

Minutes of the School Committee
Regular Meeting
Milton High School Cable Access Studio
Date: February 28, 2018

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

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

Call to Order

The Chair called the February 28th meeting of the School Committee to order at 7:01pm.

Approve Agenda

The committee approved the agenda after removing Item 4a; moving 5b and c; and removing 6a.

Citizens Speak: None.

Superintendent's Report

Happenings: Ms. Gormley discussed the Tri-M induction that she attended earlier in the day. She named the inductees. Tomorrow night is 5th Grade Info Night at 6:30 in the PMS auditorium. On Saturday morning, there will be a Minority Job Fair in the Copeland Field House. On Wednesday, there will be a PD day. March is Music & Arts in Our Schools Month. March 6 is Grade One Info Night. On March 12th is STEM Night. MHS Science Teacher Paul Damiani will go to a session on gene editing. Spring Athletic registration begins tomorrow. Ms. Gormley also gave an update on the winter athletic season.

Chairman's Report

Topic One: Blue Hills Regional Technical School Representative. Dr. Donahue noted that Mr. Joyce recently passed away. As such, the School Committee is charged with selecting a successor. They have been instructed to post the vacancy and there is a seven day window to receive interested applicants. Applications are available at Town Hall.

Topic Two: The Annual Public Budget Hearing will be held on March 21st.

Topic Three: District Enrollment/Class Space. Dr. Donahue said this topic has taken a good deal of time. He presented a sheet of options, along with pros and cons of each.

- Option A: Build a Fifth Elementary School. This would match up with the projected 24% elementary enrollment bump. Ms. Varela said this is a big "ask." Ms. White said she recalls when, 20 years ago, there was a huge pushback on the cost of the school building

project. Ms. Rosmarin said the first option is the way the future is going. Dr. Craghead agreed with Ms. White and Ms. Rosmarin.

- Option B: Build an Early Learning center for Pre-K and K classes, district-wide. We see the K classes growing, and we're going to have to deal with that. Pouring money into a temporary solution is not cost-effective. As you think about the future, this is not just a temporary problem. Ms. Rosmarin talked about the large amount of high quality preschool programs in Milton. What is a challenge for the private preschool community is to make it affordable. Dr. Craghead asked about the "best practices" for having all the pre-K and K classrooms in one place. Ms. Rosmarin said this has been successful in other towns and is not a negative.
- Option C: Expand one or more existing elementary schools. Dr. Craghead said she assumes this means Glover. Dr. Pavlicek explained that Glover can't support a second floor and therefore any expansion would have to occur in the back field. Ms. Varela asked if this might be wetlands. Dr. Craghead said this is difficult to have this conversation without ballpark numbers. Dr. Pavlicek said each classroom costs about \$400,000, but the whole project is very hard to cost out. Our current schools are built for 14 strands, but sometimes we run 15 and now, we're running 16. Ms. Rosmarin asked if we were to build a new elementary school, would it be 3 strand school or a 4 strand school? Ms. Gormley said she would never build a 3 strand school.

Ms. Rosmarin asked if they could review the temporary solutions. Regarding using specialist space, is there any left? She was told no, but there is the possibility of using the Cu/Co fourth floor. Ms. Eberhardt asked, what is the solution? Will we have 16 K in the fall? She was told yes. Dr. Donahue said we should think of this in three phases. Phase one is triage. Phase two depends on the end step, and Phase Three would be the completion of the project. Ms. White asked how this might be financed. Dr. Pavlicek explained how debt exclusion overrides work. School Committee members discussed a time line for moving forward, engaging town meeting, etc. Dr. Donahue asked, should we get the ball rolling ASAP? This is a 5-7 year issue. Members discussed if they should approach Town Meeting in April to put together a planning committee, similar to the fire house study committee. Dr. Craghead asked if the committee would be asking them to approve appropriation funds? The warrant is closed for April. Ms. Rosmarin said we might not want to present until we get "real numbers." Discussion ensued. Dr. Donahue said we should take the next few months to gather data, move pieces into place, then get this on the Warrant for fall Town Meeting, not April. In the meantime, there should be a temporary solution for the fall school year.

Finance Subcommittee

Topic One: The last meeting was cancelled. The prior meeting was reviewing the facility/space needs report. Dr. Craghead made an omnibus motion to approve three warrants:

Warrant #30, dated Jan 25, 2018 in the amount of \$591,215.46

Warrant #32 dated Feb. 8, 2018 in the amount of \$302,167.71

Warrant #34 dated Feb. 22, 2018 in the amount of \$744,699.02

Move: Dr. Craghead

Second: Ms. Eberhardt

Vote: 5-0-1 (Ms. White abstained)

Transportation and Traffic Safety Advisory Committee

Ms. Varela reported that the advisory committee walked through the intersection of Oak Street and Blue Hill Avenue. State Rep. William Driscoll and State Rep. Daniel Cullinane, along with Mass. DOT representatives came along to view the area. In the short term, the state will try to get a large flashing cone installed soon. But there will be more work to be done at this intersection. At Glover, work needs to be done at the corner of Canton Ave and Brook Road, with the suggestion of adding a flashing stop sign? Ms. Varela suggested taking this issue to the selectmen to let them know there's a concern. She thought it might be a good idea to attend Citizen Speak at Selectmen's meeting. Also, at Tucker, they have implemented staggered departure, which has helped a little bit. Ms. Varela also thought they should survey the Glover community about why nobody takes the bus.

Facilities Advisory Committee Report

It was reported that the Milton Park and Rec department might want to focus on gym space and non-organized athletics for future programming.

Approval of Minutes

The chair moved to approve the minutes of January 17th, 2018.

Move: Dr. Donahue

Second: Ms. Varlea

Discussion: no edits

Vote: 6-0-0

Old Business

Citizens for a Diverse Milton has invited Dr. Donahue to their next meeting and he plans to attend. Also, the annual budget was presented at the Warrant Committee last night.

Next Meeting Agenda Items

The Superintendent's mid-cycle evaluation will be presented. The Athletic Director will present. Ms. Eberhardt said she is seeing signs for a new school opening in Milton and they need to come back in to the School Committee for approval. Dr. Donahue said he has contacted the administration of the new school several weeks ago to inform them about this requirement.

The Chair entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Move: Dr. Donahue

Second: Ms. Eberhardt

Vote: 6-0-0

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15pm.