

Minutes of the School Committee
Regular Meeting
Milton High Library
Date: September 30, 2015

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

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

Call to Order: Mr. Zullas called the meeting to order. The first item of business is to move to executive session. This is to discuss MEA and AFSCME, with the intent to return to regular session after Executive Session. This is a roll call vote.

Move: Mr. Zullas

Second: Mr. Walker

Roll Call Vote: Unanimous.

The meeting adjourned to Executive Session at 6:06pm.

The committee returned to Open Session at 7:03pm.

Approve Agenda: The agenda was approved as written.

Citizens Speak: none

Superintendent's Report

Topic One: Full Day Kindergarten Legislation. Ms. Gormley discussed the recent visit to the State House by the administration to talk about the funding for FDK.

Topic Two: CHARMS Collaborative Agreement (Attachment) (Vote). Ms. Gormley explained that students on IEPs sometimes require that they go to private/special ed placements. There are some schools throughout the state where MPS students attend. There are also collaboratives, which are usually geographically based. Milton belongs to the CHARMS collaborative. Ms. Bagley Jones asked how many students are in the collaborative? One in Charms. Ms. Bagley Jones asked, what is the fee? There is no fee. The chair entertained a motion to authorize the chair to sign the CHARMS collaborative agreement for this year.

Mr. Walker: Move to authorize the chair to review and sign the CHARMS agreement provided that he sees the agreement in order.

Move: Mr. Zullas

Second: Mr. Walker

Vote: 6-0-0

Happenings: Ms. Gormley talked about the new MHS football coach and MPS parent Steve Dombrowski, who was featured on Patriot's All Access TV channel. The team has enjoyed its third win this season over Walpole. Also, today, we had 250 Japanese students here at MHS. Next week is Celebrate Milton. Also, the district will be undergoing a SPED program review with PCG. There will be an upcoming concert with Pauline Wells, Brandon Grimes, etc. Another upcoming event is Swing for Sports tournament and reception. Alice Hoffman is coming to Milton for Milton Library and will give a speech to middle and high school students here at MHS. The Class of 1965 came on Saturday morning. Mr. Jette gave a tour of MHS. Also, the Class of 1965 gave a gift after the tour and funded the trophy case for art and music. Finally, MHS student Michael Sullivan is asking for containers for used flags so that he can properly retire them.

Chairman's Report

Mr. Zullas mentioned that he has a child who may be attending FDK next year. If there is tuition-free FDK, then his family may have a financial benefit. He checked with the Ethics Commission and has concluded that it is appropriate to recuse himself from the discussion of FDK. The best practice is for the member to leave the room.

* Mr. Zullas left the room.

Topic One: FY16 School Committee Goal (Attachment) (Vote). Ms. Padera said that there were two different possibilities for the goal that was discussed. The first rewrite:

Option #1: Develop a plan by January 2016 for the introduction of tuition free FDK which will include an assessment of costs and program implications should the plan be implemented.

Option #2: By January 2016, explore the feasibility of introducing tuition free FDK

Ms. Bagley Jones moved to accept Option #2 with the addition of the phrase "as one of our school committee goals."

Move: Ms. Bagley Jones

Second: Mr. Walker

Discussion: Mr. Walker said it's important that we not send any message to the general public that we made a decision that we haven't. Of these two, I think Option 2 does a better job of that. This is really a discussion about the money. Ms. Padera said she can't support Option 2. Seeking out funding is what we've been doing. She prefers the first option. She thinks Option #2 is too weak to support. Ms. Varela said she understands it's vague, but does Option #1 work without an override? Discussion ensued.

Ms. Varela suggested a friendly amendment to the motion, “Develop a plan by January 2016 for the feasibility of tuition free FDK, which would include an assessment of cost and program implication should the plan be implemented.”

Ms. Varela asked Ms. Bagley Jones to withdraw her original motion. Ms. Bagley Jones agreed.

Ms. Varela reiterated her motion: “Develop a plan by January 2016 to explore the feasibility of tuition-free FDK, which will include an assessment of costs and program implications, should the plan be implemented.”

Move: Ms. Varela

Second: Mr. Walker

Discussion: Ms. Bagley Jones said she is confused why this goal, of all the things we have, is part of our School Committee goals. Mr. Walker said he agrees with Ms. Bagley Jones, but as this goal is written, it's fine.

Vote: 5-0-0 (Mr. Zullas recused)

Topic Two: Preliminary FY17 Budget Estimates (Attachment) (Vote). Mr. Walker explained about how the selectmen asked the school to provide two budget figures and explained how these numbers were developed. He moved that the school committee approve two budget figures:

#1 \$42,548,079 for required budget.

#2: \$44,100,000 for the needs and priorities beyond level service.

Move: Mr. Walker

Second: Ms. Varela

Vote: 5-0-0

* note: Mr. Zullas returned to the meeting.

Topic Three: School Committee Procedures. Mr. Zullas said that the School Committee should be reminded how to make meetings productive and efficient. He noted that at times, members re-hash conversations from one meeting to the next. He asked members to remember and pay attention. He will try to get draft minutes to members. Secondly, he said he's been liberal in encouraging debate, but please be mindful that once a point has been made, it need not be repeated. Third, while it may be important to sometimes have a small, quick sidebar/caucus during presentations, those should be limited. Finally, it's the policy to send out packets on Friday before the meeting. He asked that all materials be sent to the Chair by Friday morning to get in the packet by Friday afternoon.

Vice Chair's Report

Topic One: MPEG Update. Ms. Padera noted that Milton Access Television has nearly completed their new studio and would like to give a tour to School Committee members before Oct. 7th. Members could arrive around 6:30pm for this tour.

Finance Subcommittee:

Topic One: Approval of Five-Year Capital Plan for Facilities and Technology (Attachment) (Vote). Mr. Walker reviewed the five-year capital plan. The plan includes the installation of some exterior cameras and some interior cameras. He would like to refer the discussion on interior cameras to the policy subcommittee. For technology, the district has a great wireless infrastructure that has served it well. The request is for more access points.

Mr. Walker moved to approve all three schedules.

Move: Mr. Walker

Second: Ms. Padera

Vote: 6-0-0

Topic Two: Extension of DESEs FY15 End-of-Year Report. Mr. Walker said this report was voted at the October 7th meeting. Mr. Zullas said this needs to be submitted tomorrow. Mr. Walker moved to approve this tonight. Mr. Zullas said if the members want more time to look through it, we can always amend it.

Move: Mr. Walker

Second: Mr. Zullas

Mr. Zullas said he's in a position to sign it. It was emailed this afternoon. It's 80 pages long. Mr. Walker moved to approve the document that was emailed this afternoon, and to authorize the chair to affix his signature provided the document is in order.

Move: Mr. Walker

Second: Mr. Zullas

Vote: 6-0-0

Topic Three: MPEG Lease Renewal (Attachment) (Vote). Mr. Walker said there is \$1 lease which must be approved in order to allow MPEG to continue the outstanding work they are doing.

Move to approve the proposed lease and authorize the chair to sign it, provided he agrees that it is in order. The motion allows him to make the modifications.

Move: Mr. Walker

Second: Ms. Padera

Discussion: Mr. Zullas said there are some substantive changes, but mostly cleanup and/or clarification.

Vote: 6-0-0

Topic Four: FY16 Budget Line Items (Attachment) (Vote). Mr. Walker introduced the document which outlines the line items. Moved approval of the document "FY 16 Line Items," for adoption by the School Committee.

Move: Mr. Walker

Second: Dr. Donahue

Vote: 6-0-0

Topic Five: Approval of Vendor Warrants (Vote). Dr. Pavlicek introduced the warrants:

Warrant #11 from Sept 10th. This warrant was signed at last meeting, but there was no vote. The amount is \$199,517.93.

Move: Mr. Walker

Second: Dr. Donahue

Vote: 5-0-1 (Mr. Walker abstained)

Second Warrant: #14 from Sept 30th in the amount of \$1,026,455.96

Move: Mr. Walker

Second: Ms. Varela

Discussion: Mr. Zullas said he didn't have a chance to read it. He'll abstain.

Vote: 4-0-2 (Mr. Zullas and Mr. Walker abstained)

Mr. Walker said that regarding Vendor warrant #11, he read carefully and noticed that there is an executed legal agreement included in the warrant. He would suggest that any settlement agreement, whether to avoid litigation, should be brought to School Committee prior to settlement, or at least have a discussion with the Chair.

Ms. Bagley Jones would like a "Finance 101" course. As we approach override season, she thinks it's important to go over the basics for the community.

Mr. Pavlicek noted that the first phase of introducing the new financial software is happening overnight tonight. There will be a full turnover by November 1st. The process is underway. The warrants will be done differently. There's a lot of improvements coming out of this, including moving payroll after the first of the year.

Mr. Zullas noted that this Chair has not signed any agreement without authorization by the School Committee.

Policy Subcommittee Report

Dr. Donahue said there are second readings of five policies. No interval revisions or comments. Clean copies in front of you.

Second Reading, Student Discipline, Policy JK

Move to adopt.

Move: Dr. Donahue

Second: Mr. Walker

Vote: 6-0-0

Second Reading, Disciplining Students with Special Needs Policy JKF

Move to adopt:

Move: Dr. Donahue

Second: Mr. Walker

Vote: 6-0-0

Second Reading, Sup't Evaluation Policy CBI

Move to adopt.

Move: Dr. Donahue

Second: Mr. Walker

Vote: 6-0-0

Second Reading Hazing Policy JICFA-R

Move to Adopt.

Move: Dr. Donahue

Second: Mr. Walker

Vote: 6-0-0

Second Reading Sexual Harassment Policy ACAA (Also GBB)

Move to Adopt:

Move: Dr. Donahue

Second: Mr. Walker

Vote: 6-0-0

Transportation and Traffic Safety Subcommittee Report:

Ms. Varela updated the committee on this group. There has been a very good start to school year with buses. Also, National Walk to School Day is October 7th. Walking School Buses are in place. At the middle school, they will give bike safety lessons, especially regarding the use of bike helmets. Ms. Bagley Jones asked about the pedestrian issues in East Milton. Ms. Varela will look into this. Ms. Padera said there was positive feedback about the additional bus in East Milton. Ms. Gormley noted that in late August, they redesigned the routes to use the same fleet of buses to make another run. The district did not "buy" another bus.

Next Meeting Agenda Items:

Ms. Bagley Jones asked for "Fiscal 101." Mr. Zullas said there will be an MCAS report.

The chair moved to adjourn.

Move: Mr. Zullas

Second: Ms. Padera

Roll Call Vote: Unanimous

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40pm.