

Minutes of the School Committee
Regular Meeting
Milton Access Television Studio at Milton High School
Date: January 6, 2016

Committee Present: Michael Zullas, Chair; Becky Padera, Vice Chair; Kristan Bagley-Jones (arrived late), Leroy Walker, Sheila Varela, Kevin Donahue.

Student Reps: Grace Varela, Mike Sullivan

Staff Present: Mary Gormley, Superintendent; Janet Sheehan, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Human Resources; Dr. Glenn Pavlicek, Assistant Superintendent for Business.

Call to Order

The Chair called the January 6th, 2016 meeting of the School Committee to order at 7:05pm

Approve Agenda

The committee approved the agenda after deleting Item 4b (MHS Program of Studies); adding Item 5a (Warrant Committee and Board of Selectmen Meeting Report); and deferring Item 7d (First Reading, Non Discrimination Policy). With those changes, the chair declared the agenda approved.

Citizens Speak: none

Superintendent's Report

Topic One: Tucker Site Council. Dr. Elaine McNeil-Girmai introduced the presentation, which began with Kat Desroche talking about Saturday Scientists program. The Tucker students explained how they could choose to be journalists or architects. Next, members of the site council went through the School Improvement Plan. To view the plan, click [here](#):

School Committee members congratulated the group for their presentation. Mr. Walker asked what resources the Tucker school might need, and Dr. Girmai McNeil talked about resources for the preschool. One of the parents talked about the Tucker Playground fund. Ms. Varela asked about the full-day preschool program and how it has been working. Mr. Zullas noted that this preschool program was funded by a one-year, \$200,000 grant that was initiated by Sen. Joyce. He said the district should look into how to make this more permanent. Mr. Walker noted that the MPS will be making difficult budget choices, but for those things that are actually working well, we need to incorporate those successes into the budget. Ms. Gormley congratulated Dr. Elaine McNeil Girmai.

*Note: Ms. Bagley Jones arrived here.

Happenings: Ms. Gormley noted there was a jazz concert today which was an early release day. On Thursday night, Jan 14th, there will be an Info Night on Preschool Programs in Charles Winchester auditorium. No school on Monday for MLK Celebration. There will be an event at Concord Baptist Church. Next School Committee meeting is on Jan 20. On January 21 and 22,

the Pierce Players are doing Once Upon a Mattress. Also, K Info night will be held on Thursday, Jan 21st.

Chairman's Report

Topic One: Since the last School Committee meeting, members met on December 17 with the Warrant Committee. They outlined their calculation of the non-contingent budget, which left the MPS \$774,000 short of our "bare budget," which would translate to 14 teachers. Last night, the Board of Selectmen presented their non-contingent budget and used a different methodology to get to balanced budget. That non-contingent was 885,000 shy of the "bare bones" budget, which would equate to approximately 16 teachers. Mr. Zullas said he hopes the two boards will work together with the School Committee to reach a consensus view of the non-contingent budget. Mr. Walker commended the chair, who has been working closely with the groups. Nobody was more surprised than us that the number was different. Mr. Walker said we should take the initiative to work closely with Town Administrator, town account and Warrant Committee to reconcile this figures. Mr. Walker noted that when the school district has to make cuts, we cut people — and \$885,000 is a lot of people.

Finance Subcommittee:

Topic One: School Committee Priorities for Additions to the FY17 Contingent Budget (per Warrant Committee Request) (Attachment) (Vote) Mr. Walker noted that this list is a prioritized list of things that might be added to the budget if the Warrant Committee finds more funding. He then went over the list of 1 to 8:

1. Add another adjustment counselor to be used at both MS and HS for a cost of \$62,000
2. Cut athletic and club fees by half to \$150 (athletics) and \$25 (club) for a cost of \$130,000 (with a cap of \$130)
3. Reduce bus fees by \$50 for a cost of \$23,000
4. Add an additional elementary math specialist and coach for a cost of \$62,000
5. Restore a .5 K-12 health, PE and Social/Emotional, learning director (separate from AD) for a cost of \$45,000.
6. Add a HS transition/life skills teachers for a cost of \$62,000
7. Cut athletic and/or club fees entirely for a cost of \$260,000 (or \$130,000 beyond Priority #2)
8. Expand Middle School sports 3 teams to 5 times (\$30,000)

The total would be \$544,000, when added together with the other list would total \$1.1 million. Mr. Walker moved to approve the list of needs and priorities.

Move: Mr. Walker

Second: Ms. Varela

Discussion: Ms. Bagley Jones asked if we could we hear feedback from superintendent. Ms. Gormley said she stands by this list as is. She went through the list and explained why each decision was made. She said, regarding the athletic fees, that even though we work with families, there are some students who do not participate. Ms. Varela applauded the addition of Pierce track teams. She asked if they would consider reducing the bus fee further. Ms. Varela would like to offer a friendly amendment. Dr. Donahue seconded the friendly amendment. Ms. Varela's amendment to Item 7 would keep the dollar amount the same, and would read as follows: "make

further cuts to athletic, club fees and bus fees." Mr. Walker asked to hear all the friendly amendments before acting on them.

Ms. Bagley Jones offered a second friendly amendment to look at staffing vs. fees. She suggested putting the four teaching positions higher up on the list (#1-4). Her next issue is that although she agrees with the reduction of athletic fees, she wants it to be sustainable. She would like a guarantee in writing that this would be sustainable. She would like the list reordered to put personnel first and fee cuts second. Mr. Zullas clarified: the proposed amendment is to put the adjustment counselor first; elementary math position second; social emotional position third; life skills teacher fourth; athletic fee reduction fifth; bus fee reduction sixth; and invert #7 and #8.

Mr. Walker reminded the committee that the superintendent developed this list by consulting with the principals and the leadership team, as well as the Finance Subcommittee, after which, Ms. Gormley signed off on it and prioritized.

Mr. Walker said he would not accept the friendly amendment to add the staffers first. On the proposal "to reduce bus fees further," he would entertain a friendly amendment different from the one offered. On Priority #7, he would reduce by \$23,000 and add that to Priority #3, so that it is now a \$46,000 cost. Also, Mr. Walker said with Ms. Gormley's approval, he would entertain the friendly amendment to re-order #7 and #8.

Mr. Zullas clarified: Now, #3 will reduce fees by \$100, for a cost of \$46,000; #8 becomes #7; #7 becomes #8 and the wording changes to: "cut athletic fees and club fees *FURTHER* for a cost of \$107,000."

Mr. Zullas said that, procedurally, the proponent of the motion can accept amendments or the committee can vote on the amendments. Two of these friendly amendments have been accepted. Ms. Bagley Jones noted that her friendly amendment to put all teaching positions first was not accepted. She said she respects Ms. Gormley's input on the prioritized list. However, she really wants the K-12 PE person and adjustment counselor as #1 and #2. Ms. Gormley noted that she considered how many people are going to be impacted by each of these items. Ms. Gormley said it was a compromise for her to divide the fees in half, she would have liked to have eliminated them altogether. She would like to stay with her initial recommendation. Dr. Pavlicek said there are no ironclad guarantees. Mr. Zullas noted there is a current motion on the floor. He clarified that:

Item #1 and 2 stay the same

Item 3 has changed to read "reduce bus fees by \$100 cost \$45,000."

Items 4, 5, and 6 stay the same

#7 is expand middle school for \$30K

#8 is cut athletic and club fees *FURTHER*, cost of \$107,000 beyond items 2 and 3.

Ms. Bagley Jones asked to see data to support that cutting the sports fee will increase diversity of sports teams. She also said that if the PE/AD position is split into a one full time and a one part time position, she would like to see how the ADs position would be to get more support. Mr.

Zullas noted that the list has been moved and seconded and two friendly amendments have been accepted.

Vote: 6-0-0

Topic Two: Approval of Vendor Warrants. Dr. Pavlicek asked for approval of Vendor Warrant #27 dated December 30th in the amount of \$192,597.25

Move: Mr. Walker

Second: Ms. Varela

Vote: 6-0-0

Ms. Bagley Jones apologized for missing the night meeting for finance subcommittee and asked what will be the status of these meetings as we go into the cut season? Mr. Walker said the first version of the reduction list will be discussed for the first time next Monday. As before, we can schedule an alternative time and this should be done via Charlene Roche.

Policy Subcommittee Report: (Attachment) (Vote)

Topic One: Second Reading Policy JICH Weapons in School Policy. Dr. Donahue introduced this policy for a second reading. They asked for input from MPD. They had no changes to policy as written at first reading. He asked for approval of amended Weapons in School Policy.

Move: Dr. Donahue

Second: Mr. Walker

Vote: 6-0-0

Topic Two: First Reading Student Activities Policy JJF. Dr. Donahue thanked Dr. Pavlicek for updating this policy. There are a number of guidelines regarding management of money for student activities. This updated policy reflects a substantial, extensive changes from the prior version. Mr. Walker asked, is this feedback from the Stoneturn audit, or is this separate from that? Dr. Pavlicek said many of the changes have been recommended by the state. Ms. Bagley Jones asked about vending machines and Dr. Pavlicek explained that the only vending machines are in teacher's lounges and are not used for Student Activities.

Topic Three: First Reading Field Trip Policy IJOA Dr. Donahue thanked Ms. Gormley, Mr. Zullas and others who helped change this policy. This was an outgrowth of the previous discussion of cash handling. There have been two major changes. Language states no fundraising unless permission granted. Also, field trips do not require two rounds of approval at School Committee level. One round at administrative level and one round at School Committee. They changed the term of 30 days to 60 days' prior to field trip. The second change involves a situation which was touched on at the last meeting. This is to deal with out of state competition or field trip where the invitation is extended and there is not enough time to have a School Committee before the event. Discussion ensued. Dr. Pavlicek said the origin of School Committee being involved in field trip approval was that is a recommendation from NESDEQ. It's not required under cash management policy, though. Dr. Pavlicek said it's not required under Mass General

Laws, but it is supported by MASC. Ms. Padera clarified, it would not be necessary for us to have this policy, legally, except the final paragraph.

Next Meeting Agenda Items: Second reading of these policies. Update on long range planning committee. Ms. Varela will have an update on transportation. Ms. Gormley said there will be a draft of the annual report; and a first draft of the 16-17 school calendar. (vote) Mr. Walker requested a report on disciplinary actions, which included race and gender. Ms. Gormley said she should schedule follow ups to her evaluation.

The Chair entertained a motion to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing Negotiation Strategy for Collective Bargaining with MEA and Approval of Minutes and to adjourn directly from Executive Session and not return to Open Session.

Move: Mr. Zullas

Second: Mr. Walker

Vote: 6-0-0

The Next School Committee meeting is scheduled for January 20th.

The meeting adjourned at 9:51pm
md