

Minutes of the School Committee
Regular Meeting
Milton High Library
March 27, 2013

Committee Present: Glenn Pavlicek, Chair; Lynda-Lee Sheridan, Vice Chair; Leroy Walker, Becky Padera, Kristan Bagley Jones.

Committee Not Present: Mary Kelly

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

Call to Order

The Chair called the March 27th meeting of the School Committee to order at 7:05 pm

Approve Agenda: The committee voted to approve the agenda after moving the FPS presentation ahead of the Early Literacy presentation.

Citizens Speak: None

Approval of Minutes: The committee approved the minutes of February 6, 2013 without edits.

Move: Ms. Sheridan

Second: Mr. Walker

Vote: 4-0-0

Superintendents Report:

Topic One: Future Problem Solvers: The students introduced themselves, along with coaches and principals, too. School Committee members congratulated the students.

*** Note: Ms. Bagley Jones arrived at 7:21 pm. ****

Topic Two: Early Literacy Presentation, with Carolyn Lyons, CEO, Strategies for Children and Ada Rosmarin, Early Childhood Consultant. The pair came to speak about FDK, early learning and literacy. Ms. Lyons works with a privately funded, non-profit agency that works on literacy issues. This group's efforts include the creation of the Mass DEEC and the increase of percentage of children in full-day K from 38% in 2000 to 83% today. Ms. Lyons said that 39% of students taking the third-grade MCAS scored below proficient. She also pointed out that proficiency for low-income students has not improved in the past decade. She talked about state and national budget issues. Then, she talked about "what can Milton do?" See handout for suggestions, including

program design, assessment, professional development, curriculum and partnerships with families. Ms. Padera asked about the difference between those who show up in K with no preschool and those who come with 2, 3 years of preschool experience. Ms. Sheridan praised the presentation and remarked about the definition of reading success, and what "proficiency" means. Mr. Walker said this information will be helpful as Milton re-examines its Early Literacy program and he also asked for Ms. Lyon's help in analyzing the PD we have in place. Ms. Bagley Jones asked about the dropout rates at Milton High School. Ms. Gormley said that Ms. Lyons suggested the Milton Public Schools send a letter of intent to join the organization and "heighten awareness."

Happenings: Ms. Gormley thanked everyone who attended the Faculty Talent Show. She also mentioned the statewide debate competition, which brought several hundred high school students from around the state. She updated the committee on the progress of the Tucker Principal and Assistant Superintendent screening committee and noted that it is signup time for spring sports.

Topic Three: Superintendent's Mid-Cycle Review. Ms. Gormley noted that the School Committee is evaluating the superintendent with the new evaluation model, which requires a mid-year review. It should be called mid-cycle review. Ms. Gormley has been working with Ms. Sheridan on this issue and has produced a grid with the objectives that were worked on. She asked committee members to review this document and give her feedback at the next meeting. Ms. Sheridan said the level of detail in this report is exemplary. The chairman asked to put this item on the agenda for the next meeting. He noted that the act of creating this spreadsheet is very valuable.

* Mr. Walker asked to be recused on the upcoming Community Schools item, since his son will be working at Camp Cunningham this summer.

Chairman's Report

The chairman noted that the School Committee recently took several votes in executive session and now needs to reaffirm those votes in open session.

Topic One: Community Schools FY14 Salary Increase (Vote) This group has not had a rate adjustment in 2 years. The chairman entertained a motion to approve a 2% raise.

Move: Ms. Sheridan

Second: Ms. Padera

Vote: 4-0-0

Topic Two: Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Personnel Stipend (Vote) After Mr. Gillis' departure, much of the oversight of custodians, labor/management relations has fallen on Mr. Phelan, which has resulted in an increased workload for him. The chairman entertained a motion to approve a \$5,000 stipend to compensate for this work.

Move: Ms. Bagley Jones

Second: Ms. Padera

Vote: 5-0-0

Topic Three: Superintendent's FY13 Salary Increase (Vote) The superintendent's contract is the last to be negotiated. The chairman entertained a motion to approve a 3% raise for FY13, retroactive to July 1st, 2012.

Move: Mr. Walker

Second: Ms. Padera

Discussion: Mr. Walker said he would like to reiterate the discussion that went on in executive session, where the committee agreed that this increase was both reasonable and appropriate. Well-deserved.

Vote: 5-0-0

Topic Four: Security Update. The School Building Committee has approximately \$70,000 left in its appropriation. At the last meeting, this money was released to the schools for card-reader entrances for various schools. The card-reader doors will be installed and programmed for the opening of school in September. In addition, bi-directional antennae at Milton High School will improve police department communication. Work will continue at Glover and Cunningham schools' front entrances and additional work at Milton High. Finally, Deputy Chief Paris, Sgt. Richman, Officer Poles and Mr. Walker attended a School Security Task Force. The state may be funding "threat assessments" for particular buildings. This group submitted a request for MHS and it will be considered. Mr. Phelan echoed Mr. Walker's sentiment towards the work of the chief. Also, Mr. Phelan noted Mr. Walker has done much work on the infrastructure, antennae, swipe cars, etc., all of which will be in place for long time, and with no funds taken from the school's operating budget.

Finance Subcommittee Report

Mr. Walker introduced the subcommittee's budget update (FY14) Mr. Phelan presented the PowerPoint. He went through the Budget Reduction Summary. He explained the difference between the original list of reductions and the current list of reductions. The current reductions, as of March 27, 2013 total \$984,000. Ms. Gormley noted that a total of 14.2 individuals will be cut from the MPS. Ms. Sheridan was concerned about cutting two custodians, since their numbers are already down. Mr. Walker said that he asked Mr. Richie to survey how much square footage custodians are responsible for, but at this point, even with the cuts, it is still within acceptable levels. The chairman said it seems doubtful that the majority of these positions can be restored, but perhaps some more money may come in from state aid. Ms. Gormley said that increased funding, should it be available, would be designated for teachers first. Committee members expressed concern that the health teacher at Pierce is on the cut list. The dollar amount necessary to restore the teachers in front of students to the budget is \$235,000. Ms. Sheridan asked for a report on the appropriate amount of square footage per custodian. The chairman entertained a motion to approve the proposed cuts, provided the funding remains unchanged.

Move: Mr. Walker

Second: Ms. Bagley Jones

Vote: 5-0-0

School Building Committee: The chairman said that the committee met recently to discuss expenditure of funds on swipe-card access doors. In addition, there is one more installment of \$125,000 to retrieve from insurance company. That will finish the work of the SBC.

Facilities Subcommittee Report: Ms. Sheridan noted that this committee is continually looking for ways to save money and has recently completed many energy upgrades to the Milton High library, auditorium and Field House, as well as the Pierce Library. Many high-tech upgrades have been made, which allow systems to run on a needs-only basis. Also discussed was the fact that the Brooks Field improvement job has gone out to bid. The total cost is not expected to exceed \$460,000. The Copeland Family Foundation has pledged \$302,000 to offset the costs; the Capital Planning gave \$100,000 and the revolving account will pay for the rest. Phase II of the ductwork at MHS will be done by July 1st. Also, the subcommittee presented a school energy use update, which tracks the consumption of electric and gas. Right on track of where we expect to be. Overall, well within data expectations. Ms Bagley Jones suggested that the athletes thank the Copelands for their donation.

Policy Subcommittee Report

The chair of the subcommittee, Ms. Sheridan, noted that as part of a review of the SC policies, they will be voting to re-approve or rescind many current policies.

a. Policy BDB -- School Committee Officers and Appointed Officials (Attachment) (Vote to Re-Approve) Ms. Sheridan said this policy only needs one change. Under "Duties of the Secretary," they changed "superintendent" to "school committee chair."

Move: Ms. Sheridan

Second: Mr. Walker

Vote: 5-0-0

Next, the chair entertained a motion to eliminate Policies b, e, f, h and i on the agenda (which translates to policy BDD, BDFA, BDG, BEDA and BEDB.) Ms. Bagley Jones requested they keep the last one (BEDB), Motion was amended to eliminate policies b, e, f and h.

Move: Mr. Walker

Second: Ms. Sheridan

Discussion: Ms. Jones said regarding BDD, she knows it's not enforceable, but regarding new School Committee members, this has great information. Mr. Walker said he will be sure to incorporate this info for new member orientation.

Vote: 5-0-0

Next, the committee moved to re-approve policies BDD, BDF, BDEA, BE AND BEDG, along with the prior policy BEDB also being re-approved.

Move: Ms. Sheridan

Second: Mr. Walker

Vote: 5-0-0

Old Business: Citizens Speak Topic Response

Next Meeting Agenda Items: Add discussion of Superintendent Evaluation to the agenda. Invite the basketball team, the hockey team and a Consolidated Facilities update.

Citizen Speak: none

The chairman entertained a motion to enter executive session for the purpose of discussing negotiation strategy for collective bargaining.

Move: Mr. Walker

Second: Ms. Sheridan

Roll Call Vote: Unanimous

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 pm.