

School Committee Minutes
Town Hall Meeting Room
Monday, March 23, 2009
7:00 P.M.

Members attending: Virginia Justicz, Stu Sklar, Patty Wenger, Willie Wickman, Keith Cheveralls, Lorraine Leonard, Thomas Jefferson

Call to Order – Stu Sklar, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The Chair then offered a minute of silence for Jessie Peterson.

Minutes

VOTED Keith Cheveralls made a motion and Willie Wickman seconded to accept the Minutes from the March 9, 2009 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 Keith Cheveralls made a motion and Virginia Justicz seconded to accept the Minutes from the February 21, 2009 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 Patty Wenger seconded to accept the Minutes from the February 13, 2009 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 Keith Cheveralls made a motion and Virginia Justicz seconded to accept the Minutes from the January 24, 2009 meeting as amended.
(5/0) to accept the motion. . (Virginia Justicz (Yes), Stu Sklar (Yes) Patty Wenger (Yes), Willie Wickman (Yes), Keith Cheveralls (Yes).

REVOTED Willie Wickman made a motion and Virginia Justice seconded to re-accept the Minutes from the February 21, 2009 meeting as further amended.
(5/0) to accept the motion. . (Virginia Justicz (Yes), Stu Sklar (Yes) Patty Wenger (Yes), Willie Wickman (Yes), Keith Cheveralls (Yes).

Student Report

Rachael Kipps informed the Committee that it had been a very difficult week at Bromfield. The school held memorials to honor Jessie Peterson. She advised that the Washington D.C. trip had been postponed until June. She thanked the administration, staff, and students for stepping up and making this tragic event a growing process for all.

Emma Cait O'Rourke-Friel reported that the National Honor Society Induction was scheduled for Wednesday. The Drama Club received the "playwright" award for its play "Misconception". She also informed that the Staff-Senior Basketball game was scheduled for April 3rd.

Harvard Elementary School Improvement Plan

Mary Beth Banios with the assistance of Gretchen Henry and Cynthia Hansen provided a thorough power point presentation on the midyear report of the School Improvement Plan. They provided information on the progress the school has made in conjunction with the Strategic Plan.

School Committee Reports

Patty Wenger reported that HEAC would like to report at the Committee's April 13th meeting.

Keith Cheveralls thanked the Superintendent and Chair for organizing the Committee to be present at The Bromfield School to support and assist the community regarding the Peterson tragedy.

Keith advised that the Board of Selectmen were scheduled to meet on March 17th and that they were contemplating forming a Technology Advisory Committee after Town Meeting.

He along with Rene Roy gave an update on the underground storage tanks. The HES tank is approximately 21 years old, not leaking and a double wall tank. There is also an alarm system. The Committee agreed that a capital request was not necessary at this time, and that if there was an emergency, it could be funding through the reserve fund. Rene will obtain quotes for removal of the HES tank and quotes to bring the tanks in compliance with regulations for both HES and TBS tanks. Keith recommended that Patty Wenger turn this item over to HEAC for a formal recommendation. They will provide a status report at the next meeting.

Virginia Justicz informed that the Special Education Audit Report was presented two weeks ago. It will be on the web as well as reported at Town Meeting.

Maureen Babcock thanked Mary Beth Banios for her presentation to the Devens' residents.

Superintendent Report

Dr. Jefferson thanked the mental health workers and the community clergy for their assistance during the Peterson tragedy.

He informed that the HTA had agreed to a schedule for extending the learning time to meet the 180 day requirement.

He stated that there would be no parking fees at The Bromfield School this school year.

Dr. Jefferson gave an update on the Stimulus package which includes \$53,277 and \$160,000 for IDEA. Keith questioned whether the Committee needed to vote on the expenditures, and Tom informed that it will be administered through the Special Education grant line. He stated that he was meeting with the Commissioner of Education on Monday and will have more information at that time and will update the Committee at the next meeting.

The Chair read a thank you note from the Science Fair Winners, Harriet Holmes and Allie Cronin.

Old Business

Capital Planning

The following items are set for capital planning: 37K-air conditioning HES library/lab, 78K-SmartBoards, 18K-replacement of low level switches at both schools, and 10K-repair TBS library ceiling. The Committee discussed future funding sources for general maintenance.

Land Use – Demographic Study Committee

Dr. Jefferson and Patty Wenger will draft a document to charge the committee to respond to land use opportunities, monitor demographic data, and provide periodic status updates. The Committee will put out an all call for representatives.

Willie Wickman provided the Committee with correspondence relative to the Getty Land stop order.

FY0809 and FY0910 Budget Updates

The Committee decided to hold its Budget Hearing at its April 13th meeting. Regular business will be at 6:00 p.m., with HEAC at 6:30 p.m., and the Budget Hearing at 7:30 p.m.

The Committee discussed the issue of not receiving the surplus 9C money back into the School account as the Tri-Board felt there may be a future deficit requiring further cuts. Willie Wickman felt the Tri-Board was not honoring the original deal and that the Committee needs to be clear on what it is agreeing to and if another Board reneges on a deal in the future, the Committee needs to stand firm in its position. The Committee agreed to track the 245K until the end of the fiscal year and move money from School Choice and/or Devens if there is still a surplus. Maureen Babcock stated that it was not

appropriate to use Deven's money to fund the Town budget. The Board of Selectmen will make a decision on the health insurance at their March 31st meeting.

Keith Cheveralls made a motion and Patty Wenger seconded to direct the Superintendent to manage the budget targeting \$245,000 in 9C cuts proposed in January.

VOTED (4/1) to accept the motion. . (Virginia Justicz (Yes), Stu Sklar (Yes) Patty Wenger (Yes), Willie Wickman (No), Keith Cheveralls (Yes).

New Business

Energy Initiative

The Committee discussed potential contract from National Grid to utilize natural gas for heating the schools. Lorraine Leonard informed that the contracts would be subject to the bidding process. Patty Wenger will discuss placeholder options with the Chair following the meeting.

Willie Wickman left the meeting at 10:04 p.m.

Special Education

Lorraine Leonard informed the Committee that she had met with the CASE Collaborative to determine potential savings in transportation. CASE is currently operating with the optimum cost savings.

Dr. Jefferson updated the Committee on the Coordinated Program Review. No further progress reports are necessary.

He also informed the Committee that the District received the highest performance level, Meets Requirements, for meeting federal accountability requirements.

Clubs

Virginia Justicz made a motion and Patty Wenger seconded to approved the following clubs at The Bromfield School provided the Superintendent review the fundraising policy with them:

Bromfield Against Cancer
Core Productions
Bromfield Young Democrats Club

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

Enrollment/School Choice

Dr. Jefferson provided an enrollment update. The Committee discussed School Choice for the 0910SY and authorized the Superintendent to advertise for openings in grades K half day, 3, 6, 10 and 11.

Gifts

Keith Cheveralls made a motion and Virginia Justicz seconded to accept the following gifts:

PTO – Principal’s Account - \$1,595.00

Various Donors – Arlene Gutz Memorial Scholarship Fund - \$850.00

Mark & Susan Hardy – Mr. Pike’s Classroom - \$75.00

Harvard Schools Trust:

Gym Equipment - \$3,322.00

Reading Clubs in Action Seminar - \$2,879.00

Nature’s Classroom Scholarship - \$755.00

Kiln Element Replacement - \$313.00

Primary Source - \$3,000.00

Mini Video Cameras - \$1,093.92

Donna Conklin – Xylephones for HES - \$550.00

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

Adjournment

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the regular meeting and move into Executive Session for the purpose of pending litigation and not to return to open session

ROLL CALL

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

Meeting adjourned at 10:28- p.m.
Minutes submitted,

Jackie Smith
Recording Secretary