

**SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES
TOWN HALL MEETING ROOM
Monday, February 25, 2008**

Members attending: Virginia Justicz, Stu Sklar, Brian Stevens, Will Verbits, Willie Wickman, and Thomas W. Jefferson

Call to Order – Willie Wickman, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Minutes

Stu Sklar made the motion and Virginia Justicz seconded to accept the minutes from the February 11, 2008 meeting with one minor correction.

VOTED (4/0) to accept the motion. (Virginia Justicz (Yes), Stu Sklar (Yes) Brian Stevens (Yes), Will Verbits (Yes), Willie Wickman (Abstain).

The Committee asked that Executive Session Minutes be drafted for the February 11, 2008 Meeting.

Starting Time Study

Dr. Jefferson reported that the committee was scheduled to meet on Wednesday to finalize the survey for parents and staff to complete on-line. Students will complete a hard copy of the same survey. He also stated that he was awaiting word from the Harvard Teachers Association regarding the request to extend their letter of agreement for one year.

Strategic Planning Committee Report

Virginia Justicz informed that there was nothing new to report, but that the committee was continuing the process. They are scheduled to meet on Tuesday. She estimated that the plan would be ready for School Committee's approval by April.

Superintendent Report

Dr. Jefferson informed the Committee that school lunch costs at Bromfield will be raised \$0.25 effective March 1, 2008. The Elementary school lunch cost will remain the same. He stated that it was due to rising transportation costs which impact food costs as well as the fact that the school is receiving fewer government commodities. The increase is only intended to keep the program self-sufficient. He will notify families via email and newspapers.

Student Report

Emma Cait O'Rourke-Friel reported that students had returned this week to Bromfield after the vacation break. The undefeated Girl's Ski Team had participated in regionals,

Drama Festival is scheduled for preliminaries this coming Saturday, and students are beginning the course selection process for next year and will participate in a self-protection workshop.

FY09 Budget

The Committee discussed the benefits of mailing the Budget Book town-wide and agreed on mailing target date set for March 19th. They felt the booklet contained good detail and was well-written. The Committee discussed making the following changes for this year's booklet: provide an executive summary, list/graph outside funding sources, split out legal costs by department, have all narratives adjacent to budget for paging, narrative regarding driving costs such as healthcare, and state level summary. Willie and Virginia will work on School Committee narrative to include the committee's commitment to continue to engage in discussions regarding athletic fees. Will Verbits will review the special education narrative along with Charles Horn for accuracy. The Committee asked that they receive the schools' narratives at the next meeting so that they may review them. Dr. Jefferson suggested that the Special Education Task Force Summary be included in the booklet so that they public could be informed of the results.

Stu Sklar said that Bruce Leicher has asked him to request that he be allowed to make a presentation regarding tax costs/spending trends at the Schools' Budget Hearing. Although the Committee was interested in seeing his data, they felt it would not be appropriate to include him in their hearing. It was decided to put him on the March 10th Agenda.

School Committee Members agreed that they would be available to attend coffee hours as well as PTO, Council on Aging and SOS meetings in an effort to get the word out to the public regarding next year's school budget proposal.

Stu informed the Committee that the state is working to update the Open Meeting laws to include posting meetings on websites.

FY09 School Calendar

Janet Vellante, Town Clerk, had requested that the FY09 School Calendar reflect no school on November 4, 2008 as it is election day. Dr. Jefferson supported her request due to student safety concerns and suggested the possibility of a Professional Development Day for teachers at the Elementary School.

DOE Complaint #08-0047

Dr. Jefferson explained that the Committee was scheduled for the compliance training to be conducted by Attorney Nuttall on March 24, 2008 at 6:30 p.m. He asked the Department of Education to attend, but it declined. The DOE did extend the deadline for compliance to March 31, 2008. The Committee asked that invitations to attend be sent to the Board of Selectmen and FinCom.

MassDevelopment RFP

Dr. Jefferson informed that the RFP was submitted on February 15, 2008, and they had met the deadline. He had received a confirmation letter and was scheduled for an interview on March 10, 2008 at 9:00 a.m. He invited all committee members to attend the interview.

Gifts

The Harvard PTO submitted the following two) 2 donations:

1. Printmaking Supplies for Bromfield Art - \$501.52
2. Laptop for Art Department - \$794.64

For Art's Sake made a donation of \$3,309.47 for Original Art.

VOTED Virginia Justicz made the motion and Stu Sklar seconded to accept all donations. (5/0) to accept the motion. (Willie Wickman(Yes), Will Verbits(Yes), Virginia Justicz (Yes), Stu Sklar (Yes) Brian Stevens (Yes).

The Committee asked that a thank you letters be sent.

Because it was not televised, Willie Wickman mentioned that at the Tri-Board Meeting it was voted to accept the independent audit following the guidelines outlined in Attorney Stonberg's letter.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 8:13 p.m. with roll call.

Minutes submitted,

Jackie Smith
Recording Secretary