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MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor William Samaras and Members of the City Council

FROM: Eileen Donoghue, City Manager *EMD*

DATE: October 1, 2019

SUBJECT: 9/10/2019 - Motion by C. Leahy - Req. City Mgr. Provide An Update Regarding School Repairs Done During This Past Summer.

9/10/2019 – Motion by C. Conway - Req. City Mgr. Provide An Update Regarding The Heating Systems Within City Schools And Other Municipal Buildings.

Update to Repairs at Schools

The DPW Division of Lands and Buildings oversees the maintenance and conditions of 50 municipal buildings, made up of 22 municipal buildings and 28 school buildings. The Lands and Buildings Division is managed by a Deputy Director and houses 32 full time employees, broken into groups based on their specific craft, including custodians, HVAC, carpenters, masons, plumbers, roofers, and electricians. The school department employs another 97 custodians, spread throughout the district, who are responsible for the custodial tasks at each school building. The relatively low number of Lands and Buildings staff compared to the total square footage they are charged with maintaining (over 2.87 million square feet of space, not including water, wastewater, and parking facilities) makes both preventative and ongoing routine maintenance a challenge. As a general rule, Lands and Buildings is responsible for anything that is a part of the building infrastructure. The School Dept. is responsible for equipment within the building and for the grounds immediately adjacent to school buildings (such as flower beds and grass within the immediate vicinity of the school); the Parks Dept. maintains fields and playgrounds at all schools.

The DPW Division of Lands and Buildings has done a considerable amount of work related to maintenance and repairs this summer, as they do every summer, in the Lowell Public School Buildings. Some of the highlights of work completed within the schools this summer (June 1st through September 15th) include a total of 372 closed/completed work orders spread across many of the different crafts that Lands and Buildings performs, including the following major categories: Electrical (79 work orders), HVAC (76), Plumbing (61), Roofing (55), Carpentry (31), Masonry (19), Doors/Hardware (15), Painting (14), and Miscellaneous other requests (22). Some of the work tickets were quickly and easily taken care of, such as replacing ceiling tiles, and others take many man-hours or an external contractor to complete, such as a tube

replacement in a boiler. For a complete listing of completed work orders within the schools, please see Attachment A which lists all completed work order tasks by school, broken down by category.

Upon his appointment as Superintendent by the School Committee, Dr. Joel Boyd and school department staff developed a “dashboard” containing categorized issues to be addressed at each school building before the school could open for the year. In the weeks leading up to the 2019 school year, DPW Commissioner Ralph Snow and Assistant to the City Manager Alex Magee visited most school buildings in the district to tour the school, look over outstanding “dashboard” maintenance issues, converse with school staff on other non-reported facilities issues, and develop a plan to address any critical problems prior to the school year beginning. All critical items were addressed before the school year began, and other routine needs continue to be addressed as time and resources allow.

Heating Systems within the Schools

The DPW Division of Lands and Buildings typically works on air conditioning calls during the late spring and summer and heating calls during the fall and winter. During the lead-up to school each August, Lands and Buildings staff tests each boiler within each school to determine they are functioning how they’re supposed to. Typically a boiler will be fired up to verify functionality, ensure there are no leaks within the system, and that the radiators produce heat. These systems are always checked before they are turned on for good once the weather becomes cold enough each Fall.

Following some of the boiler and HVAC related challenges at LHS over the last couple of winters, the City now has a contractor on retainer in order to facilitate boiler repairs, tube refurbishment/replacement, and more technical repairs in a timely fashion. As of reporting time, the heating system in each school is properly functioning. With that said, each year some portions of our facilities’ older heating systems are prone to break and need to be fixed in order to ensure adequate heat within the buildings. The Lands and Building staff make it a priority to deal with school-related heat problems prior to any other issues they deal with during the cold months. During very cold stretches, the Lands and Buildings staff coordinates with the school department’s facilities managers to work through the night and early mornings to ensure adequate heat within school buildings. Following a stretch of very cold weather, which led to some burst pipes in two of our school buildings, the School Dept. contracted with Stellar Building Systems to upgrade building monitoring systems to ensure more timely notifications of heating issues as they arose. At the same time, the City contracted with Combustion Service Co. of New England to supplement emergency repair/maintenance of boilers in any school as needed. The City continues to retain Combustion Services of New England and utilizes their services on boiler repairs as needed, including work over this summer.

Due to financial constraints, the City is unable to modernize HVAC systems within every school. This is a relatively common issue, especially in Gateway Cities, with older school facilities. The Commonwealth has recognized this and formed the MSBA’s Accelerated Repair Program, which school districts may utilize to help ease the financial burden of major building-system replacement costs. This year, the City was awarded eight projects located within six schools (six boiler replacement projects and two roof replacement projects) which will bring brand new heating systems and roofs to their respective schools. The City will continue to aggressively apply for these opportunities until such time that all qualified systems have been upgraded.

Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions or concerns you may have.

Completed School Work Orders by Craft - Summer 2019

Craft	Total
Carpentry	31
Doors and Hardware	15
Electrical	79
Flagpole	1
Flooring	6
Glass\Window Repairs	4
Graffiti	1
Heating/Ventilation /Air Conditioning	76
Irrigation	1
Key and Lock	1
Lighting	3
Masonry	19
Painting	14
Paving	1
Pest Control	1
Plumbing	61
Roof	55
streets	1
Tree Services	1
Welding	1
Grand Total	372

Completed School Work Orders by Location - Summer 2019

Location	Total
Bailey Elementary School	21
Bartlett Community Partnership School	15
Butler Middle School	29
Cardinal OConnell School	9
Daley Middle School	8
Freshman Academy	1
Green School - Adult Education Program	1
Greenhalge Elementary School	19
Laura Lee Therapeutic Day School	6
LeBlanc Therapeutic Day School	3
Lincoln Elementary School	11
Lowell High School	11
McAuliffe Elementary School	22
McAvinnue Elementary School	18
Moody Elementary School	15
Morey Elementary School	8
Murkland Elementary School	22
Pawtucketville Memorial Elementary School	17
Pyne Arts Magnet School	13
Reilly Elementary School	1
Riverside School	6
Robinson Middle School	22
Rogers School	7
Shaughnessy Elementary School	8
Stoklosa Middle School	34
Sullivan Middle School	10
Wang Middle School	22
Washington Elementary School	10
Grand Total	369

Location	Carpentry	Doors and Hardware	Electrical	Flooring	Glass\Window Repairs	Heating/Ventilation /Air Conditioning
Bailey Elementary School	2	2		5		5
Bartlett Community Partnership School			1	1		1
Butler Middle School	7	1		4		3
Cardinal O Connell Alternative School	1			2		1
Daley Middle School				2		
Freshman Academy				1		
Green School - Adult Education Program						
Greenhalge Elementary School	1	2		4		1
Laura Lee Therapeutic Day School	1			3		
LeBlanc Therapeutic Day School				1		
Lincoln Elementary School	2				1	
Lowell High School		1		4		
McAuliffe Elementary School	1			4	1	10
McAvinnue Elementary School	1					9
Moody Elementary School	2			6	2	
Morey Elementary School	1	1		1		1
Murkland Elementary School	2	1		4		
Pawtucketville Memorial Elementary School		1		7	1	
Pyne Arts Magnet School				4		1
Reilly Elementary School						7
Riverside School				4		1
Robinson Middle School	1	2		6	1	1
Rogers School - Central Administration Office	1			2		
Shaughnessy Elementary School				1		1
Stoklosa Middle School	4			3		18
Sullivan Middle School	1	2		5		
Wang Middle School	2			2		11
Washington Elementary School		1		3		1
(blank)	1					
Grand Total	31	15	79	6	4	76

Location	Irrigation	Key and Lock	Lighting	Masonry	Painting	Plumbing	Roofs	Streets	Tree Services	Welding	Grand Total
Bailey Elementary School				1		4	1		1		21
Bartlett Community Partnership School				2		8	2				15
Butler Middle School	1			1	5		7				29
Cardinal O Connell Alternative School						2				1	9
Daley Middle School						3	3				8
Freshman Academy											1
Green School - Adult Education Program						1					1
Greenhalge Elementary School				3		1	4				19
Laura Lee Therapeutic Day School							2				6
LeBlanc Therapeutic Day School				1		1					3
Lincoln Elementary School				2	1	3	2				11
Lowell High School			2			3	1				11
McAuliffe Elementary School						3	3				22
McAvinnue Elementary School			1	2		3	2				18
Moody Elementary School				1		3	1				15
Morey Elementary School							1				8
Murkland Elementary School				1		5	9				22
Pawtucketville Memorial Elementary School		1		2	3	1	1				17
Pyne Arts Magnet School						1					13
Reilly Elementary School											1
Riverside School							2				6
Robinson Middle School				1	1	3	4				22
Rogers School - Central Administration Office					1	1	1				7
Shaughnessy Elementary School				1			5				8
Stoklosa Middle School				1	2	4	1				34
Sullivan Middle School						1	1				10
Wang Middle School						5	2				22
Washington Elementary School						5					10
(blank)					1			1			3
Grand Total	1	1	3	19	14	61	55	1	1	1	372