

Minutes of the School Committee  
Regular Meeting  
Milton High Library  
June 4, 2014

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

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

**Call to Order:** The Chair called the June 4th meeting of the School Committee to order at 7:08pm

**Approve Agenda:** The committee approved the agenda after adding the MHS Rugby Team to the Superintendent's Report (Item 5a), deleting The Retreat Format and the Draft School Committee Calendar (Items 6a and 6b), adding Unanticipated Expenses to Finance Subcommittee (Item 7b), and reversing the order of Items 8a and 8b.

**Citizens Speak:** No one came forward for Citizen Speak

### **Superintendent's Report**

Topic One: Milton High School Rugby Team. Coach Joe Dolan said it was a terrific season; they went 8-0 during the regular season. Highlights were raising \$1,500 for Relay for Life and watching the team grow during the season. Mr. Dolan said he will be starting a youth clinic on Sundays this summer, which will be free for Milton residents. Rob Conway is the assistant coach, who commented on the dedication of players. Mr. Walker congratulated the team and coaches. Mr. Phelan said "the sport is here to stay" at Milton High. Mr. Dolan also recognized Ned Corcoran for his contributions to the team.

Happenings: Milton High graduation was a great success. Ms. Bagley Jones said the event went smoothly. The Academic Awards Night was held last Tuesday night. More than \$120,000 was given to graduates. Wednesday was the Boosters Awards banquet. Friday night, there was a successful prom at Gillette Stadium. The All-Night Party was chaired by Paula Sullivan with the help of Casel Walker. Next week is Kindergarten Screening. Parents/guardians should have received screening appointments. All first grades will be open for parents to go in and view both French and Innovation Pathway programs. Tuesday night, the Milton Road Race will be run. There will be another School Committee meeting on Wednesday night. The Eighth Grade Social is June 13th. Ms. Gormley shared her plans to offer more PD over the summer and more PD into next year. Also, this summer, the high school will be busy, with nearly 600 students registered for MSE, Tucker Scholars, students receiving ESY at MHS. Explore Japan camp, summer music program, etc.

### **Chairman's Report**

Topic One: Follow Up. Mr. Walker reported that the School Committee recently saw a presentation on Improving Science MCAS performance. He said he is looking for an update on a more aggressive timeline. Also, he is looking for a timeline on improving the SPED proficiency gap. He said the School Committee recently saw a presentation on the Common Core. Ms. Kelly asked how to assess Common Core competency, especially for incoming students who join us later in their academic career. Regarding early literacy, Mr. Zullas raised the idea of a partnership with the public library

on early literacy. Ms. Padera suggested Pre-K outreach for summer 2014. Mr. Walker said he would like to reach closure on two of these and would like to discuss either next week or at a later meeting in June. Ms. Bagley Jones mentioned an upcoming mental health care requirement at one of the prior meetings. Mr. Walker said he would like more info on this and Ms. Bagley Jones said that she would research it. Mr. Walker said he'd like to know what the timeline is, and what the decision points are for PARCC. Ms. Gormley said there's a June and October timeline. Ms. Sheridan asked if the School Committee has a role to play in this. Ms. Gormley confirmed yes, and noted that many superintendents are reporting whether their district will be PARCC or MCAS. Ms. Bagley Jones asked for an update on the Parent Liaison and the Search Committee for Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum.

Regarding the MCAS/PARCC transition, Mr. Walker asked about the potential gap in data and how to avoid that. Finally, there are a number of items on the five-year financial plan with Dr. Pavlicek. What's the timeline, what would be the override request? What is the deliverable? Ms. Gormley said, regarding the five year financial plan, she was going to give an update for Finance Subcommittee. Dr. Pavlicek agreed and Ms. Kelly said it belongs in both places. Ms. Gormley said that Elaine McNeil Girmai and Stephanie Nephew have a great preschool proposal they will bring forward to School Committee.

Ms. Gormley went through the list of job descriptions for the three new positions and explained each. She said that they researched communities that had these positions and came up with a first draft of job descriptions. Ms. Bagley Jones said she would like to edit the job description. Regarding Mr. Phelan's position, Ms. Gormley said there is a possibility of having an interim position for one year. Ms. Sheridan said she would like to see job description for the technology position. Ms. Kelly asked for finalized list for advancement budget.

### **Finance Subcommittee:**

Topic One: Approval of Vendor Warrants. Dr. Pavlicek explained they need a vote on Warrant #49 for the amount of \$386,104.97

**Move:** Ms. Kelly

**Second:** Ms. Sheridan

Discussion: Ms. Kelly asked how many warrants have been reviewed and was told three so far. Ms. Kelly said, before we take the vote, she would like to thank Dr. Pavlicek for providing more specifics. She previously had concerns about signing off on line items. Mr. Walker also said he is pleased with detail we can work with now. Dr. Pavlicek reported that there is an inter-fund transfer request. The second School Resource Officer stipend is on a separate document for \$30,000 for second half of this year. Dr. Pavlicek said he is trying to keep us from writing checks to ourselves. He asked members to sign a separate page. It was decided that should be a separate motion.

**Vote:** 6-0-0

Dr. Pavlicek asked for approval of an inter-fund transfer of \$30,000 for the School Resource Office for half this year. Ms. Padera asked if the SRO has already started and it was confirmed that he had. Ms. Padera asked if the district is using the money from the music lesson security fee to pay for this. Dr. Pavlicek said that we are using all of that money, plus additional funds. Ms. Padera expressed concern that the music parents were being charged all year for an SRO who was hired near the end of the year. Mr. Walker said the committee should look into this. The chair entertained a motion to approve Dr. Pavlicek's transfer request.

**Move:** Ms. Sheridan

**Second:** Mr. Zullas

Discussion: There was discussion about the music lesson security fee. This fee was \$10 per semester. Ms. Padera made a motion to refund the money to families who paid the fee.

Mr. Walker offered a friendly amendment to the motion. He moved to take half of the money. Pay the \$30K out of the security line and only use half of the fees we collected. Mr. Walker then suggested this issue be taken up on the 11th. Ms. Kelly asked if there is time sensitivity and Dr. Pavlicek said the police would like the money to pay their salary lines. Ms. Sheridan said since she made the original motion, she would amend it to say that we take half of the funds that were raised and adjust it as we see fit. Mr. Zullas asked, before this discussion began, regarding the money in the account, does that include deposits from the music folks? Dr. Pavlicek said no, this was money in the general fund. The \$10 fee for security goes into the music revolving fund, with the tuitions, etc. He would estimate \$6-8,000 was raised through this security fee. Mr. Zullas asked if it were possible to transfer the money from the general fund without compromising the fee proceeds? Can we look at this as two different issues? Pay the bill this week, and next week, figure out the music security money. Mr. Walker said he is not comfortable taking a vote on an undetermined number and said he would like to hear more answers and whether we are making refunds.

Ms. Sheridan made a motion to transfer funds from general funds to MPD salary line for \$30,000.

**Move:** Ms. Sheridan

**Second:** Mr. Zullas

**Vote:** 5-1-0 (Mr. Walker opposed)

Ms. Kelly noted that she would like notice of inter-fund transfers ahead of time.

Topic Two: Unanticipated Expenses. Ms. Kelly talked about "odds and ends." Dr. Pavlicek said when we rolled forward the budget, we assumed static enrollment. We discovered that we will need 15 Kindergarten classes, not 14. This will require an additional teacher and also a .8 FTE, for a total of 1.8 in positions. Also, they will need a new set of furniture and materials. The cost of all would be about \$90,000. The flip side is that we get tuition. With the sliding scale, the average collected is \$3,000 per child. The district expects to get \$66,000 to help offset the costs. The net cost is about \$24,000. The second challenge we have is that we need a second co-taught teacher in Grade Two, which will cost around \$55,000. However, there is a "bubble class" at Grade 4, which requires only a .5 teacher, which offers a savings. Net is about \$27,000. Third challenge is integrated preschool. Some children with special needs are moving into preschool. In fall, the district will need to add a second class of integrated preschool and therefore need a .5 teacher. In these classrooms, role models pay tuition. Average tuition is about \$2,900 so the additional teacher would be revenue-neutral. The cost for supplies is about \$5,000. By January, we may need a third integrated preschool class. A lot of students with special needs will be joining us in January. This means a total of \$57,000 for all the above. Where will we get the money? One option may be increasing Medicaid funds, by encouraging parents to claim for Medicaid reimbursement. Also, in the advancement budget, we put in three positions. Two are half-time; one is full-time. We are in discussions about making the half-time positions full-time. The cost of adding them all to full time would be another \$62,000.

Now, we're at \$100,000 of additional spending. Where do we get that? There would be saving \$20K on bus contract. Legal bill was lower than expected, so take \$10K from here. There have been phone service changes, by working with a consultant. We have more phone lines than anyone could imagine. The cost of this is half of our first year savings, which is brought to about \$60,000. We

have two very senior people who are retiring. Staff exchange will make up the difference. If we add all these things, we could, in fact, afford to do it. Ms. Kelly thanked Dr. Pavlicek for this and said she will continue to maintain this list. She noted that the pre-school is very affordable.

Ms. Padera asked to see on a future agenda a discussion about bus fees. Are we in line with that? Dr. Pavlicek said the law requires bus transportation for students in grades K-6 who live over two miles from school. Ms. Padera said now that we have our contract, how much does it cost per students for the bus? Increased traffic and safety around school might be helped if there were more students taking the bus.

### **Policy Subcommittee:**

Topic One: First Reading, Policy ADDA, Background Checks (Attachment). Mr. Zullas said the current policy should be in the folders. Right now, CORI policy is based on state criminal records. Basically it's the state "rap sheet." In the past few years, national and state legislation has adopted a new system using fingerprint-based national database. All these agencies have issued regulations based on Mass. statutes. The fingerprint data base can be checked nationally to see if there are "unsuitable actions." A "CHRI check" is the new acronym. Mr. Zullas said he will recommend we adopt this policy with a few minor changes. For volunteers, MASC does not recommend this requirement, but the Superintendent may decide. There was discussion as to whether to use the word "may" or "shall" in the policy. Ms. Bagley Jones asked if we are currently doing CORIs on subcontractors in the schools. Ms. Gormley said yes. Mr. Zullas brought up the point about who pays the fees. He said that MASC recommends the individuals pay the fees — \$55 for educators and \$35 for all other staff and volunteers. This would be similar to a license and a condition to employment. There was some discussion of hardship waivers. The problem, if we try to define certain groups we would not charge, we might not "get" all of them. The MASC view is that policy should require the payment, but the Superintendent can provide for some hardship waivers.

Ms. Bagley Jones asked if staff members/volunteers can take the "results" with them to a new district. Mr. Zullas explained that the new district can call the old district to see if the employee was "suitable." The results of CHRI are good for 7 years. Ms. Sheridan asked what if you commit a crime in the 7 years and Dr. Pavlicek said the report is out of date 30 seconds after you take it. It's a "snapshot." Ms. Kelly said this is a step in the right direction. She did point out that it's strange to put a dollar amount into a policy and suggested re-wording that section. Ms. Sheridan said if this is our first reading, please note at the back of the policy.

Mr. Zullas noted that although the policy has been vetted by MASC, we also asked our own legal counsel to look at this. Mr. Walker asked if we worded it "May be required" -- and there's an unfortunate incident where a child is harmed, is there liability? Mr. Zullas said he would ask Ms. Tobin.

Topic Two: First Reading, Policy ACH, Amended Bullying/Peer Aggression Policy (Attachment) There are strengthened protections for certain students, LBGTQ, Disabled, etc. Mr. Zullas said that School Committee members have two alternatives as an updated policy. The first #1 (with red) is the existing policy, edited. The revisions were made by counsel. Also, there is a revised draft, which includes the new requirements. This tweaks our existing policy. There are fewer specifics. The bullying plan was discussed and edits were suggested. Ms. Gormley said she appreciates these very important changes. Ms. Bagley Jones said there has been an incredible effort on these policies and Milton is ahead of the curve on this issue.

## **Facilities Subcommittee**

Ms. Sheridan said we are still awaiting town-side approval for our off-site solar farm, on the roof of Stop & Shop in Readville. MPS is the leader in the state for green initiatives. No Green refunds this year, as we are not making more improvements. Dr. Pavlicek talked about the phone system re-vamp and subsequent savings. The district also completed an NStar energy audit, which is a helpful tool to constantly improve energy cost-savings. This is an ongoing maintenance issue. The back side of Gile Road will be repaved from the lower field to Blue Hills Parkway. They must also address issues about parking and concerns about speed bumps.

Ms. Sheridan gave an update from We Are Milton — a group of residents helping to plan a fireworks display and music festival on June 21st and June 22nd.

## **Next Meeting Agenda Items**

PARCC, the disposition of the security fee, second reading for two policies. Also, CDM will return, and EOY report, the MASC award to be reviewed and replace those items removed from the Chairman's Report.

Reminder this is Volunteer Reception. 6pm in the Courtyard.

The Chair entertained a motion to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing collective bargaining strategy for MEA and negotiation strategy for Non-Union Personnel and to adjourn directly from Executive Session and not return to Open Session.

**Move:** Ms. Padera

**Second:** Ms. Bagley Jones

**Roll Call Vote:** unanimous.

The regular meeting adjourned at 9:12pm.