

Minutes of the Milton School Committee
Regular Meeting
Milton High School Library
March 16, 2011

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

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

Call to Order

The Chair called the regular meeting of the School Committee to order at 7:16 P.M.

Approve Agenda

Ms. Sheridan reported that the agenda items include some of those moved forward from the March 30th meeting.

Citizen's Speak

No citizens appeared before the committee.

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Sheridan entertained a motion to approve the minutes of the February 9, 2011 meeting of the School Committee.

Move: Kelly

Second: Huban

Vote: 6-0-0

Superintendent's Report

Technology Plan

Ms. Gormley introduced Robert Pattison, the MPS Technology Director, who presented 1) a detailed list of the scope of the Technology Service's responsibilities—for example, three technicians are responsible for 1,200 computers— 2) his recommendations for technology enhancements for FY12, and 3) a comparison of Milton's current available technology services versus the state recommendations. His presentation can be found on the MPS Web site:

<http://www.miltonps.org/committee-presentations.php>

Mr. Pattison is planning to increase the bandwidth and connection speed of the schools' systems in the next month and implement a computer replacement strategy more in line with the state's recommendation. He stated that most of his budget is comprised of recurring costs.

In response to a question from Ms. Kelly, Mr. Pattison stated that his team of two technicians is very busy, and response time is its biggest challenge. Because the price of PCs has come way down over time, purchasing computers is more cost effective than leasing them.

Thanks to the support of the MFE and Copeland Foundation, Milton has exceeded state expectations in terms of availability of computers and SmartBoards per student. Ms. Bagley-Jones stressed the importance of pushing technology as a priority to keep the MPS competitive. Mr. Pavlicek spoke about the need for a long-term plan for staffing the technology department and replacing equipment—three people managing 1,200 computers and the infrastructure is not feasible over time. Ms. Sheridan also noted that there is no technology teacher in the elementary schools.

Ms. Gormley commended Mr. Pattison for his department's outstanding job despite the limited manpower.

Food Service Plan

Ms. Jacqueline Morgan, Food Service Director, presented the annual report of her program. Her presentation can be found on the MPS Web site:

<http://www.miltonps.org/committee-presentations.php>

Ms. Morgan began by commending her staff of thirty employees for the quality and efficiency of her program. She stated she is able to keep food costs down and ensure student participation because 1) healthy food options are cooked on site in the schools in batches throughout the day, which minimizes overproduction, and 2) payment processes are all automated. She stressed that free and reduced fee meals are available through a very confidential process. Information about free and reduced meals can be found on the MPS Web site homepage. In response to a question from Ms. Sheridan, Ms. Morgan explained the process for state and federal reimbursements for reduced fee and free lunches.

Ms. Morgan works closely with parents and school nurses to identify and protect students with food allergies and maintains a safe environment for all students. Mr. Gillis reported that representatives from 20-25 school systems had visited Milton for guidance in running a successful food service.

The Superintendent and committee members thanked Ms. Morgan for her leadership and outstanding work.

Solar Panel Presentation

School Business Administrator Matt Gillis updated the committee on the solar panel project. His presentation can be found on the MPS Web site:

<http://www.miltonps.org/committee-presentations.php>

Participation in this project could reduce electricity costs for the system and lock in low rates with minimal price escalations for up to 20 years. There are currently a number of incentives and credits for developing renewable energy resources. Several Massachusetts communities are looking in this—developing solar arrays on rooftops or on land. Using land is a viable alternative to rooftops. For land, developers require 3-5 acres, with southern exposure. The administration has invited proposals from developers, which are due at the end of March. Mr. Gillis and the committee will rank the bidders first by their qualifications, after which they will review the costs.

School Happenings

Ms. Gormley reported on the current and upcoming school events, which included the following:

- Celebration of Music In Our Schools this month; congratulations to all Milton students selected to participate in Senior SEMSBA, Allstate, and the Eastern Division.
- Several MHS students have been recognized for their artistic talent at the national level and by the *Boston Globe*; further detail will be reported the upcoming e-mail blasts.
- Art fairs are planned for all six schools; an exhibition for ACE participants in grades 7-8 will be scheduled soon.
- Future Problem Solvers from Milton are competing at the state level.
- The MHS Faculty Talent Show will be held on March 31st and April 1st.
- The MFE “Big Backyard Bash” fundraiser will be held on April 2nd,
- The Consolidated Facilities Committee has finalized the appointment of Director of Facilities.
- The screening committee for the Administrator of Pupil Personnel is in the final phases of its search.
- Gracie Burke, Foreign Language Department Head, and Dr. John Drottter, MHS Principal, are retiring; the Superintendent is looking for School Committee representation on the screening committees to replace them.
- The school administration has held meetings with the PTO presidents, the visual arts supporters, Site Councils, and most recently with the special education parent group, who have put together an ambitious schedule.
- Spring sports sign-ups are underway; 224 students have signed up to date.

- All first graders who attended MPS kindergarten have been placed in schools of their choice; the administration is now placing 20 children new to the district; the most current first grade class sizes and updated enrollments are posted online.
- Check the MPS Web site for the MCAS schedule.

Chairman's Report

Ms. Sheridan reviewed the School Committee Calendar updates. She also commended the activities celebrating Arts in Our Schools this month. She stated the concerts and visual arts displays were a privilege to attend.

Finance Subcommittee Report

As reported by Ms. Kelly, there have been no changes in the budget since the last committee vote.

Ms Gormley presented a revised management letter, which amends an erroneous statement indicating that the school system overspent its budget. She thanked Amy Dexter, Town Accountant, who extended herself to address this issue for the school system.

Consolidated Facilities Update

Ms. Sheridan reported that Mr. Bill Ritchie was appointed by the Consolidated Facilities screening committee to be the new townwide Director of Facilities. Per Mr. Keohane, who served on the screening committee, Mr. Ritchie has hands-on management experience plus building maintenance experience. As stated by Ms. Gormley, Mr. Ritchie will be able to hit the ground running since he knows the school buildings so well. Ms. Sheridan noted that Mr. Ritchie already sits on five townwide committees.

Ms. Gormley thanked Mr. Huban for his participation in the Consolidated Facilities process over the past 2.5 years. Ms. Sheridan recognized the hard work of Tony Cichello, Chair of the Consolidated Facilities Committee. Ms. Kelly noted that creating and filling this position represents a huge move forward for the town.

Ms. Sheridan entertained a motion to approve the appointment of Mr. Ritchie as the Director of Facilities.

Move: Keohane

Second: Bagley-Jones

Vote: 6-0-0

Health and Wellness Subcommittee Update

Ms. Bagley-Jones updated the committee on the work of the Health and Wellness Subcommittee. She thanked Jackie Morgan and Steve Traister for their participation and input. She stated that the committee has focused on reaching at-risk children and is working on securing funding for a formal mentorship program. Her committee is also investigating a community service learning program to integrate with the 140-hour community service requirement of the high school. The committee continues to use Dr.

Knight as a resource for addressing substance use. Recess safety and play supervision at the elementary schools is also an issue the committee hopes to address.

School Building Committee Update

As reported by Ms. Sheridan, the School Building Committee is winding down. Some of the remaining items to be addressed are signage for the dedicated spaces and auditoriums at Milton High School and Pierce Middle School and final reporting to close out the committee accounts.

Ms. Sheridan entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Move: Huban

Second: Keohane

Vote: 6-0-0