

**SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES
TOWN HALL MEETING ROOM
Monday, May 27, 2008
7:00 P.M.**

Members attending: Keith Cheveralls, Virginia Justicz, Stu Sklar, Patty Wenger, Willie Wickman, and Thomas W. Jefferson

Call to Order – Stu Sklar, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

Minutes

VOTED Virginia Justicz made the motion and Willie Wickman seconded to accept the minutes from the May 12, 2008 meeting.
(5/0) to accept the motion. (Keith Cheveralls (Yes), Virginia Justicz (Yes), Stu Sklar (Yes) Patty Wenger (Yes), Willie Wickman (Yes).

VOTED Willie Wickman made the motion and Virginia Justicz seconded to accept the minutes from the May 12, 2008 executive session meeting, not to be released.
(5/0) to accept the motion. (Keith Cheveralls (Yes), Virginia Justicz (Yes), Stu Sklar (Yes) Patty Wenger (Yes), Willie Wickman (Yes).

School Committee Reports

Keith Cheveralls reported on the 40B, Planning and Zoning Boards. He presented a report from the Land Board's data. It addressed the impact of school aged children and town growth projections. He felt they were a good long term planning tool. Virginia Justicz requested a more realistic bedroom count and potential school-aged occupancy for his next report.

Patty Wenger reported on the Prom and Celebration. She said there were no problems, and it was a great success.

Virginia Justicz reported that the Fun Fair is scheduled for June 13th, with a rain date of June 12th. Volunteers are needed. The money raised from the event is used to purchase supplies for teachers' classrooms.

Willie Wickman reported that The Bromfield School Council should have its School Improvement Plan ready for the June 9th meeting.

Stu Sklar reported on the Harvard Elementary School Council. There is a new lice policy, and the Council agreed with the new Allergy Policy. The School Improvement Plan should also be ready for June 9th, and Stu asked that it be included as an agenda item for that meeting. The Committee discussed that new members are needed for both Councils for next year.

Superintendent Report

Dr. Jefferson discussed ELNA, Educational Leaders for Non-Violent Age. It is a 10 town consortium focusing on student leadership training.

He informed the Committee that the Starting Time Survey will be on the website through June 15th. There are approximately 350 responses so far. He intends to send another link to the PTO. Respondents include faculty, parents, all Bromfield students and fifth grade Elementary students. The largest concern surrounds the athletic program, but it may be possible to have a fixed study last period to accommodate sports. Surrounding communities are interested as well. It is just in the research stage not a proposal at this point.

Dr. Jefferson discussed the Teen Drug and Alcohol Forum and Safe Homes Network. The forum was held last Wednesday. It was a thoughtful discussion that opened up dialogue regarding the issues facing Harvard. He also plugged the Safe Homes initiative at the forum. He will keep the Committee posted on the progress.

Dr. Jefferson presented the Committee with the early release closing dates for the 0809 School Calendar. There are a total of 20 days used for staff development, parent conferences, NEASC and study committees. The dates were approved by the HTA.

He also gave an update on School Choice. Currently still accepting applications. A lottery was held on May 14th for grades 1 and 2. To date, seven out of the ten spots were confirmed. He will follow up with the three remaining candidates.

New Business

Dr. Jefferson gave an update on the Director of Special Education search. He was pleased with the overall pool of candidates. He recommended that Pamela DeGregorio be offered the position. She presented well and was the strongest candidate being thoughtful, organized and with outstanding references. The Committee discussed how to handle the contract negotiations.

Willie Wickman made the motion and Virginia Justicz seconded to allow the Superintendent to offer the position of Director of Special Education to Pamela DeGregorio and prepare a draft contract which the Committee will review in a timely fashion before it is executed by the parties.

VOTED (5/0) to accept the motion. (Keith Cheveralls (Yes), Virginia Justicz (Yes), Stu Sklar (Yes) Patty Wenger (Yes), Willie Wickman (Yes).

The Committee discussed the Special Education Task Force's recommendation that school climate/culture be analyzed further. Charles Horn had drafted a Q & A as a point of reference to begin with. Willie Wickman stated that this should be pushed by School Committee Goals with administration working to suggest a proposal accessing the school climate. It should be an overall assessment and not just special education. Once it had been defined, it should be up to administration to address it. The Committee agreed to put it as part of their goals for next year.

The Committee discussed how the Superintendent's evaluation should be conducted. Willie Wickman stated that in the past the Chair is in charge, gets individual input from members and puts together a final evaluation. Willie Wickman and Stu Sklar introduced commentary from the Executive Director from MASC, Glen Couture, to the effect that new members are not included in the evaluation process. Dr. Jefferson provided a copy of an undated opinion document from the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents for consideration. There was discussion among the Committee members as to whether the evaluation should be conducted in public or executive session. Dr. Jefferson also stated that his contract states that the School Committee and the Superintendent must mutually agree on the process of the evaluation. There was further discussion and consensus regarding a 360 evaluation. Stu Sklar will verify with the School Attorney the correct way to proceed and will discuss further at the next meeting.

Old Business

The Committee reviewed last year's goals to determine their status. The majority of the goals have either been met or are ongoing. A progress report will be posted on the website.

Gifts

The Harvard Schools Trust, Inc. submitted the following three (3) donations:

1. Grant No. 08-07: \$3,260.00, plus up to an additional \$2,160.00 as needed for replacement needles, with a maximum grant total of \$5,420.00, for Middle School Art Program Fiber Twist
2. Grant No. 08-08: \$1,140.00 for Nature's Classroom scholarships
3. Grant No. 08-09: \$750.00 honorarium for the Bromfield Drama Program

VOTED Willie Wickman made the motion and Virginia Justicz accept the gifts. (5/0) to accept the motion. (Keith Cheveralls (Yes), Virginia Justicz (Yes), Stu Sklar (Yes) Patty Wenger (Yes), Willie Wickman (Yes).

The Committee asked that a thank you letter be sent.

The Committee discussed the Fourth of July Parade, and who would represent the Committee.

VOTED Willie Wickman made the motion and Virginia Justicz to adjourn the meeting.
(5/0) to accept the motion. . (Keith Cheveralls (Yes), Virginia Justicz (Yes), Stu Sklar (Yes) Patty Wenger (Yes), Willie Wickman (Yes).

Meeting adjourned at 10:10 p.m.

Minutes submitted,

Jackie Smith
Recording Secretary