Minutes of the Milton School Committee
Regular Meeting
Milton High School Library
December 8, 2010

**Committee Present:** Lynda-Lee Sheridan, Chair; Glenn Pavlicek, Vice Chair; Chris Huban, Mary Kelly, Kristan Bagley-Jones, Denis Keohane, John Savino, Student Representative, Michelle Nabi, Student Representative

**Staff Present:** Mary Gormley, Superintendent; John Phelan, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Personnel; Matthew Gillis, School Business Administrator

**Call to Order**
School Committee Chair, Ms. Sheridan, called the meeting to order at 7:05 P.M. and informed the assembled group that the proceedings would be videotaped.

**Approve December 8, 2010 Agenda**
After updating the agenda to highlight items requiring a committee vote (the solar panel project, FY12 budget revisions and cuts, and acceptance of gifts from the Copeland Foundation), the agenda was approved.

**Citizen Speak**
No citizens appeared before the committee

**Approval of Minutes**
After inserting a change in language requested by Mr. Huban, the committee voted to approve the minutes of October 6, 2010.
Move: Huban
Second: Pavlicek
Vote: 5-0-1(Kelly abstained)

The committee voted to approve the minutes of October 20, 2010.
Move: Huban
Second: Pavlicek
Vote: 5-0-1 (Kelly abstained)

**Superintendent's Report**
Collicot Site Council
The Superintendent recognized Principal Gerard Schultz and two representatives from the Collicot School Site Council, parent representative Courtney Affanato and teacher representative Janis Gordon, who presented the Collicot School Improvement Plan for 2010 – 2011. The Collicot School received a commendation from the state for high growth (60% growth or better for two consecutive years in ELA and math), which is a great accomplishment. Mr. Schultz's presentation can be found at the following link:

http://www.miltonps.org/documents/CollicotSiteCouncil.pdf

Mr. Schultz presented an analysis of MCAS data for the school and individual students, highlighting strengths and weaknesses in ELA and math performance in grades 3, 4, and 5. He focused much of his discussion on the area of writing and the need to find ways to increase time for writing in the classroom to help students explain their thoughts in coherent and meaningful ways. In order to address performance issues and patterns discerned in the MCAS data, two professional days were held, in August and October.

Mr. Schultz listed a number of strategies for improvement for Collicot, including early identification of students who should receive enhanced support before a special education referral is needed. He and his team are monitoring progress regularly, and using technology such as the *Study Island* website to help reinforce skills. He and his team are also focusing on ways to improve writing skills and, specifically, on open response answers required on the MCAS.

Ms. Gormley reported that Collicot is looking for community members to serve on the Site Council. To serve as a community member, one need not have children in the schools.

In response to a question from Ms. Bagley-Jones, Site Council members described Collicot as a cohesive, child-centered community with an engaged parent group.

The committee also asked for further information about *Study Island*. As described by Mr. Phelan, the program is designed for grades 3 – 8 and is based on the state frameworks. It is very engaging and motivational for students, and can be accessed from home using a student's password. Students are encouraged to use it at home. Implementation of a pilot license for science has been funded by grant money.

Ms. Gormley recognized the work of Mr. Schultz, who is retiring at the end of the year. She stated that he has had a 41-year career in education and has been a great role model for everyone in the Milton schools. She thanked him for his dedication and service.

<u>Solar Panels Presentation</u>
Mr. Gillis introduced Robert Patterson from W. R. Patterson & Associates, who presented background information for a proposed solar panel project, which could provide significant energy cost savings to the schools over 20 years. The presentation can be found on the home page of the MPS Web site.

http://www.miltonps.org/documents/PVSolarPpoint.pdf

The project involves leasing the flat roof spaces of Milton High, Pierce, Glover, and Tucker Schools to a solar energy developer, who would install photovoltaic panels on the rooftops. The developer would front all of the capital costs, including the engineering and permitting (there would be no outlay of funds from the schools), and the schools would buy back energy produced by the panels at a greatly discounted price to offset electricity costs. Mr. Patterson estimates that the schools could save $120,000-$130,000 per year, reducing energy costs by 13-14%. The lower solar energy prices are the result of the

availability of credits from the Green Communities Act, tax incentives, and increased competition among solar developers. After a developer is selected through an RFP and bidding process, Mr. Patterson estimates the project could be up and running within 4-5 months.

Subsequent School Committee discussion focused on:

- the process for receiving and evaluating bids
- the mechanisms in the facility lease agreement to create a budget for repairs of the roof and structure
- the basis of the calculations for energy savings and kilowatt hour production
- how to account for degradation of the panels over time and reduction in energy efficiency
- the number of well-qualified companies with track records for this type of project
- the stipulations in a power purchase agreement
- impact of the panels on roof structure
- anticipated changes in the energy costs after ten years and revenue advantages of a 20-year contract
- the impact of severe weather on the roof and panel system

Bill Richie, Facilities Manager of the Milton Public Schools, joined the discussion and spoke in favor of the project. He stated that the Collicot-Cunningham solar project worked well with minimal roof penetration. He also reminded the committee that the majority of the school roofs were new and structurally capable of withstanding severe weather.

Mr. Gillis stated that both town counsel and bond counsel confirmed that the School Committee has the authority to enter into this project.

After the discussion, a motion was made to authorize the School Department to enter into an agreement to submit an RFP for the solar panel project with the expenditure not to exceed $9,000. The Superintendent recommended a yes vote on the motion.
Move: Pavlicek
Second: Bagley-Jones
Vote: 6-0-0

<u>Announcements</u>
The Superintendent informed the committee about recent and upcoming events.

- Kindergarten information night will be held on January 27th.
- First Grade information night will be held on February 10th.
- An update on winter sports will be coming soon.
- The Robotics Team recently participated in a tournament at Quincy High School and has been successful competing at the state level.
- The MHS Debate Team participated in a competition in Washington, DC, along with 1,400 students from all over the US.
- The Pierce Mock Trial Team's actual trial at Quincy Court House is coming soon.

- The MHS Marching Band received a donation of uniforms from the King Philip Music Association.
- Budget meetings will take place with each school's PTO in January.
- Budget presentations have been made to all school staff.
- The resignations of Pat DelVal, Jeff Rubin, and Jerry Schultz will open up important administrative positions. Job descriptions have been sent out already. The administration is working closely with Citizens for Diverse Milton to widen the net for potential applicants.
- The Walkathon fundraiser for athletics and activities will take place on February 12th.

Superintendent Goals

The Superintendent submitted her finalized goals to the committee, which incorporated the feedback of the members.

A motion was made to accept the Superintendent's Goals as written.
Move: Pavlicek
Second: Huban
Vote: 6-0-0

The Superintendent's Goals can be found at:

http://www.miltonps.org/documents/SuperintendentGoals2010-11.pdf

**Finance Subcommittee Report**

FY12 Budget Cut/Reduction List

Ms. Gormley presented a revised level-service budget amount, as well as a list of proposed cuts in personnel and non-personnel lines to meet the budget requirements. She and her team have been working closely with the Finance Subcommittee to submit drafts to the Warrant Committee of a level-dollar budget and a level-service budget. A level-service budget will keep current programs in place and move the current system forward. The details of the Superintendent's presentation can be found at:

http://www.miltonps.org/documents/2012ReductionSummary.pdf

In the budget process the Superintendent established non-negotiables like the co-taught classes and programs necessary to meet the requirements of NEASC. Beyond the non-negotiables, she and her staff scrubbed the numbers thoroughly to come up with a reduced level-service budget amount. Any program changes, she noted, would not require additional personnel, and would be achieved through exchanges and reorganization.

A motion was made to submit to the Warrant Committee the revised draft level-service budget amount of $34,957,391.
Move: Kelly
Second: Pavlicek
Vote: 6-0-0

Ms. Gormley then presented a list of proposed personnel cuts representing 11.2 FTEs to achieve the level-service budget. She stated that the schools must be as transparent as possible in detailing the cuts and positions. Mr. Huban expressed concern that the budget number may need to change as the process evolves. Mr. Pavlicek stated that the committee had the ability to change the number up until the moment the warrant goes to press.

Mr. Pavlicek, who was a former three-year Warrant Committee Chair, went on to say that it was good to start the budget exercise early, keeping everything in draft form. He stated that although the state revenue picture looks somewhat better, everyone is making conservative estimations.

Ms. Bagley-Jones requested that the committee keep an ongoing impact list. Ms. Kelly expressed concern about losing a science position at the high school.

A motion was made to submit the list of cuts in the revised draft budget summary to the Warrant Committee.
Move: Kelly
Second: Pavlicek
Vote: 6-0-0

Acceptance of Gifts
Ms. Kelly expressed gratitude to the Copeland Foundation on behalf of the schools for their ongoing generosity.

A motion was made to accept a grant of $25,000 for security cameras from the Copeland Foundation.
Move: Kelly
Second: Huban
Vote: 6-0-0

A motion was made to accept a grant of $47,980 from the Copeland Foundation to fund a 0.5 FTE Facilities Coordinator position to manage rentals and scheduling.
Move: Kelly
Second: Huban
Vote: 6-0-0

Ms. Kelly deferred the November Expenditure Report to later meeting.

**Facilities Subcommittee Update**
Mr. Keohane reported on the progress of the security system installation. 80% of the cameras have been installed. Mr. Keohane commended Mr. Gillis for his effort in this project, which is over budget by only $454.

Both MHS and Tucker have received Energy Star ratings for electricity and heat efficiency.

**Next Meeting Agenda Items**
Ms. Kelly requested an assessment of the new security system once it is up and running.

**Executive Session**
Ms. Sheridan entertained a motion to enter into Executive Session, and not return to Open Session, for the purpose of discussing contract negotiations and pending litigation and to discuss negotiations with non-union personnel since to do so in Open Session might have detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigation position of the committee.
Moved: Pavlicek
Second: Huban
Vote by roll call: Unanimous