

Milton School Committee Meeting
September 5, 2018
Minutes

Committee Present: Dr. Kevin Donahue, Chair; Sheila Varela, Vice Chair; Dr. Elaine Craghead; Margaret Eberhardt; Ada Rosmarin; and Elizabeth White

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

Meeting called to order at 7pm

Dr. Donahue added “Guest of the Superintendent” to the agenda.

No one came forward for Citizen Speak.

Superintendent’s Report

Guest of the Superintendent: Supt. Gormley invited Milton’s SEL Facilitator Laurie Stillman to the table to share some exciting news. Ms. Stillman informed the public that her association with the schools and social emotional learning (SEL) came about through her work with the Milton Substance Abuse Coalition. The Milton Substance Abuse Coalition recently applied for a Drug-Free Communities Grant (through DESE) and was recently notified that the grant has been awarded. The Coalition will receive \$125,000 per year for the next 5 years and up to 10 years if they reapply. Ms. Stillman worked closely with Superintendent Gormley and Assistant Superintendent Janet Sheehan when writing the grant, and DESE is clear on how the grant is spent. Ms. Stillman reported that a .6 community engagement position for the town and a .4 position (Masters Degree level) to work in the schools were written into the grant. The grant also requires that we focus on the two pressing areas impacting the town. When looking at the data from the YRBS survey, marijuana use and underage drinking were the two primary issues.

A significant amount of the resources will be going to the schools and the grant will fund a large portion of the SEL Facilitator position. A parent education program will also be included. Dr. Donahue stated that the amount of resources dedicated to these important topics will be tremendous. Ms. Stillman added that in year one they would like to do a Social Norms campaign with students to prevent underage drinking. Addressing student mental health will be another area of focus.

Ms. Stillman introduced Deborah Milbauer who has also been working closely with her and the Milton Substance Abuse Coalition. Ms. Milbauer has worked with other communities that have obtained DESE grants, and she has seen firsthand the trend of substance abuse go down when these grant funds are targeted to prevention, etc. She informed the public that she saw the trend go down in Danvers over a 7-year period – alcohol consumption decreased by 12%; cigarette use by 12%; high risk (binge) drinking by 25.5%. She is confident the DESE grant funds will make a difference in Milton. Ms. Milbauer stated that Milton is unique since from the beginning all stakeholders have been supportive and involved.

Happenings: Superintendent Gormley reported that it was an excellent start of school. She thanked Assistant Superintendent Pavlicek and Rachel Schewe for their work with transportation and informed the public that all transportation information is on the website and parents/guardians can email bus@miltonps.org.

Superintendent Gormley reviewed the date change for the instrumental beginner registration night (Sept. 11 to Sept. 6) and informed the public of the upcoming Parent Speaker Series event on September 13th at 6:30 in the MHS Auditorium (Jane Hardin, *Preparing your Student for a Successful School Year*).

Superintendent Gormley also gave a special thank you to ProForma (Bill Resnick), Sullivan Insurance, Coffee Break, Milton Fruit Center and Senator Walter Timilty for donating backpacks to **all** MHS students as part of the Bring your own Device initiative. We live in a generous community.

Superintendent Gormley thanked Stephanie O’Keefe for her work on the Annual Report. The Annual Report will be emailed to the Committee tonight. She suggested that comments/edits be sent directly to Stephanie. The Annual Report will be approved at the next meeting.

Chair’s Report

Dr. Donahue discussed the revised School Committee meeting calendar and the scheduled meetings being held at each school. He suggested that Committee members send him edits to this schedule if they have any. Superintendent Gormley added that she had removed some of the annual presentations to the School Committee from the calendar. Dr. Donahue asked that Committee members let him know if they have specific topics they would like to have presented at School Committee. Ms. Rosmarin suggested having brief tours when they visit each school throughout the year. All agreed this would be beneficial.

Dr. Donahue mentioned data and the Diversity Report. He stated that we are working under the deadlines of DESE with regard to reporting. We would not be ready to present on October 17th since the MCAS data is not ready.

Finance Subcommittee Report

Dr. Craghead reported that an enrollment update was given at the last meeting. We are 70 students above where we were at this point last year and there are 7 more in the pipeline. The Finance Subcommittee tabled the discussion of a stratified fee proposal for athletics and salary increases for Community Schools. Dr. Craghead stated that the Finance Subcommittee will be scheduling meetings with each school Site Council. At the next meeting there will be a discussion of the two items that were tabled along with a discussion of the FY20 budget calendar and capital request.

Motion was made to approve vendor Warrant #6 dated August 17, 2018 in the amount of \$149,506.94 and vendor Warrant #7 dated August 23, 2018 in the amount of \$131,526.50.

Second: S. Varela

Vote: 6-0-0

Ms. Varela requested that dates of meetings, agendas, and minutes of Subcommittee/Advisory Committees be sent to all School Committee members.

Facilities Advisory Committee Report

Ms. Rosmarin reported that the Facilities Advisory Committee met this evening prior to School Committee meeting. Highlights of tonight's meeting included the RFQ being discussed for a facilities study. The Facilities Advisory Committee has been in touch with the town's Chief Procurement Officer Arlyn Zuniga who informed us that there is an exemption from the requirement to do an RFQ for this work. This would mean that we are able to contract directly with an architectural firm. Assistant Superintendent Pavlicek explained that under Chapter 30(b), there are a variety of exemptions and one of them is for architectural work. When asked by Ms. Varela if the consultant would be addressing both long-term and short-term solutions, Ms. Rosmarin replied that right now they will address short-term solutions. The consultant will provide steps for a more long-term solution. Ms. Varela feels it would be helpful to have the short-term solution presented at January Town Meeting and the long-term solution presented at May's Town Meeting. She feels there is a certain level of urgency and parents/guardians want feedback. Dr. Donahue replied that coming up with an effective short-term solution will lay the groundwork for the long-term. Committee members agreed that having DRA do the consultant work will expedite the process since they are familiar with our buildings.

Ms. Eberhardt feels it would be worthwhile to explore other space options again. Even though we already reached out to the private and parochial schools and Curry College, we should reach out again. Ms. Rosmarin will add that to the next Facilities Advisory Committee agenda. At the next Facilities meeting the group will also be reviewing the facilities and technology capital requests.

Ms. Rosmarin reported that the last item discussed was the town-wide coordination regarding space – there are many different building projects being discussed for the town. Dr. Donahue has been invited to attend the next Selectmen's meeting to talk about our facilities issues and ideas going forward. Ms. Rosmarin feels that there is a lot to be said for coordinating efforts and streamlining the approach for this issue. Ms. Varela agreed, but does not want this coordination to delay our efforts.

Dr. Donahue noted that there was no Old Business to discuss and no Citizens Speak Topic Response.

Next Agenda Items

Dr. Donahue asked members to send him agenda items they would like addressed if they are not already listed on the calendar. Dr. Craghead inquired if the Wilson-Kindelan vote on the September 26th agenda is the vote of the School Committee to approve the new school. Dr. Donahue replied yes.

Dr. Donahue made the motion to adjourn the School Committee meeting for the purpose of entering into executive session to discuss contract negotiations with union personnel and not to return to public session.

By a roll call unanimous vote, the regular School Committee meeting was adjourned.