

Minutes of the School Committee  
Regular Meeting  
Milton High Library  
Date: May 20, 2015

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

**Student Reps:** Matt McCarthy and Spencer Torres.

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

**Call to Order:** The Chair called the May 20, 2015 meeting of the School Committee to order at 7:08pm

**Approve Agenda:** The committee approved the agenda after removing Item 4d (Goals of the Family Outreach Liaison.) The chair reminded the audience of the rules of Citizens Speak.

### **Citizens Speak**

Rev. Hall Kirkham was the first speaker. He commented on the expansion of the school calendar by making Yom Kippur and Good Friday as school days. He reminded the committee that Yom Kippur is the holiest day of Jewish calendar.

Karen Friedman Hanna came to speak as a past parent of children in the Milton Public Schools, and as the president of Congregation Beth Shalom of the Blue Hills. She noted that missing school for a religious holiday became an issue in middle and high school, when it became a family discussion about the more important thing -- school, work or religious celebration.

Rob Milt spoke next, as the parent of three Milton Public Schools students. He said that government works best when a problem is identified and a solution is deliberated by the elected body. He asked the School Committee to consult with the PTOs on how to properly "bank" snow days.

Debra Milbauer, Glover and Pierce parent, said she was speaking on behalf of many Jewish families in Milton. Yom Kippur is the most sacred holiday of the entire year. Jewish community is not being honored or respected. She said she is disturbed by the process and thought the School Committee should have convened a study committee comprised of parents, teachers, etc. to work on this.

Rabbi Benjamin handed out a chart, which listed comparable school districts. He noted that nobody banks seven days and said he thinks Milton shouldn't either.

Father Patrick McLaughlin came to speak. He is living at St. Agatha's rectory. Easter is the most sacred holiday of the Christian calendar. He asked, is it possible to keep Yom Kippur, keep a half day on Good Friday?

Mr. Zullas noted that, if this is logistically feasible, then revisiting the issue is warranted. He asked to include a discussion of this issue on June 10th. All members can discuss and make a motion at that time if they wish.

### **Superintendent's Report**

Topic One: Elementary and Middle School Future Problem Solving Program. Coaches Lori Henry and Nicole Hoyceanyls, along with all the students from the Future Problem Solving teams came to talk to the School Committee about their recent competitions. The students and coaches were congratulated by School Committee members.

Topic Two: Massachusetts Regional Science and Engineering Fair. Pierce Middle School Principal Dr. Karen Spaulding and Science Curriculum Coordinator Christie Chiappetta came to tell the School Committee about the success of three Pierce students -- Luke Baltay, Anna Fahy and Wallace Heller at this competition. Ms. Gormley congratulated these students, along with their parents and teachers. Ms. Chiappetta said the school had an amazing science fair this year, with about 300 parents in attendance. John Diamond and the high school robotics team came to put on a demonstration. Each student talked about their science fair project. Mr. Walker asked each of them questions about their science projects. Dr. Donohue congratulated them on their interest in science.

Topic Three: Milton Public Schools/Milton Public Library Initiative/Partnership. Milton Public Schools Librarian Lori Henry, along with Milton Public Library Children's Librarian Sara Truog came to talk about the goal of giving a library card to each child. They talked about their interaction with elementary school students and how they have been distributing library card applications. On average, the Milton Public Library gives out 15-20 cards per month to children, according to Ms. Truog. However, after this collaboration, there have been 106 cards given out to K students. The second initiative is the 4th Grade Book Clubs. The pair also talked about Summer Reading Program. Last summer, there were 200 students registered and 100 met the goal of 300 minutes of reading time. Ms. Henry and Ms. Truog also talked about Summer Storytimes. They noted that Will Adams invited Sara Truog and Lori Henry to be part of the long-range planning committee for the Milton Public Library. In addition, the pair worked

together to write an essay that has been selected for publication. Ms. Bagley Jones said she is very impressed with how they get the young people engaged at the library. She asked about a partnership between the library and the Pierce Middle School and was told there are conversations underway about developing a partnership.

Mr. Walker congratulated them on their work and asked how close are we to achieving the goal of getting every first-grader a library card. They said it is difficult to track but they will work on getting better data.

Happenings: Ms. Gormley noted that next week is Kindergarten screening. Tomorrow night is the SEPAC overview. Also upcoming is the Boosters Banquet, Senior Awards Night, Graduation and the All-Night Party for Seniors this year. Student Rep. Mr. McCarthy also talked about the Rugby team heading to States. Ms. Gormley reminded the audience is Bye Bye Birdie will be performed at Pierce Middle School, and Katie Greer will be visiting grades 5-8 on June 8th and speaking to parents and guardians that evening.

\*Mr. Zullas congratulated Matt McCarthy on his two years as School Committee representative. He noted his willingness to share opinions and wished him well at St. Bonaventure. Ms. Bagley Jones also congratulated Mr. McCarthy. Ms. Gormley talked about the Tucker students who made birdhouses as a fundraiser. Denis Keohane was able to raise money to help fund the students' Duck Tour field trip. She named the families who donated and said this exemplifies the generosity of the entire community.

## **Chairman's Report**

Topic One: FY16 Budget Update. Dr. Pavlicek said he could offer a more complete update at the next meeting.

Topic Two: Full Day Kindergarten Update. Dr. Pavlicek noted that as of this afternoon, nothing has been voted yet regarding the funding for FDK. Within the next few days, we will find out how the Senate budget funds the FDK grant. Dr. Pavlicek said that once this is settled, if we don't have a grant, we may have to re-set the tuition. Mr. Zullas re-iterated that this is a \$600 hit per family. Ms. Varela asked for a clarification -- are we proceeding with the whole screening process as normal, but letting families know that this is happening? Mr. Walker said we should provide contact information for those on the committees in the Senate. Ms. Bagley Jones said a more practical point of view is that we should put out the cost of the program going up. We should be very, very vocal about this. Dr. Donahue suggested expanding this to other preschools in town, for those without students in Milton Public Schools.

Topic Three: Milton School Committee Subcommittee/Negotiating Team (Attachment) (Vote.)  
The chairman said he has a slate and will nominate each committee by slate.

Mr. Zullas nominated Mr. Walker and Ms. Padera for *Finance Subcommittee*.

**Move:** Mr. Zullas

**Second:** Dr. Donahue

**Vote:** 6-0-0

Mr. Zullas nominated Ms. Varela, Dr. Donahue and Ms. Bagley Jones for *Policy Subcommittee*.

**Move:** Mr. Zullas

**Second:** Mr. Walker

Discussion: Ms. Bagley Jones said she is not sure this committee needs three people, but is willing to help out.

**Vote:** unanimous

Mr. Zullas nominated Ms. Bagley Jones and Ms. Padera for *Health & Wellness Subcommittee*.

**Move:** Mr. Zullas

**Second:** Ms. Bagley Jones

**Vote:** 6-0-0

Mr. Zullas nominated Mr. Walker for *Facilities Subcommittee*.

**Move:** Mr. Walker

**Second:** Ms. Bagley Jones

**Vote:** 6-0-0

\*note: Mr. Walker said the charge for this subcommittee is "to create a comprehensive facilities management plan."

Mr. Zullas noted that they will need representation for various town committees.

For the rep to *Town/School Consolidation Subcommittee*, Mr. Zullas noted that he serves on this committee and would like to stay on this until this fall, at which point Mr. Walker has expressed interest in serving. Therefore, Mr. Zullas nominated himself to serve.

**Move:** Mr. Zullas

**Second:** Mr. Walker

**Vote:** 6-0-0

For the rep to *MPEG committee*, Mr. Zullas noted that Ms. Padera would like to continue. Mr. Zullas nominated Ms. Padera.

**Move:** Mr. Zullas

**Second:** Mr. Walker

Discussion: Ms. Varela noted that she would like to serve on this committee if Ms. Padera ever wants to step down. She is also willing to fill in if Ms. Padera cannot make it to a meeting.

**Vote:** 6-0-0

For the rep to *Milton Foundation for Education*, Mr. Zullas nominated Ms. Padera.

**Move:** Ms. Padera

**Second:** Mr. Walker

**Vote:** 6-0-0

For the rep to *Town/Capital Improvement Committee*, Mr. Zullas nominated Mr. Walker.

**Move:** Mr. Zullas

**Second:** Ms. Varela

**Vote:** 6-0-0

For rep to the *Transportation, Safety and Traffic Committee*, Mr. Zullas noted that he is currently serving, but would like to step down by the fall. He nominated himself and Ms. Varela as reps.

**Move:** Mr. Zullas

**Second:** Dr. Donahue

**Vote:** 6-0-0

For *Payroll Warrant*, Mr. Zullas explained that this is someone from the school committee who signs the payroll so that the staff can be paid. Mr. Zullas nominated Ms. Padera and Ms. Bagley Jones to serve on this.

**Move:** Mr. Zullas

**Second:** Ms. Varela

**Vote:** 6-0-0

Mr. Zullas noted that the next appointment is to be part of the Collective Bargaining Negotiating Team. This is the team that the School Committee votes to represent the committee during contract negotiations and serve as the “agent” for the School Committee. Mr. Zullas moved to appoint Mr. Zullas and Ms. Padera as the negotiating team.

**Move:** Mr. Zullas

**Second:** Ms. Varela

Discussion: Mr. Walker proposed a friendly amendment to add more clarity on the charge for the team. He gave a handout with the wording to School Committee members, which read as follows: *“Moved that the charge for the School Committee negotiating team will be to execute collective bargaining objectives that have resulted from a planning process that included the School Committee and the Administration leadership team and that have been approved by the Superintendent and the School Committee.”* Mr. Zullas asked, is this an amendment to the policy, or is it a charge to the team? Ms. Bagley Jones asked if we were to change the planning process, what would that look like? Mr. Walker explained that the responsibilities would be similar to how they are now. Mr. Zullas asked, is this really just to put words around what has been the status quo? Mr. Walker said yes. Ms. Bagley Jones asked about the timeline. Mr. Zullas said this reinforces that this is a top-down process, rather than a bottom-up process. Mr. Zullas noted that the motion is on the table and said he would accept the friendly amendment. He reiterated the motion to appoint Ms. Padera and Mr. Zullas as part of the Collective Bargaining Negotiating Team, with the charge as read above by Mr. Walker.

**Move:** Mr. Zullas

**Second:** Mr. Walker

**Vote:** 6-0-0

Topic Four: Strategic Plan Update/Discussion. The chair asked, do we want a committee, and what form should that committee take? Should we have a strategic plan advisory committee, to outline a five year plan for the district? Dr. Donahue has expressed interest in this committee. Ms. Bagley Jones said she thought this overlaps with what we already do. The chair said he would be in favor of this but only if it became more specific. Mr. Walker said he thinks that the committee should identify some strategic issues that are not currently on the table and recommended that it stay a short list. Ms. Bagley Jones said it's very important to respect the time of the administration. She likes the long-range planning idea. Ms. Bagley Jones asked Ms. Gormley her opinion on this. Ms. Gormley talked about the advancement initiatives and how they have formed the basis of many districts’ strategic plans and noted that the entire district is invested in these now. Ms. Padera thought this committee would be helpful for the new members. Dr. Donahue said his sense would be that there are issues we can see on the horizon and address them. Mr. Walker moved “to create a strategic issues committee, the purpose of which is to identify key strategic issues which are not currently being addressed and creating a

plan integrating current goals and objectives that are in place with new strategic issues that are identified.”

**Move:** Mr. Walker

**Second:** Dr. Donahue.

**Vote:** 6-0-0

Topic Five: Summer Retreat/Summer Meeting Schedule (Attachment). Last year, we had a facilitator come in to help out with the retreat, which was held in August. The chair noted there are meetings scheduled through June (10 and 24), perhaps one meeting in July. Two in August, one of which would be the retreat/goal setting exercise. He suggested a Saturday afternoon to lead into a cookout. Ms. Bagley Jones thinks it's a great idea. There was some discussion about the summer schedule.

Topic Six: Approval of Vendor Warrants

Dr. Pavlicek presented Warrant #47 from May 21 in the amount of \$559,550.86

**Move:** Ms. Padera

**Second:** Ms. Varela

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

### **Transportation & Traffic Safety Subcommittee Report:**

Mr. Zullas said this committee met, developed a list of issues from each of the schools and had two sessions with the chief of police. There has been a very good exchange of issues and potential solutions to problems identified. They are in the process of finding some solutions. Also, he spoke about the upcoming Bike Rodeo.

### **Approval of Minutes:**

May 6th, 2015 School Choice Hearing

**Move:** Mr. Zullas

**Second:** SV

**Vote:** 6-0-0

May 6, 2015 Regular School Committee Meeting

**Move:** Mr. Zullas

**Second:** Dr. Donahue

Discussion: Change "cost" to "expenses"

**Vote:** 6-0-0

### **Next Meeting Agenda Items**

Mr. Zullas asked for the addition of a discussion of Religious Holidays.

Mr. Walker asked for a discussion of Edline, including what percentage of teachers regularly use Edline? Is there contract language to require all teachers to comply or do we need new contract language?

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

**Move:** Mr. Zullas

**Second:** Mr. Walker

**Roll Call Vote:** 6-0-0

The Next School Committee meeting is scheduled for June 10th.

The meeting adjourned at 9:52pm.