also heard that the \$47,000 we are paying for new grates was already in the specs when they put in that field. So in my opinion there is a bottom line here. The bottom line is that there needs to be some accountability. With reference to the parents' demand in here, I think that is critical. It is an opportunity to give a parent the opportunity to look into their children. In my opinion that is critical. How many times do we hear that parents have to get involved? I have heard that 100 times and with today's technology the

fact that we are not able to do that, and we have from what I am understanding in this report, the capability with this software to do that is an immediate problem. It is not acceptable to have this...to pay \$500,000 to ASPEN from what I heard to do what we are not doing. That is just absurd. We are paying, from what I understand, \$453,000 to employees and that isn't including the benefits. I think the City stepped up to the plate and sets an example by paying every employees benefits but that is just salary. I look at salary and I ask what I get for that salary. Close to \$500,000 in salary tells me that we ought to be meeting these parents' demands or state and federal mandates. We shouldn't have to be double-checking ourselves. We should be able to spit that out expeditiously. There are too many unanswered questions for a plan to set up this joint committee. Personally, I think another year from now we are going to be at the same place.

Alderman Shea stated the whole crux of this discussion is centered on Pages 17 through 19 and that was a recommendation of Mr. Briggs' committee. He recommended a particular approach to this problem very clearly and if one were to quote "The City has presented a plan that shows with the combined staff resources it could effectively complete delivery of the ASPEN website and other critical services". School Board Committeeman Beaudry came in with an amendment, which again was voted on by the School Board. They were in favor of this. The problem is that the discussion centered on different matters that were not germane to the problem. In my opinion, we are talking about websites and we are talking about developing different types of parent portal considerations and so forth. This cannot be done, according to Mr. Briggs' committee, by the present people who are employed by the School District simply because they don't have the resources available to them and they don't have the expertise. To me, there is not a lot of confusion. I look at Pages 4-1 and 4-2 and I look at Pages 4-19 and 4-20 and I say that in my judgment it makes much more sense to go according to what your motion would be in order that the City would benefit and the children would

benefit by having these five employees go over to the City side and utilize the resources available at the City side and you have said, Mayor, that you can come up with the \$1.68 million in time that would bring all of these wireless and fiber optics materials into the schools. The people now that are employed by the City who are repairing computers that are outdated and aren't worth the time and effort and sincere devotion to their duties are concerned. Therefore, I think it makes much more sense for us not to form a committee as far as the School Board is concerned and to make a motion that we would like, as you have expressed, to have these employees go over to the City under City employment provided they are guaranteed their jobs.

Mayor Gatsas responded I agree with Alderman Long. The discussion shouldn't be focused on employees because I believe the employees in the School District do a great job. There is no question. I have never focused on a point that says we should get rid of employees. I just think that they have been without a rudder and they are looking at things that are going to be very difficult to fix based on where they are at. I sat in the other day when principals were asking questions and it was very difficult to get them answered so that they can move forward in the school year. We have newly hired teachers who will be starting in five days. They haven't been trained at all on this system.

Alderman Roy stated point of order. We are here to discuss the School IT directive and in the directive it says that they will retain the existing IT personnel. I don't know how we jumped to having personnel come over to the City side. I don't think it is in our purview. It is under the purview of the School Board and they are the ones in control of those people.

Mayor Gatsas responded you are singling out one line. I think there is an awful lot more in this recommendation that the City must do.

Alderman Roy replied what I am trying to do is read what is in front of us that they have passed and given to us. You can't add anything else to that. You can't say we should change this or we should change that. That is the School Board's job.

Mayor Gatsas responded but there is a lot more in this motion than just saying they are going to keep five employees. It says that we are going to do the rest of the work on this side.

Alderman Roy stated and I would believe that they are going to be back charged so we are going to get our money for doing the work if that is the case. I mean they always have the opportunity in the future to say we think we should merge but I don't think that is where we are at today and that is my point of order. I don't think that we can do that and I don't think it is within our purview.

Mayor Gatsas asked so it is your suggestion that we vote and be prepared to do all of this work?

Alderman Roy answered yes. No joint committee, and if they outsource to us then we are going to back-charge them.

Mayor Gatsas asked and how do we come up with a number to do that?

Alderman Roy answered I guess every hour that is spent working for them would be an hour we would charge them.

Alderman Lopez stated we need clarification here. If I may have the privilege I would like to ask the IT Director to come up here. I think it is important that the School Board hears what she can do. It is easy for everybody to sit around the table and say they can do something when they can't do it without those employees.

Mayor Gatsas responded I hear you and I understand where you are coming from but let's just go around the table.

Alderman Craig stated I just want to put a couple of things in perspective. In talking to people who have been in the District for a number of years, back in 1998 we had seven users of computers. Then the district moved to Rediker and I am not sure what the year was but probably ten years later there were 300 users with the same number of people in the IT staff. Now a couple of years ago we moved to ASPEN helping 1,700 students with still the same number of employees. When we launched ASPEN, those employees were charged with taking ten years of student data and inputting that into the system. It wasn't an easy task.

Mayor Gatsas stated let me just clarify that for you, Alderman. ASPEN told us not to do that. Their recommendation to the School District was not to do that. I am just telling you what their recommendation was.

Alderman Craig stated I guess my bottom line is the leadership is lacking with that department. The people that are working there have been doing what they have been told to do. Leadership has been lacking. According to the Union Leader and your quote, Dr. Brennan, we are "90% there" where we should be from a data perspective with ASPEN. Now we haven't addressed the parent portal and that is critical. There have been so many valid points tonight but I think we

need to focus on how we make this whole and we need to do what is right for students. My concern, with all due respect, is where are you going to find \$1.68 million to do this.

Mayor Gatsas asked is that a charge you have given me?

Alderman Craig answered I am interested, yes.

Mayor Gatsas asked is it a charge? I think when I made a commitment to do some other things we did them. I don't have a problem looking at that and addressing that charge. I think Committee Member Briggs understood the same thing because he and I had a very long conversation about that.

Alderman Craig replied I am interested because there are other places where we also need to spend money and I just want to make sure that we are not taking from one bucket and putting it in another.

Mayor Gatsas responded as long as we don't move education into a sewer bucket we will be fine.

Alderman Arnold asked may I inquire of School Committee Member Beaudry? I can see that we are beyond where Alderman O'Neil hoped to go with not being kept here a long time. I was hoping that it would be a briefer meeting than it has been as well. Committee Member Beaudry, it was your motion at the School Board meeting. Can you concisely explain to me and anyone else on the Board what it is that the School Board was asking? I know that we heard Dr. Brennan's explanation. With each speaker tonight I think this issue gets further and further away from what my understanding was about what we were being called here tonight to do, which I thought simply had to do with a vote up or down of having a

joint committee with the School Board. Committee Member Beaudry could you offer or attempt to offer me some clarification?

School Committee Member Arthur Beaudry responded I will attempt to. I don't know what document you have but on Page 1 of the recommendation we want to keep the five IT individuals on the School side because we have 5,000 computers. A lot of those computers are Apple computers, which the City side does not deal with. It would cost us more money to have the City side take care of all of our computers. Under the testimony of Jennie Angell, it is \$600 per computer for what they charge other departments in the City to oversee their computer. \$600 times 5,000 is \$3 million. Our total IT budget is \$1.3 million. What this document basically hopes to do is keep our IT people working in the field keeping the existing computers up and running and augmenting what the City would be, under the chargeback. That is why we wanted to have a joint committee because we wanted to immediately outsource to the City side. From my understanding, and I don't want to speak for Jennie because she can come up and speak for herself, but she would have to have one more staff member to take care of the ASPEN hosting. We were going to outsource the ASPEN hosting, the District website, the training and support, project management, remaining ASPEN deliverables which are the parent portal and nutritional accounts, and the appropriate strategic planning to the City side on a chargeback basis similar to what we do on Building & Sites. That is why we keep mentioning Building & Sites because we set the scope and it goes to the City side and they do the project and then it is charged back to us I believe at an hourly rate based on who does the work. That is why we wanted to have a joint committee because your IT department is going to be doing some work for the School District and we wanted to keep the Aldermen abreast of what was going on.

Alderman Arnold responded I can certainly appreciate that perspective as I, on many occasions, have made inquiries about the goings on at the School District. I appreciate the invitation, as I believe many of the Aldermen do. It sounds to me, however, as if the committee, whether it is a joint committee or just a committee of School Board members, that the chargeback issue is going to discuss and resolve the charge-back issue. Is that your understanding or what? It would seem to be that based on what you said and based on what other people have said that that committee is going to bring something forward to this Board.

School Committee Member Beaudry stated our IT Committee that was formed will now be addressing our IT issues and will be bringing those issues forward to the School Board who in turn would be bringing them forward to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen. We are going to need funding to have this work whether it is the chargeback system or whatever. We need to have funding whether the City side has it all or we have it all. We are still going to need funding. If I can just make one point because we did have the woman, Margaret Schibe I believe from ASPEN come before the committee and she indicated to the IT sub-committee that even if the City side had all of the people on their side right from the beginning that ASPEN would not be up and running today because it is so data driven that you have to have the appropriate data in the computers to be able to get the parent portal up and running. That has not been done yet because there are so many names that are similar in the City and you have to make sure that right information is going to the right parent or we will end up getting sued. That is one of the reasons why it is taking so long. It has nothing to do with the IT Department because they are not the ones who generate the data. It is the schools themselves that generate the data.

Alderman Arnold replied I appreciate the clarification as well as the additional explanation. I mentioned to you that you don't need to convince me. I am happy to defer to the School Board on School District issues. When the School District, through the School Board, wants the Board of Mayor and Aldermen to do something you ask or bring something forward to us. I thought you were doing that tonight by means of asking us to participate in a joint committee.

School Committee Member Beaudry responded that was my intention of the motion – to keep the Board of Mayor and Aldermen abreast of what is going on because with the charge-backs we want the Aldermen to know what is being done with IT and what the City side is doing for the School District.

Alderman Arnold stated I appreciate that very much. I would just as soon leave the School Board members to handle that in committee and keep the Aldermen abreast when individual inquiries are made.

Mayor Gatsas asked Committee Member Beaudry, is there money in the budget for charge-backs?

School Committee Member Beaudry answered currently we have an open position and there are funds available through that position. The Director resigned. There is also money because we were going to pay a principal for this year who resigned who was working in our administrative office. There is at least \$200,000 to \$250,000 that we can get access to for those charge-backs.

Mayor Gatsas stated the best I can recollect is that the department head there was getting paid \$77,000 and the principal gets about \$92,000 so that is about \$169,000. If that is what you are looking at for charge-backs and you think this

work is going to get done for that then I would...I guess the Finance Director is not here but I would ask this question of the Superintendent: Is there money in your budget to take on this entire venue?

Dr. Brennan asked the entire project?

Mayor Gatsas answered yes.

Dr. Brennan replied no sir. There is money. In fact, just in terms of our current enrollment I am concerned about the positions as we fill them as school starts to open because we are having more and more students enroll. My number one priority will be to ensure that there are classroom teachers in all of our classes.

Alderman Shea stated point of order. I just wanted to mention that when School Committee Member Beaudry mentioned 5,000 computers. The report submitted by Mr. Briggs' committee indicated that the City also identified how replacing all classroom computers with remotely managed diskless computers could drastically reduce the maintenance costs. This was extended to a minimum classroom technology (MCT) configuration and when combined with the necessary fiber-ring maintenance costs of \$80,000, it brings the total...in other words we know the computers have to be replaced and obviously worked on but are we doing something that is minimal compared to what we could have as far as the recommendations the report brought out. That is my point. In other words are we spending money needlessly repairing computers that are going to be outdated or are not worth the price indicated in the report? That is my point of order.

Alderman Greazzo stated Committee Member Beaudry touched on what I was looking for. You want to outsource all of your IT needs to the City but you want to retain your employees to, as I understand it, maintain your computers.

School Committee Member Beaudry responded that is correct. Somebody has to maintain the existing computers we have. The language says “However, the Board of School Committee became convinced that the City had an envelope of performance and the maintenance of almost 5,000 ad hoc computers would be outside the envelope and could become a distraction that would limit the City’s ability to serve its current base. This unpredictability would result in excessive charge-backs to the District and could possibly inhibit the responsiveness of the City to District needs”. That is why we wanted to keep our current employees.

Alderman Greazzo replied I understand that, but back to Alderman O’Neil’s comment, we are here to find out why you want to form a committee. Since Committee Member Briggs made the report as to what you need, I would like to hear from him what you would like to accomplish with this joint committee.

School Committee Member Joe Briggs stated thank you for the opportunity to clarify. Again, what Committee Member Beaudry had presented as a motion and what passed was the draft that we informally agreed to in the meeting would be used as the skeleton or the basis to construct or formalize a report from and fill in all of the gaps and so forth. In this meeting the real operative statement in this on page 2 of the form was “The Board of School Committee makes the recommendation to implement a phased transition to alignment.” So we are agreeing right there that the end point we are getting to is moving our employees to the City and using the City’s resources to maintain our system under certain conditions. If you read these sentences here, it basically says whenever we get our new system installed that is the point when the District no longer needs its own employees to maintain it. What we did over the weekend that succeeded this was to put some bounds around this, some conditions around it. Basically they make the same point. One has conditions and the other doesn’t that in the longer term

there is a synergy in working with the City and we wouldn't have to hire additional people. If we keep the systems that we have in place today, we need to hire four or five people and one of those being a director. If we had the funds to replace these network systems we would probably only have to hire two people. If we could synergize with the City then we don't have to hire anyone and that is the synergy and that is where the savings are. This recommendation was under the assumption that the most synergistic way was to go ahead and align with the City and that is what it says specifically "implement a phased transition to alignment" and then details the map to get there. When this was written...these were my words that I wrote on August 4th to use as a framework to construct a formalized report and the only real difference between this and the formal report is the number that put a condition on it.

Alderman Greazzo asked so what you are trying to achieve with the joint committee is to be able to phase that over so the City takes over all of the IT for the School District?

School Committee Member Briggs answered we were not trying to achieve it; it was what we concluded by looking at all of the facts and the data and the situation. It made the most sense for us to not have to hire additional people in the District who were not in the classroom, to not bear the burden of hiring additional people but rather to synergize and leverage the resources that the City has to date with respect to project management and programming systems integration supplemented with our very high expertise in maintaining computers and so forth, upgrade those technicians to understand how to operate and maintain network managed systems and then possibly the City would hire one engineer that would be used for a variety of projects from the Fire Department to the City and so forth so in effect we would be paying maybe one-third of that salary.

Alderman Greazzo asked why then would you need a joint committee? Why wouldn't you just turn over your IT to the City?

School Committee Member Briggs answered that is the critical point because without alignment within the City there is no context for a joint committee. The only context for a joint committee is within the framework of alignment with the City and that is simply so that we can share our ideas and directions that we are going in with respect to technology compared to what is the direction that the City – the Fire Department, Police Department and so forth are going in and could...is there some flexibility to share ideas and by the purchasing power or by the shared numbers that the District is introducing could there be some cost savings with projects that the City is interested in? It is purely to share notes and synergize. Unless there is alignment, there is no context for the joint committee.

Alderman Lopez stated I need Jennie Angell here. There are two critical issues. One is the joint committee, which I said I will not vote for but I think the other critical issue is we have an IT Director in the City and I would like her to comment on Item 4 so that the School District can make the decisions they have to make over there hearing it from the IT Director. Secondly, I would like her to also comment on the Enterprise support of telephone, email, websites and file sharing on Page 5-19. Those are the two issues on the first motion we talked about.

Ms. Jennie Angell, Director of Information Services, asked what is the first item again?

Alderman Lopez replied Item 4 where it says the School District wants to immediately outsource to the City all of those things. Would you comment on that and then comment on the Enterprise?

Ms. Angell stated we do not have the sufficient staff within our organization to take that on. I believe what they are talking about is adding one position – Kevin Smith’s position and moving that in. That is not adequate to do what they are talking about. What they are talking about is they have a major project and it is project management and it is a function that has not been happening within the School District and that is why ASPEN is not being the successful system that it can be and that we are all hoping it will be. You have not had that position there so it is really an additional position that needs to happen. You were talking about getting to parent portal and you get the data straightened out and we get to parent portal on ASPEN but that is just the beginning of the next phase because there are more things. You have teacher websites and you have interfaces with school lunch so this is going to be much more than a full-time position for several years to come so you can get the functionality and the benefits of the ASPEN. The other thing I noticed that is really critical is in the original report from the IT sub-committee under Enterprise, you talk about the fact that the Enterprise support of telephone, e-mail, websites and file-sharing was handled by the former Director as it was and must be resolved either through new staffing or alignment. Those items, the underlying infrastructure and the network...you have a network, an Enterprise network that covers 23 locations throughout the City. This is not a network like you have in your house. This is an Enterprise class network that requires higher level skills so it works reliably. While I have not seen the resumes and I am not completely familiar with the existing staff, my impression and my understanding from talking with Kevin Smith is that right now there isn’t anybody over there who can do all of those functions. These functions are not covered in this proposal so somebody has to be able to do this. If you want ASPEN to work in the schools, you have to get the communication over to the schools and I don’t see that covered. That is a concern also. These are high level, full-time jobs.

Alderman Lopez stated thank you. My only comment is that I wanted the School Board to hear that because we can't do it. Even if you tell us and give it to us, she does not have the resources to accomplish what you want. Therefore, I think a separation of authority is here. The School Board can make all of the decisions they want under their authority but they have to readdress this somehow. If we are going to work as one City to accomplish this goal then she needs the resources. If you want to go it alone, you have the resources. Change your priorities on a lot of things. Teachers are important but they will fail to if the system doesn't go up. I know when I have a problem I call Comcast and it takes about an hour for them to tell me how to do things. I think that you have to readdress this as an IT Committee. I wanted you to hear it from the Director that you can send anything you want over but she doesn't have the resources.

Alderman DeVries stated Alderman Lopez in his closing pretty much touched on where I wanted to go. We have no authority to spend money within the school budget. Once a year we give them a lump sum and they manage it as they wish. That is the way our Charter is written. What I am hearing from the Superintendent and in talking with School Committee Member Beaudry, the \$1.68 million is beyond what they have to spend this year in charge-backs and the like. I read the report and the recommendations, and it was a very complete report. I want to thank School Committee Member Briggs, but it seems that you were recommending not just the network person that Jennie Angell just spoke of but also the need for several other employees. I think, therefore, when you were reviewing this some of the departments said that the existing staff is about half if not less than half of what you would see out in private industry. You noted that yourself, that your funding was extremely shy.

School Committee Member Briggs stated given the current configuration, whereas the synergy is shifting to a different configuration and re-qualifying people and adding one or maybe two people at the City level for shared projects.

Alderman DeVries stated and if I follow your recommendations, your original recommendations that you presented to the School Board, you first started with the \$1.68 million expenditure based on the infrastructure and going out to each and every school and then you hope to bring on additional employees and the synergies and working with the City to make it happen. Again, that is coming apparently from the City side because I haven't heard that that was written in your budget. I know it wasn't written into our budget but as an Alderman sitting on this side, I am looking at several employees not currently in the IT budget and \$1.7 million that you bet before we are going to vote on that we want to see the details of where that is coming from so that we can make...you look to your classrooms and the teachers in your classrooms. On the City side we have our own front line liabilities that we have to make sure are attended to. I just want to know. I want to be able to make that decision. I am not going to say...we do things on the fly a lot, Your Honor. More than we wish to. Bring in some details so I understand what it is you are asking for and where the money is coming from so we can have that conversation. What is going to happen on the City side if we come up with \$1.7 million and then another \$500,000 in the budget line item for IT to get it done appropriately?

Mayor Gatsas replied let me try to help you because the school budget for IT is about \$1.2 million. The first thing that would happen if those employees came to the City side is the \$1.2 million...

Alderman DeVries interjected we don't have the authority to do that laterally. They have to first send those employees to us.

Mayor Gatsas responded let's try again. If we were in the perfect world, the \$1.2 million would come to the City along with the five employees. Right now the wage cost is about \$453,000 and the balance is based on two projects. They pay ASPEN about \$583,000 a year and they have a couple of other projects that they must pay maintenance fees on. Those would come to the City side. We would move forward. I think we heard from the IT Director that we need to hire one other person of the staff that is in that \$453,000 already. We don't need to hire other IT people. The IT people would come to our side and we would then go from 15 employees to 20 or 21?

Ms. Angell answered 21.

Mayor Gatsas stated 21 employees. So there would be 21 employees serving both the School District and the City. We will take a look, because I think Committee Member Briggs did a great job. He shows you that we get computers from BA Systems that are street valued at about \$150. We put an additional \$350 into them to get them up and running when today you can go into almost any computer store and buy them for \$500. When you look at those numbers, somebody needs to tell me that we are not doing that on the City side.

Alderman DeVries responded but Your Honor, those are not the cards that are dealt to us to deal with. I can understand what you are saying but we have not been sent any of the money or any of the employees that you are building into the department. All we are being asked tonight is whether or not we are going to go along with the joint committee.

Mayor Gatsas replied just for clarification, we are not being asked just for a joint committee. That is not what this meeting is about. It is not just about a joint committee. It is about whether we are going to take these other five things and say that we are going to do them on the City side. That is what we are being asked to do because this system can't move forward without these other things happening.

Alderman DeVries stated except Your Honor, when you look at some of the School Board members in the audience and before us I am not sure they agree with you that they are going to send those five employees over to the City.

Mayor Gatsas responded I didn't say they were sending the five employees. Let me try and be a little clearer. I will be a little slower. There is a motion that was voted on by the School District. That motion says that they will retain their five employees. It also says that we as a City...and it doesn't talk about charge-backs here so let's be clear about what this says. It doesn't say that we are going to charge them back and they are going to pay for it. It merely says we are going to do these things without any cost associated with them. It doesn't say come back and let's talk about charge-backs. Read the motion clearly because I know you do that well and when you look at it, nothing in here says that the School District will be paying the City for any of these services. It just says we will do them.

Alderman O'Neil stated for clarification, you are talking about the same thing. The two of you are saying the same thing but you are saying it differently. The bottom line is the motion from the Board of School Committee is not very clear as to what they are asking for and there is no money with it and no employees with it. Therefore, we should probably vote it up or down right now and not continue to discuss it.

Mayor Gatsas replied I don't disagree with you Alderman O'Neil but there are 16,000 children...

Alderman O'Neil interjected I understand that.

Mayor Gatsas stated let me just finish with a couple of points. You would think that when we fill out an MS24 form that goes to the State that tells us the number of students we have in this District it would be the same number that we pay ASPEN because we pay ASPEN \$10 per student that we have in the District. I will ask the question again. She is not here but I think the Superintendent will remember the answer. I asked the Business Administrator if those two numbers the same and her answer was...

Dr. Brennan interjected no, there was a slight variation.

Mayor Gatsas stated I don't know how much clearer we can be. We heard that we were fortunate that our drop out rate dropped. It went down last year and we are all proud of it. Dr. Brennan, do you want to tell us why the drop out rate went down?

Dr. Brennan responded we verified the numbers.

Mayor Gatsas asked we had an extra 100 students in the system that we didn't know about before, correct?

Dr. Brennan answered yes sir.

Mayor Gatsas stated so it is not about anything changing. It is about what we are getting for numbers and how we look at them. Can you also tell us was there discussion or I asked you about what would happen if those number changed and does it affect the amount of money we could receive from the State?

Dr. Brennan responded yes, it would have an impact in terms of the allocation.

Mayor Gatsas asked what else could it impact?

Dr. Brennan answered it could impact our school approval status.

Mayor Gatsas stated now again I am trying to be as clear as I can be. This is about 16,000 students. If this District for some reason is 200 students off on the number that we send to the state, that means we could be losing funding in the vicinity of \$2 million.

Alderman O'Neil asked what are you asking us to do tonight, Your Honor? What are you asking us to do?

Mayor Gatsas answered I am asking this Board, if we are going to take on those challenges, the challenges of bringing ASPEN into the City side...because I don't think that we have the ability without the resources to do what we need to do on the School side. This is something that must be done. This isn't something that maybe we do. It must be completed. We have the knowledge and the people on this side if we have those employees because they are going to continue fixing computers until we go out and purchase what we need. I will give you an example. There are three schools where we have wires running by their doors. We don't even have them in the system.

Alderman DeVries asked what are you asking us?

Mayor Gatsas answered what I am asking you to do is obviously the recommendation was that at some point they are going to send the employees over or they want the City to do the work on the ASPEN side.

Alderman O'Neil stated it is not clear that that is what they are saying. I would rather send it back to the Board of School Committee to put in very, very simple language what they are asking for and then I can make a decision. What this says is not clear. You interpret it one way. Dr. Brennan interprets it another way. My colleagues on this Board interpret it a third way. To me, it is clear that this is not a well written request. That is what is clear to me.

Alderman Greazzo stated I, too, would like to see the School Board come back with something concrete, solid and specific that you would like us to do. I would also like to move the question if none of the other Aldermen have anything to say and I would like the Clerk to read the motion please.

Alderman Shea stated suppose for the sake of discussion that we made a motion that would bring ASPEN over to the City side. Does that automatically...how does that motion affect the School District? In other words, can we make a motion that takes away any authority they may have? I would like some kind of clarification on that if a motion were to be made either at this meeting or a future meeting.

Mayor Gatsas responded I hear what you are saying and I wish I could give you clarification. I think what the joint committee of IT from the City and School side together...you know, is it the same as what we do with Building & Sites? No. I

think what they are talking about is if the School District wants something that they would sit and meet with the committee on the City side and I am not too sure how that would work. I think Alderman O'Neil knows that the Building & Sites Committee...the request first comes to CIP and if we have the money we send it back and say we have \$50 or \$100 and then the School Board allocates what projects they are going to do and then they come to the Joint School Building Committee. That is normally the process. This process for the joint IT committee is not the same.

Alderman Shea replied no I am not interested in the joint committee. I am steering clear of that. In other words, we are going to vote on whether we want a joint committee but what I am asking is can a motion be made that would tend to change how the IT School Committee is made up or does that still stay in their jurisdiction regardless of what we do here? That is what I am asking.

Mayor Gatsas stated I think this Board has the ability to make one of two motions. I think Alderman Greazzo talked about the first one, which was to send it back for clarity.

Alderman Greazzo responded I wanted to move on Alderman O'Neil's motion.

Mayor Gatsas replied right, and Alderman O'Neil said send it back for clarity. Somebody has to come back and say if we are going to have charge-backs how are they going to be paid for. The alternative motion is to say if you send us everything we will be responsible. I have a big fear that a sharing of responsibility, at some point somebody is going to be pointing the finger and saying ASPEN failed because you didn't do it or ASPEN failed because you didn't follow your obligation. That is my biggest fear. My fear is that we are not going to get anything accomplished. We are four days away from school starting.

We aren't going to have a composite...it took four months for a sub-committee to come forward with a plan that Committee Member Briggs brought forward but there was an alternate motion that was voted on. This Board needs to send a message that either yes we are going to do it or no we are not going to do it and how we plan on doing it. I guess we have two more speakers.

Alderman Ludwig stated it seems like the immediate needs are the 16,000 students and I think everybody here agrees with that but there seems to be a comingling of...I watched the meeting and I don't even know if School Committee Member Briggs' recommendation...I think what he was trying to do is just say you will accept it. Not vote on it but say that they accomplished what they set out to do. I don't even know if they voted on that.

Mayor Gatsas responded we did accept it after the other motions were made. We did accept that committee report.

Alderman Ludwig replied okay, let's go back to what is in front of us. There seems to be some differentiation between what the School Board voted on, which was School Committee Member Beaudry's recommendation. Obviously this is a ship without a captain right now and has been for some time but I don't know how long. It is no fault of theirs. I don't want to speak for them but there is no leadership over there. If there is some money to bring this IT person in right now why can't we get him or her in under Jennie Angell? When we start talking about how do we pay for all of the charge-backs, can't we authorize the School District to...we do away with all kinds of other fees they don't want to pay like ice time and all of those things that go to Enterprises so why do we have to worry about charge-backs? Why don't we just waive their charge-backs and they won't have to find the \$250,000 that School Committee Member Beaudry said is there and

you say there is \$169,000. Waive their charge-backs. Now does that affect our ability as far as...why couldn't we do that?

Mayor Gatsas answered because the biggest portion of implementing this system is not only bodies. It is about buying hardware that is going to go into the classrooms. We have a system right now that is very old and antiquated. We, as a Board, told Jennie Angell that we were going to appropriate \$800,000 to move forward and bring this District or this Department up to speed with where we need to be. So I look at this and say...again we can waive the charge-backs but do you propose to give them the \$1.68 million because the money that School Committee Member Briggs is talking about, that \$1.68 million is not bodies. It is software and hardware.

Alderman Ludwig stated I read the report. I am just saying when it gets into charge-backs I believe this Board has the authority to say we will, and I don't want to speak for Jennie Angell over there or put more work on her department than she can take on because I understand how that goes. Typically department heads won't sit here and tell you that they can't do it. They will just keep saying yes we can, yes we can. She is stuck over there in the corner right now, but the fact of the matter is someone is going to end up doing it. There is a lot of work to be done. I think she said five or six years to get all of this data collected or something like that a few minutes ago. Maybe I am off a little bit on that but regardless there is a lot of work to be done. As far as the charge-back number goes, their budget is set and if they are stuck, we waive the charge-back. Years ago there were no charge-backs.

Mayor Gatsas asked are you suggesting that \$1.6 million?

Alderman Ludwig answered no, because that is for tangible items.

Alderman Lopez stated point of order. I think Solicitor Clark remembers the Supreme Court ruling on charge-backs and the agreement with the School District. It is in writing and I would like him to comment on it.

Mr. Thomas Clark, City Solicitor, stated this Board and the School Committee would have to come to an agreement on the charge-back number by the court ruling.

Alderman Lopez stated I think there are two issues. One is the main motion that everyone seems to be in agreement on, which is not to establish a joint committee. That is the first motion that I think is in play and then I would like to comment on Item 4. I don't think we need a motion but I think I need to comment on it.

Alderman O'Neil moved the motion.

Mayor Gatsas stated let me ask a question because you made a motion that was I think different than where Alderman Lopez was. Would you read back Alderman O'Neil's motion, please?

City Clerk Matt Normand responded my understanding of the motion is to deny the request to set up a joint IT committee with the Board of School Committee and refer the recommendation back to the Board of School Committee for clarification.

Alderman DeVries stated if we were of a mind set to want to authorize the \$1.68 million and to engage you to bring that forward to our full Board meeting for a vote next week, would you be able to support this Board in doing so?

Mayor Gatsas replied I guess you are saying you want me to go and find \$1.68 million in a week. Is that your request?

Alderman DeVries responded absolutely, Your Honor.

Mayor Gatsas asked and what you are saying is if that request comes in then we are going to transfer five employees to the City side and move forward? Is that what I am hearing?

Alderman DeVries asked would you welcome more discussion on that?

Mayor Gatsas answered I have no problem with more discussion on it.

Alderman DeVries stated I appreciate the opportunity. I think it is important that we fund the infrastructure and you have suggested that you have somehow the ability to come up with the \$1.68 million. I am encouraging you to bring that back to this Board so we can see what the source of those dollars would be and we can vote it up or down. I would love to see the updated computer system happen at the School District. I think that would save money in the school budget. It is a totally separate discussion I believe from the personnel issue that is before us.

Mayor Gatsas responded but without those people coming to the City side, it can't be done. They both must be hand in glove. She can't implement the hardware on her side without five more employees. It can't be done. You are asking for something that...I am not as good at IT as the people sitting in front of me or behind me but I can tell you it is like a hand in glove. You have to put them together.

Alderman Shea stated point of order.

Mayor Gatsas replied we will take one more point of order and then we are going to take a vote.

Alderman Shea asked would the employees, if they were under the City's jurisdiction be able to maintain the services that are now being rendered that are needed within the School District itself so that the existing services...

Mayor Gatsas interjected I don't want to speak for the IT Director.

Alderman Shea stated I am asking her. In other words, would the School District still be able to be serviced if somehow or other this were done?

Ms. Angell responded when this discussion started...

Alderman Shea interjected yes or no.

Ms. Angell stated the expectation is all of the existing School side employees would come over to the City side. We still have the same number of employees. The City side would assist the School side in implementing some automation so that we could be more efficient and actually raise the level of service before we even change out the equipment. The goal is to increase the level of service.

Alderman Shea asked so the students would not suffer?

Ms. Angell answered no.

Mayor Gatsas called for a vote on the motion.

Alderman Long asked can I get clarification on the motion?

Mayor Gatsas replied I will have the Clerk read the motion again.

City Clerk Normand stated the motion by Alderman O'Neil, seconded by Alderman Roy, is to deny the request to set up a joint IT committee with the Board of School Committee and refer the recommendation back to the Board of School Committee for clarification.

Mayor Gatsas called for a vote. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

Mayor Gatsas asked is there another motion somebody wants to make?

Alderman Lopez stated I would like the Board of School Committee to take a good look at Item 4. You heard the IT Director and as I indicated, it is the authority of the School Board regarding making a decision on a new direction or continuing in the same direction with the IT. As far as the \$1.68 million, I think you have the \$1.68 million. You have money in the salary account to hire some people if that is the direction you want to go in. I don't think that is a great direction but it is your decision to make. Let us know what you plan on doing.

Dr. Brennan stated there were comments made earlier this evening regarding the rudderless ship that exists with IT. I think it is very important to say publicly that the five members of the team have come together and have worked very hard to maintain the system. I just don't want people out there thinking that nothing is happening. In particular I would like to recognize Paula Greenspan's effort in assuming many of those responsibilities. I just don't want that...that has to be said publicly.

Mayor Gatsas responded certainly I agree that they have been working. I was at a school the other day and I saw somebody sitting in the back working on a computer so there is no question that they are out in the District and they are working. I just want to make sure that the students...because I know a lot of parents are waiting for the portal on February 1st.

There being no further business relating to the School IT Directive, on motion of Alderman Lopez, duly seconded by Alderman O'Neil, it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

City Clerk