

Minutes of the School Committee  
Regular Meeting  
Milton High Library  
Date: March 12, 2014

**Committee Present:** Lynda-Lee Sheridan, Chair; Leroy Walker, Vice Chair; Mary Kelly, Becky Padera, Mike Zullas. Kristan Bagley Jones (arrived late-- 7:16 pm)

**Not Present:**

**Staff Present:** Mary Gormley, Superintendent; Glenn Pavlicek, Assistant Superintendent for Business. John Phelan, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Personnel.

**Call to Order**

The Chair called the March 12, 2014 meeting of the School Committee to order at 7:01pm.

**Approve Agenda**

The committee approved the agenda with the addition of a calendar item and master planning report. They also reversed the order of Items 6a and 6b.

**Citizens Speak**

Frank Schroth came to speak about Run for Red Nation and encouraged the community to sign up to support this fundraiser.

**Approval of Minutes**

Ms. Sheridan entertained a motion to approve the minutes of the School Committee meeting of January 8, 2014. (Attachment) (Vote)

**Move:** Mr. Walker

**Second:** Ms. Kelly

Discussion: None

**Vote:** 5-0-0

Happenings: Ms. Gormley asked representatives from the drama club to speak about the Rabbit Hole, an upcoming production. The rest of the Happenings will be presented after the Site Council.

**Superintendent's Report**

Topic One: Milton High School Student Athletes who participated in post-season play were invited to School Committee to be congratulated. Coach Paul Noonan spoke about the MHS Boys Hockey season; Coach Chuck Ajemian summarized the MHS Boys Indoor Track season; Coach Tom Shaw discussed the MHS Girls Indoor Track

season; Coach Paul Ajemian talked about the MHS Ski Team. All team members present and coaches were congratulated for their seasons.

Topic Two: The Future Problem Solvers teams, along with coaches Lori Henry, Anna Higgins, Nicole Hoyceanyls, Thuy Nguyen, Christina Reynolds, and Marti McKenna arrived to talk about this year's State Bowl, which they will attend on April 5th. The School Committee congratulated them and wished them well in the upcoming competition.

Topic Three: The Tucker School Site Council made a presentation, led by Principal Dr. Elaine McNeil-Girmai. The Site Council is comprised of Teacher Representatives Elizabeth Spitz and Kirsten Finnell; Parent Representative Steve Paxhia, Oliver Truog, Ayanna Quinones, Kari McHugh, Piel Hollingsworth-Hayes Kristen O'Hara and Joan Gancarski. This group came to speak about Tucker. Dr. McNeil-Girmai reviewed the highlights of the assessment data, noting that 65% of all students were proficient or advanced in ELA and 70% proficient in Math. They discussed many of their early literacy initiatives and how to bring that connection to all our families. They have been videotaping some parents and guardians reading their favorite books, which can then be accessed later via a YouTube channel. They also talked about their upcoming MCAS pep rally. The idea is to present an upbeat, exciting start to MCAS. School committee members thanked the site council for the presentation and asked questions about some of the assessment data and technology purchases.

Topic Four: Special Education Program Overview (Attachment). Director of Pupil Personnel Services Karen Clasby gave a presentation which described many aspects of her department. She discussed the "Partners" Program and the NECC, along with LEAP and LEAP II. She described how the STEP is for students with emotional issues and how the co-taught classrooms work. She outlined the REACH and ACHIEVE programs at Pierce and Milton High School and post-graduate, transition programs. Ms. Clasby addressed the issue of children on the autism spectrum and how they could be assigned to any of the programs listed. Mr. Phelan J said that organizing this presentation by grade level and by "pathway" was very helpful. Ms. Bagley Jones asked Ms. Clasby to explain to the public why we have to provide "special ed" services and also asked for an explanation of co-taught classrooms. Ms. Padera asked, regarding OT, speech therapy, PT, are they available at every school? Do students need to be on an IEP to get them? Ms. Clasby said there are district therapists who travel to schools and are not specifically assigned to one school. Ms. Kelly asked about RTI process and whether the parents involved in this. She also asked about dyslexia and what services are provided, which Ms. Clasby outlined. Ms. Kelly noted that some districts use music therapy as part of other therapy programs. Ms. Clasby was thanked by the School Committee.

## **Chairman's Report**

Topic One: Residency Restitution (Attachment) Mr. Walker said that Paige Tobin was here to talk about residency. He made a motion, designed to authorize the sup't and give her the discretion she needs to take action with regard to restitution.

**Move:** Mr. Walker moved "to authorize the Superintendent and her designee, with advice of counsel to evaluate those involving parents, guardians or others determined to be non-residents of Milton and to separately determine when actions(s) to secure restitution should be initiated.

**Second:** Mr. Zullas

**Discussion:** Ms. Kelly asked how this differs from our current policy and Mr. Walker said it doesn't differ much, but it gives Ms. Gormley and the administration more authority to seek restitution. Ms. Sheridan then noted, for the purposes of people at home, she would read the Residency Policy (Policy JFAA). Ms. Padera asked if the committee will be adding a paragraph or leaving it as is. Mr. Walker said it would be left as is. Ms. Bagley Jones asked what would the restitution efforts entail and Ms. Tobin replied that generally speaking, it would involve court. The cost would be determined on a case-by-case basis. That would be part of the evaluation that the Superintendent would make regarding the cost and the merits. Ms. Bagley Jones asked which other school districts are doing this? Ms. Tobin said she knew of one reported case -- Swampscott, and in that case, restitution was awarded. Mr. Zullas asked if we should do a demand letter. Ms. Tobin said this is an equitable remedy and prefers the other approach. After further discussion and after comments by Ms. Gormley, who said she does not have any concerns about this issue, a vote was called.

**Vote:** 6-0-0

Topic Two: Approval of Vendor Warrants. Dr. Pavlicek said, based on the DOR report, we should be voting the vendor warrants in session. He explained how the district prepares a warrant for the town accountant to "ease the process." It's been our policy for many years that we collectively get four signatures every time there's a warrant and send it to town hall. The DOR suggested a vote. Legally, we don't have to vote it beforehand, you can do either before or after transmission. He suggested putting this week's warrant (to be transmitted tomorrow), warrant #37, on the agenda for a vote. Ms. Sheridan asked, will this be once a month or every meeting? Dr. Pavlicek said it's probably cleanest to do it at every meeting. Ms. Sheridan noted that it would be important to have the number and the actual date. Dr. Pavlicek said the motion to approve should have the number. Ms. Kelly suggested that, included in that detail, is the dollar amount. Also, the policy subcommittee should look at this and come up with a policy around the signing of the warrant. Ms. Kelly suggested making an umbrella document that says how we handle warrants. Ms. Bagley Jones asked for a hard copy. Ms. Kelly stated that she will abstain from this vote because we have to vote on two line items that we don't control -- the MPACE item and a capital expenditure. Until those are resolved, I'll abstain. Ms. Gormley said that she drafted, and will send out, a legal piece about that and I will try to resolve it. Dr. Pavlicek explained the methodology behind the capital expenditure item and said the MPACE money is generated through the treasurer's office, but spent by the schools.

**Move:** Mr. Walker moved to approve to approve the warrant #37 dated March 13, 2014, in the amount of \$575,999.71.

**Second:** Ms. Padera

**Vote:** 5-0-1 (Ms. Kelly abstained)

Topic Three: Ms. Sheridan said she would like to switch School Committee meetings to be the first and third Wednesdays. The upcoming is April 2nd, then the committee will not meet again until April 30. Then, meetings are scheduled for May 14th, May 28th, June 4th, Ms. Kelly said this might be a problem planning for town meeting. She asked to meet on April 9th. Mr. Walker suggested keeping the meeting on April 2nd and holding the re-org meeting on April 30th.

\*\*\* Topic Four: Master Planning Committee. Dr. Pavlicek updated the committee on the recent meeting at Fuller Village. Those present went over the main themes. The first topic was "healthy Milton," -- walking, biking, healthy food, traffic calming, etc. The next meeting will be held on March 25th at the Tucker from 7-9pm. Get together and discuss. On April 10th, there will be a second roundtable discussion on mixed use districts. Housing vs. Open Space. The goal is to have, in place, for fall town meeting, any zoning changes, etc. He said the organizers have created a Tumblr Page.

## **Finance Subcommittee Report**

Topic One: Second Quarter Report (Attachment) Dr. Pavlicek handed out an update on finances, as of Dec. 31st. Ms. Kelly moved to approve the report and post online.

**Move:** Ms. Kelly

**Second:** Mr. Walker

**Vote:** 6-0-0

Ms. Kelly asked the committee if they could develop metrics to convey to the Selectmen regarding 40b development. This would be a reflection of what we believe the impact to MPS would be if there were to be X number of apartments/condos, or other residences added to the town. In this way, we would have some input. Mr. Walker said it should be okay, as long as it's not for or against any particular project, but merely a cost estimate of the impact. Ms. Kelly agreed it should be a strictly financial impact and totally neutral. Mr. Walker suggested that finance subcommittee review this and come up with a document.

**Old Business:** none

**Citizen Speak Topic Response:** none

**Next Meeting Agenda Items:** Ms. Bagley Jones asked to add a Health and Wellness report to the next agenda. Also, Mr. Walker requested an update on how we're performing against School Committee district goals. It was suggested that Policy Subcommittee or Finance Subcommittee should look at the issue of fingerprinting. Ms.

Gormley requested bringing Science Administrators in to answer questions. The chair entertained a motion to adjourn.

**Move:** Ms. Bagley Jones

**Second:** Ms. Padera

Vote: Unanimous

The meeting was adjourned at 10:28 pm.