

Minutes of the School Committee
Regular Meeting
Milton High Library
June 5th, 2013

Committee Present: Chair; Lynda-Lee Sheridan, Vice Chair; Leroy Walker, Mary Kelly, Kristan Bagley-Jones, Leroy Walker, Becky Padera, Mike Zullas

Not Present:

Staff Present: Mary Gormley, Superintendent; John Phelan, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Personnel;

Call to Order

The Chair called the June 5th meeting of the School Committee to order at 7:04 pm

Approve Agenda

The committee approved the agenda.

Approval of Minutes

The chair entertained a motion to approve the minutes of April 12, 2013.

Move: Mr. Walker

Second: Ms. Padera

Vote: 4-0-2

The chair entertained a motion to approve the minutes of April 24th, 2013.

Move: Mr. Walker

Second: Ms. Bagley Jones

Vote: 5-0-1

Superintendents Report:

Topic One: Representatives from the MFE LiveWire Celebration appeared before the School Committee, including Anacristina Kenny and Anne Gatnik, Co-Chairs of the Celebration for Education. They were joined by Margaret Eberhardt, who came to speak about the new wireless internet project that was completed in the schools. She talked about some recent events for the MFE, including the Teacher of the Year Event. Next year, they will be moving back to April for the annual celebration. Members congratulated them and thanked them for their work. Mr. Walker talked about what an important improvement getting WiFi in the buildings has been. He said it changes the way we're doing education. Ms. Gormley noted that Anne and Anacristina will participate in how the funds are distributed.

Topic Two: The Milton High Girls Tennis team came before the School Committee. This year, they were MIAA Division II South State Tournament champs. Assistant Couch

Debbie Higgins, reported that the team record was 10-6 this season. She introduced the captains, including a Bay State All-Star, Grace Wammister and talked about some of the more difficult matches this season. Members congratulated the team.

Topic Three: Athletes and coaches from the Milton Crew Team, who won a Bronze Medal in the Varsity Four at the High School/Scholastic MPSRA Championships, appeared before the School Committee. Milos Nikoli, Head Rowing Coach for Boys and Michael McVeigh, Head Rowing Coach for Girls also appeared. Coach Nikoli talked about the successful season, calling it the "best so far." He said the team emphasized dedication and determination. Ms. Bagley Jones said she was so impressed with the way this got off the ground. Mr. Walker also congratulated the team and noted that being able to "medal" one year after coaching is unbelievable. This is the crew team's third year. Most other high schools have had programs for 20, 30 years. this doesn't make sense and I don't know how to fix it sorry. The coaches also talked about the summer program for rowing. Adults and Juniors from 6-8 am M-Th. The coaches said they'd like to see the team grow to more than 100.

Topic Four: Milton High School Rugby Team, winners of the Division II Mass. State Rugby Championship appeared before the School Committee. Joe Dolan, Coach and Ned Corcoran, Co-coach introduced some team members. The first season had 18 players, and the next season, there were 28. This year, there were 60 players. Ms. Gormley talked about the power of a coach and commended the coaches for the pride they've given the school, community, etc. Everybody makes a difference. She mentioned Mr. Riscuitti, Mr. Corcoran, Terry Driscoll, Frank Schroth, John Rees and others for being instrumental in the creation of this team. Both Ms. Bagley Jones and Ms. Kelly said they initially opposed the team for financial reasons. Coach Dolan noted that rugby is the second-most popular team sport in the world. Richie Law, coach from Auckland, has played in France, England, South Africa and Ireland.

Topic Five: Milton Public Library, Foundation Grant. Lori Henry, Elementary School Librarian and Sara Truog, Milton Public Library children's librarian, came to speak about a recent grant, "The Milton Public Library and the Milton Public Schools' Community Partners for Student Success." The goal is to get library cards into the hands of elementary school students and give them the tools to be able to use the library's resources. So far, they have issued 400 new cards for elementary students alone. It took four months to visit every classroom as part of this project. The pair issued "coupons" to students to redeem at the library for a prize, and 547 students redeemed them. They hope to expand the program to include the Kindergarten classes as well. School Committee members congratulated the women on their presentation. Ms. Kelly asked if we could include library card materials in the new student packets. Ms. Sheridan asked if there was data available on how the parents of these students use the library. Ms. Gormley pointed out that Ms. Henry services 2,000 students in 4 elementary schools. Thanks to advancement budget, she said they can now hire another librarian/technology to work on closing achievement gap and improving technology. Mr. Walker asked about Internet access and technology in the home.

Happenings: The Screening Committee for Glover principal is on its second round. Tucker principal is coming. Ms. Gormley announced that the AD, Steve Traister, is going to Dedham. A screening committee will be convened to hire a new AD. She also congratulated Mr. Jette for a successful high school graduation. She acknowledged this year's retirees. Upcoming events include the Volunteer reception and the Pierce Players' "Hello Dolly" performance. Ms. Gormley also congratulated the music students for their performance at Great East and the Middle School Track Team for the state meet. She also mentioned that Thursday, June 6th is Internet Safety Night. Tucker's Potluck Dinner will be held in the playground on June 20th. Summer School registration is going strong.

Chariman's report: Mrs. Sheridan asked if School Committee members would like to sign up for any different SC Subcommittees on the list. Ms. Kelly said she can only attend Policy Subcommittee meetings if they're night meetings. Mr. Walker said he will not serve on Policy any longer. Mr. Zullas and Ms. Kelly said they would serve on this committee.

Fireworks update: A new organization in town, called "We Are Milton," is sponsoring the first Milton Music Fest & Fireworks. Due to the rainy forecast the date has been changed to Sunday from 5-9. There will be shuttles from Pierce and St. Agatha's and the whole community is invited.

Finance Subcommittee Report

Topic One: Mr. Walker reported that on May 21st, he met with DOR representatives to start the financial review with the town. As expected, he said, they will look at the existing organizational management system and look for improvements in consolidation and efficiencies. Mr. Walker expects they will talk to leads in accounting, treasury, etc. and staff members. He said they will begin to draft a report and the process will take about three months start to finish. They do not plan to submit a draft. Mr. Walker said he asked for a one-month check-in to see how things are going and they agreed to that. The reps said they have a "bias" for a system with a CFO individual. Mr. Walker said he thinks, on the financial management side, this report will give a lot of usable information. This is like hiring a consultant, but we don't have to pay for it. Ms. Gormley reported that today, two of the DOR individuals met with payroll, budget analyst and herself. Ms. Kelly asked if any of the boards get interviewed? Does the School Committee? If not, she would like to request it because she wants to talk about the warrant process with these folks. She said she would like to create a system with the checks and balances that are part of our fiduciary responsibility. Ms. Gormley said that when she met with them today, she gave them all the School Committee members' e-mail addresses.

Ms. Kelly then asked if the SC could review the warrant process. From now on, members can access, review the warrant and sign it 24-7 at the Milton Police Station. Ms. Gormley said the new process is to facilitate School Committee members who work long hours -- and who want to review the warrant after school hours. The warrant will come back to Milton High School for School Committee meetings. Ms. Sheridan explained that, the warrant is the regular compilation of bills that are paid by MPS

department and must be signed by at least four SC members in order to get paid. Ms. Bagley Jones said she'd like to know a schedule of when each warrant is due. Ms. Gormley said she will work on a schedule of when the warrant needs to be signed.

Old Business: none

Next Meeting Agenda Items:

A member asked if we can we get a First Grade program selection program update? Ms. Gormley said this would be added, and she will also update the committee on kindergarten screening.

The chair entertained a motion to enter into executive session for the purpose of discussing contract strategy for the MTA.

Move: Mr. Walker

Second: Ms. Bagley Jones

Roll Call Vote: 6-0-0

The meeting was adjourned at 8:47 pm.