

Minutes of the School Committee
Regular Meeting
Superintendent's Conference Room
May 30th, 2013

Committee Present: Lynda-Lee Sheridan, Chair; Leroy Walker, Vice Chair; Mary Kelly, Kristan Bagley-Jones, Becky Padera, Mike Zullas.

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

Call to Order

The Chair called the May 30th meeting of the School Committee to order at 6:35 pm.

Approve Agenda

The committee approved the agenda.

Citizens Speak

No one came forward for Citizen Speak

** Because Ms. Bagley Jones was not yet present, the chair opted to change the order of the items in the Chairman's Report. **

Chairman's Report

Topic One (originally Topic Two) Signing of Warrant: Mrs. Sheridan said the police station was not the ideal place to keep the warrant for signatures but we don't know where else to keep it so SC members can have access on weekends. Members discussed other options, including Town Hall. It was decided to keep the warrant at the Central Office at MHS during the week and move it to the police station on weekend.

Topic Two (originally Topic Three) MASC Nomination (Attachment) (Vote) Ms. Sheridan read the criteria for the Lifetime Achievement Award and recommended Mr. Pavlicek for this honor.

Move: Mr. Walker

Second: Ms. Padera

Vote: 5-0-0

** note: Ms. Bagley Jones arrived at this point ***

Topic Three: (originally Topic One) Assistant Superintendent for Business. Ms. Gormley went over the timeline as to the posting and screening of the Ass't Sup't for Business position. She detailed the work of the Screening Committee and said they have not been able to recommend a candidate, despite two separate postings. Ms. Gormley said she approached Mr. Pavlicek about this position. She described his

experience with School Committee, Warrant Committee and his work on the school budget over the past years. Ms. Gormley noted that this is an important position in the MPS and that prior to her administration, there had been incidents surrounding this position that had to do with absconding of funds. (Ms. Kelly noted that his was the Food Services department in one instance.) Ms. Gormley also noted there have been some errors in the budget in the past. She expressed her opinion that Mr. Pavlicek will "hit the ground running." She said that today (5/30), she convened the screening committee again and interviewed two more candidates, including Mr. Pavlicek. She believes that this will be an outstanding hire for the system. Ms. Sheridan said, to clarify, she wanted to be sure this information is to provide an update and the School Committee will not be taking a vote tonight. They will vote on this in Open Session when the meeting is televised.

Mr. Phelan said on behalf of the screening committee, they reviewed all 10 candidates and asked two finalists to come in. They used the same set of questions to interview both candidates, one man from another district and Mr. Pavlicek. Mr. Phelan said the committee got a chance to experience what GP does beyond Milton, all his skills and experiences came into play. The screening committee voted 4-0 to advance Mr. Pavlicek as the top candidate.

Ms. Gormley said Mr. Pavlicek excels at issues around personnel, contracts, budget, etc.

Mr. Walker said he's generally in favor of this appointment. He talked to Joe Emerson about the legal issues and he said Chapter 71 treats this appointment differently. This is a School Committee appointment. The Superintendent can recommend, but the School Committee needs to approve. Transparency is particularly important on this one.

Mr. Zullas reported that last month, he got a financial contribution for his election campaign from Mr. Pavlicek. At the time, no one was contemplating that he was being considered for this position. However, there is "an appearance" of conflict. Mr. Zullas noted that there are two options: a party could file a written disclosure, and then if that party decides they can be impartial, they can act on it. Or, another option is to recuse yourself. Mr. Zullas informed the committee that he will not participate in the discussion and will abstain from voting. Ms. Padera said that she is in the same position and she will also choose to abstain. Mr. Walker said we should request a written ethics decision. He doesn't think there's a conflict, but to cover Mr. Pavlicek and to cover the committee, we should do this.

Ms. Kelly said there is a School Committee policy that covers the hiring of "family members of school committee members." She said she has spoken with Ms. Sheridan, Mr. Walker and Ms. Gormley about this issue. Although she feels that Mr. Pavlicek is very qualified for the job, she thinks that coming off the chairmanship of the school committee into one of the highest paid administrative positions is not a good scenario. She said she would be okay with this plan if it were an interim position. But if this is intended to be a long-term position, she said, she would disagree with it. Ms. Bagley Jones asked for copies the policies that relate to hiring. Ms. Kelly asked to read aloud

Policy GBEA, which refers to the hiring of family members of School Committee members. She noted that this policy goes above what the Ethics Board recommends. Ms. Kelly reiterated her opinion that if this is a long-term position, there needs to be time between Mr. Pavlicek's retirement from the School Committee and his moving into this position. Ms. Gormley reviewed the timeline of events. She noted that they closed the School Spring posting last Friday. The posting was initially put on School Spring for 10 days. Then in mid-May, the position was re-opened and advertised again. Ms. Kelly asked if Mr. Pavlicek has all the requirements of the job posting. Ms. Gormley said his Superintendent's certification is pending, and that has not precluded them from hiring other candidates in the past. Ms. Kelly wanted to know if the job posting made it clear that a pending certification would be acceptable.

Mr. Walker acknowledged that he is concerned about the ethics of this, but he pointed out that the School Committee does not have a policy that covers this. In the absences of such a policy, he said we should rely on the ethics commission. Ms. Kelly said that we went to the Ethics Commission on the policy for GBEA and thinks it's logical that we should carry what we say about family members to someone who is walking off the School Committee. She noted that in previous discussions, this job was discussed as being perhaps an interim. Ms. Sheridan said the expectation is that this would be a one-year interim.

Ms. Gormley said she is putting Mr. Pavlicek forward for this job and he said he'd like to take it as an interim. However, I'm not going to ask someone to leave his/her job for an interim position. This is a one-year appointment. After a year, we can review. Ms. Bagley Jones said it seems as though the screening committee did their best. We have no choice than to move ahead quickly. She asked if , after one year, will there be another screening committee? We have to be clear. Mary Kelly asked if the School Committee is considering a one-year contract, or a 2, 3 year contract with a re-evaluation? If Mr. Pavlicek comes in for one year only, she said she's ok with that.

Ms. Bagley Jones said the policy GBEA does not apply to this situation. It applies to family members. Ms. Kelly said the public will probably see this differently. We can say there were no good candidates, which is true. Ms. Bagley Jones said that she disagrees. She thinks this is needed, and that as a School Committee, they need to hire a responsible person and she said she can stand behind this appointment. Ms. Gormley asked if Mr. Pavlicek had indicated what he would consider for a time line and Ms. Sheridan said he wants "a one-year." Mr. Walker said the School Committee should decide what's best for them and then offer that to Mr. Pavlicek. Ms. Sheridan said the conversation should be around the one-year issue.

Ms. Kelly said the School Committee has previously not interviewed any Assistant Superintendent positions live on television. They usually get the recommendation from Ms. Gormley and vote at a meeting. If we do this, we're setting a precedent. If it's our (SC) appointment, we have an obligation regarding transparency. She said she doesn't see how we do this without public interview. She thinks it's fine if Ms. Gormley says he's our finalist and we can vote him up or down. Ms. Kelly said we don't have a policy on

this, but know that, once we do this, that's the way it happens going forward. We'll have to interview all future Ass't Superintendent for Business positions live on TV.

There was discussion about which positions are hired by the School Committee. Only the Superintendent and the Assistant Superintendent for Business? Ms. Gormley thought the SPED director was also a School Committee appointment. Ms. Sheridan said we should clarify the one-year appointment language regarding Mr. Pavlicek. Ms. Bagley Jones asked for a timeline and a copy of the posting. Ms. Kelly said we should have a policy on this and also questioned the timeline. Mr. Walker said everyone agreed the process should be the same for all candidates.

Next Meeting Agenda Items

The Chair entertained a motion to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing contract negotiations for Milton Educators Association and to adjourn directly from Executive Session and not return to Open Session.

Move: Becky Padera

Second: Mary Kelly

Roll Call Vote: 6-0-0

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 pm