

Minutes of the School Committee
Regular Meeting
Milton High Library
August 21, 2013

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

Not Present: Mary Kelly

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 August 21, 2013 meeting of the School Committee to order at 7:01 pm.

Approve Agenda

The committee approved the agenda after the addition of the School Committee calendar.

Citizens Speak

No one came forward for Citizen Speak

Superintendent's Report

Topic One: Ms. Gormley gave a back-to-school update. She said the custodial staff has worked hard to get the schools ready for opening day. All six buildings have been meticulously cleaned. In addition, the staff at Central Office has had a busy summer, interviewing candidates, reviewing resumes and hiring. Mr. Phelan announced there are 32 new staff members here in Milton Public Schools this fall. During the new staff orientation, they discussed the advancement budget, technology initiative and new safety protocols. With regard to the teacher/staff handbooks, Ms. Gormley stated that they have been edited, reviewed and updated. Ms. Gormley announced she has increased the enrollment cap for Kindergarten to 23 (from 22) and they will try to assign the half-day K students to those 23 classes. Regarding Grade One registration, Ms. Gormley reviewed the three-tiered approach for assigning students. Following the process, there was a lottery held at Glover and Tucker. She reported that the process has worked and all those who wanted French Immersion were able to be placed in a classroom, and although not all families got their school of choice, they all got their program of choice.

Topic Two: School Year Calendar (Attachment) Ms. Gormley explained how the school calendar would work in regard to the Jewish holidays. The plan is that when Yom Kippur falls on a school day, there will be no school. When Yom Kippur falls on a weekend,

there will be no school for one day of Rosh Hashanah. She also explained that the athletic signups have gone very well under the direction of new AD Larry Rooney.

Topic Three: Mr. Walker discussed security improvements in the district. He said about six months ago, after the Newtown shootings, the School Committee began to look into improving safety and security with Milton Police Chief Richard Wells, Bill Ritchie and members of District Attorney Michael Morrissey's office. There were key areas to be addressed:

- Improve Police Department Communications: In some schools, the quality of communications for police radios was not satisfactory. This problem has been solved.
- "Harden" some of the physical facilities: Some schools could do a better job of controlling access. Physical improvements have been made to enhance them.
- Access Control: Key access control systems have been installed to allow us to know who is requesting access to the buildings.
- MHS Security: Improve after-school security at the high school campus in the afternoon and evening hours.
- Cultural Change: All staff will be trained in safety and security protocols.

Mr. Walker said that he is confident that once we have completed these initiatives, the Milton Public Schools will be in the forefront in terms of school security and safety.

Chairman's Report

Topic One: Warrant Schedule. (Vote) Ms. Sheridan said there has been some discussion about the signing of the warrant. She explained it is the School Committee's responsibility to sign the warrant regularly when bills need to be paid. She recognized that it's not always easy for School Committee members to get to Milton High during regular business hours, so she has come up with a rotating schedule. Ms. Sheridan referred to a handout, where the left side is blank. She randomly assigned dates to each School Committee member to sign the warrant. She explained that if a member can't make it on their assigned date, they should find another member to "cover" for them. She entertained a motion to approve the schedule.

Move: Mr. Walker

Second: Ms. Padera

Vote: 4-0-0

Topic Two: Strategic Plan RFT (Attachment) (Vote) Mr. Walker reported that he received some great feedback on this RFP. He handed out the same document, except that he boldfaced some parts. He wanted to make sure that, as part of the strategic plan, this document can be reused by the School Committee in subsequent years. The chair entertained a motion to accept the Strategic Plan RFP.

Move: Ms. Padera

Second: Mr. Zullas

Vote: 4-0-0

Topic Three: Meeting Agendas. Ms. Sheridan said that School Committee members have shared some frustrations about long meetings. She asked that SC members send specific recommendations to her on how to improve meetings and cut down on the length.

Ms. Sheridan also noted there are some changes to the School Committee schedule. She would like to move the meeting scheduled for September 18th to September 25th.

Finance Subcommittee Report

Topic One: FY14 Budget (Vote) Mr. Walker recommended approval.

Move: Mr. Walker

Second: Mr. Zullas

Discussion: Ms. Gormley said there have been regular meetings of the Finance Subcommittee and a good deal of discussion about this budget.

Vote: 4-0-0

Topic Two: Accepting Donations (Attachments) (Votes)

- Item One: Copeland Family Foundation Donation for Brooks Field Artificial Turf Replacement.
- Item Two: Copeland Family Foundation Donation for .5 Rental Facilities Coordinator Salary

Move to approve both items: Mr. Walker

Second: Mr. Zullas

Vote: 4-0-0

Topic Three: Water Bill (Vote) Mr. Walker explained that, due to a broken water meter, the amount charged to the town has been incorrect. The amount owed on the adjusted bill is \$46,000. The town will accept a payment plan. Mr. Walker moved that the School Committee pay \$16,000 now and authorize Dr. Pavlicek to work out a payment plan with the town.

Move: Mr. Walker

Second: Ms. Padera

Discussion: Dr. Pavlicek explained how defective meter was under-reading the school department's consumption. It has since been repaired and as of June 27th, 2013, everything has been adjusted. Mr. Zullas disagreed that the school department should have to pay the entire amount. He thinks the fair thing would be to share the burden of the error and agree to pay 50% of the owed amount. He proposed meeting with the Board of Selectmen to see what they think is fair. As an alternative, he suggested we

pay part of the bill now, with no commitment to pay the rest. Ms. Sheridan agreed that it may be worth a discussion with the town on this issue.

Motion Withdrawn: Mr. Walker

After some discussion, Ms. Sheridan and Mr. Zullas agreed to meet with the selectmen together on this issue.

****note:** Ms. Bagley Jones arrived at this point (7:50 pm)

Old Business: None

Next Meeting Agenda Items: none

Citizen Speak (Round Two): None

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

Move: Mr. Walker

Second: Mr. Zullas

Vote: 5-0-0

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 pm.