

**SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES
TOWN HALL MEETING ROOM
Monday, December 8, 2008
7:00 P.M.**

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

Call to Order – Stu Sklar, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Minutes

VOTED Willie Wickman made a motion and Virginia Justicz seconded to accept the Minutes from the November 10, 2008 meeting as amended. (5/0) to accept the motion. . (Virginia Justicz (Yes), Stu Sklar (Yes) Patty Wenger (Yes), Willie Wickman (Yes), Keith Cheveralls (Yes).

VOTED Willie Wickman made a motion and Virginia Justicz seconded to accept the Minutes from the November 17, 2008 meeting as presented. (3/0) to accept the motion. . (Virginia Justicz (Yes), Stu Sklar (Yes), Willie Wickman (Yes).

Kathleen Doherty informed the Committee that the Harvard Teachers' Contract One Year Extension was ratified today. There will be a salary step freeze with only a 2% COLA and health insurance will stay at 80/20%.

Student Report

Molly O'Rourke Friel reported on an internet safety assembly was conducted, the High School Drama presented "London Suite", a band concert is scheduled for December 15th, the Middle School Dance was a success, and thanked Patty Wenger for attending the School Council meeting.

Rachael Kipps reported that two new clubs had been formed, school merchandise sales have begun, and School Council has begun to plan the Snowflake.

Jacquie Holmes congratulated the Boys Varsity Soccer for winning states and Emily Jones for winning the Regional Footlocker Race. Emily will advance to Nationals.

Emma Cait O'Rourke Friel reported that the concert schedule for December 15th will include all band levels as well as chorus.

School Committee Reports

Keith Cheveralls reported that the Policy Committee had finished Section G Personnel. Section G will be ready for the Committee's first reading in January.

Virginia Justicz reported that the Special Education Audit Committee would meet tomorrow evening to review the interim report. A final report should be forthcoming in January.

Willie Wickman reported that the Getty Land Committee was working with the Water Commission to resolve some potential issues. The Getty Land Committee agreed that a Town Meeting would be necessary to determine whether to proceed with an offer to purchase the land.

Superintendent Report

Tom Jefferson presented updated enrollment information. He advised the Committee on the status of the Coordinated Program Review. Dr. Jefferson informed that the Renzulli contract would be for one and one-half years for the same annual fee. A training for faculty is schedule for January 28th. He also told the Committee that DEAC was meeting tomorrow evening and that they were still gauging interest of the potential usages for the Shirley School.

Food Service Program

Chef Paul Correnty informed the Committee of a new initiative the food service program had undertaken. In an effort to go green, the Bromfield cafeteria will begin using compartmental trays and real cutlery in lieu of Styrofoam products. There are water constraints so the new system will be tailored to address that issue. Currently, the cafeteria produces 8 bags of trash times 160 days. This new effort will reduce waste as well be more cost effective. He stated that it will be a school wide effort and that education will be done through posters and assemblies. Helen Kilian, a senior student, has enlisted other seniors to monitor trash disposal during lunch periods in an effort to train students to dispose of their lunch materials properly. Chef Paul further hopes to begin a composting program in the near future. The Committee felt this new initiative was innovative and impressive.

Old Business

District Attorney Letter

The Chair gave a synopsis of a letter from the District Attorney stating the Committee violated the open meeting law when three members were present a coffee hour hosted by Virginia Justicz. He then read the remedies outlined in the District Attorney's letter and read verbatim a letter from Attorney Stonberg (see Attachment A). Virginia Justicz felt the Committee should follow Attorney Stonberg's advice. Patty Wenger questioned the cost of litigating the matter, and Keith Cheveralls questioned how this letter related back to the initial evaluation process.

Keith Cheveralls made a motion and read his "Corrective Action Plan" (see Attachment B). There was no second.

Willie Wickman made a motion and Virginia Justicz seconded to confirm the September 22, 2008 vote.

Keith Cheveralls made a motion and Patty Wenger seconded to table Willie's motion until the Committee obtained a second legal opinion of the District Attorney's letter.

VOTED (1/3/1) to not accept the motion. . (Virginia Justicz (No), Stu Sklar (No) Patty Wenger (Abstain), Willie Wickman (No), Keith Cheveralls (Yes).

Willie Wickman took exception to the criticism against Attorney Stonberg, and she stated she has full confidence in her abilities as the Committee's attorney. She further stated that it would be a better practice to have an open dialogue with a complainant prior to filing their complaint with the District Attorney.

Willie Wickman made a motion and Virginia Justicz seconded to extend the Superintendent's contract to 6/30/11.

VOTED (3/2) to accept the motion. . (Virginia Justicz (Yes), Stu Sklar (Yes) Patty Wenger (No), Willie Wickman (Yes), Keith Cheveralls (No).

A motion was made and seconded to accept the Minutes from the September 18, 2008 meeting as amended.

VOTED (3/0) to accept the motion. . (Virginia Justicz (Yes), Stu Sklar (Yes) Patty Wenger (Yes), Willie Wickman (Abstain), Keith Cheveralls (Abstain).

The Chair informed that public that "the Minutes from September 8th, September 22nd and Executive Session Minutes from September 22nd were all posted online as voted and approved by the Committee. He further stated that a rigorous discussion did take place on September 22nd."

Superintendent Contract Language

The Chair read a clause from the District Attorney's letter regarding striking statement 3B from the Superintendent's Contract. The clause was discussed in Executive Session, but no formal vote was taken.

Willie Wickman made a motion and Virginia Justicz seconded to strike statement 3B from the Superintendent's Contract.

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

FY09 Budget

Lorraine Leonard and Dr. Jefferson provided an update on the FY09 Budget. Still on target with a deficit of less than \$1,000.00. Dr. Jefferson thanked Mary Zadroga, Lorraine Leonard and Pam DeGregorio for their efforts in keeping the budget in line.

Keith Cheveralls volunteered to be the School Committee liaison for the Capital Planning Committee, and the Chair appointed him as such.

Underground Storage Tanks

Keith Cheveralls presented his findings relative to the Underground Storage Tanks at both schools. He thanked Mark Force for his responsiveness to his requests. Keith stated that the tanks at the Bromfield School are the most secure as they are encapsulated in a concrete vault. He recommended that Fire Chief Mignard inspect the tanks to determine the year they were installed. Keith further stated that the tanks at the Elementary School were a major concern as their age is undetermined and they have no cathodic protection. He would also like the Fire Chief to inspect the Elementary tanks for his recommendation. Tank replacement costs are approximately \$70,000.00 each with a possibility of 50% grant reimbursement. Lorraine Leonard stated that bids would be necessary for a vote at Town Meeting. Dr. Jefferson recommended that this project be a priority item for capital planning. Keith will ask the Fire Chief to inspect all the tanks prior to the next meeting in January. Keith will also attend the Water Commission meeting tomorrow to provide them with an update of the status of his investigation.

New Business

Contract Approval

Willie Wickman made the motion and Virginia Justicz seconded to accept the Harvard Teachers' Association One Year Contract Extension with a 2% COLA, freeze on steps, no language changes, and settlements to be signed after the vote is taken.

VOTED (4/0) to accept the motion. . (Virginia Justicz (Yes), Stu Sklar (Yes) Patty Wenger (Yes), Willie Wickman (Yes), Keith Cheveralls (Abstain).

FY10 Budget

The Committee discussed the FY10 Budget which is a level funded budget. There is the potential for a Tri-Board Meeting on January 10th. Willie Wickman requested that the Committee receive impact statements from all administrators and that the Committee review them and meet again before the first Tri-Board Meeting. Virginia Justicz requested to obtain the offset data such as Community Education and Athletic Revenues. Lorraine Leonard and Jackie Smith will update last year's graphs. Lorraine Leonard advised that health insurance increases may impact the budget further.

Gifts

The Harvard Schools Trust submitted the following three grants:

1. Grant No. 08-17: \$7,173.00 for “A Greener Cafeteria”
2. Grant No. 09-01: \$5,517.00 for Smart Board Classroom Set
3. Grant No. 09-02: \$115.00 for “Star Party”

Willie Wickman made the motion and Virginia Justicz seconded to accept the grants.

VOTED (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.

Adjournment

Willie Wickman made a motion and Virginia Justicz seconded to move into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing potential pending litigation and not to return to the regular meeting. Roll call.

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Minutes submitted,

Jackie Smith
Secretary