

School Committee Minutes
Mass Development Building
Devens, MA
Monday, March 9, 2009

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.

Minutes

Keith Cheveralls made a motion and Patty Wenger seconded to accept the Minutes from the February 9, 2009 meeting as amended.

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

Student Report

Jacqui Holmes reported that the Quebec trip was a positive experience for all who attended. The Indoor track team would be participating in Nationals to be held Friday, March 13, 2009 at the Reggie Lewis Center in Boston, MA. The Drama Club is disappointed that they did not make it to the semi finals for their production of “Misconception” which was written by the students; they will be showing the play before the Harvard Schools Trust Gala. The PTO is sponsoring Bingo night on Friday, March 13th from 6:30 – 9:30 p.m.. The Guidance Department is in the process of setting up a Parents Night for 5th grade parents to discuss their transition to The Bromfield School.

School Committee Reports

Patty Wenger reported that the Harvard Energy Advisory group is doing building assessment s to determine options to save energy. They are looking to attend a school committee meeting in April. She reported that students on the Quebec trip were well behaved and the trip was fabulous.

Maureen Babcock reported that parents are very happy with the communication from HES regarding the transition of Devens students to HES. 18 parents attended a presentation held at Devens as well Devens children and parents have participated in Kindergarten registration. HES will be having an Open House on Tuesday, March 10, 2009 for all incoming Devens students and their parents.

Keith Cheveralls reported that he attended the JBOS meeting on February 26, 2009 and it was gratifying to see the committee working together on the Vicksburg Square zoning by-laws and possible changes to them. Public hearings will be held on 3/16 at the

Harvard Town Hall, 3/23 at the Shirley Town Hall, and 3/24 at the Ayer Town Hall. The Open Meeting law presentation by Patricia Smith, Assistant District Attorney was held on February 26, 2009 and was factual and well done. DVD's are available for anyone who missed the presentation. Information has been found that could determine that the underground storage tank at HES is well designed. According to the project specifications, if we got the tank as specs were designed we should not have to replace it. The fire chief is doing more research and will decide if the tank needs to be removed and replaced. Keith will follow up with the fire chief. The Capital Committee met twice for organizational purposes. They plan to redesign the process for short and long term assets and recurring capital and will formalize structure prior to annual town meeting. Discussion on the appropriations for ongoing repairs and maintenance at the schools will be funded by stabilization fund followed by town/school budget. Informed committee of a presentation by at UMass Lowell on March 16, 2009 7:30 a.m. to Noon titled "Getting a Grip on Grants".

Willie reported that the School Committee will be meeting with the BOS on March 17, 2009 and there will be discussion regarding regionalization of town services, school regionalization decisions should be left up to the school committee. Stu asked to have the development of a "Technology Advisory Committee" put on this agenda as well.

Virginia Justicz reported that there would be a public presentation by Frank Gagliardi and Jim Early on the Independent Special Education Audit at the Bromfield Library, March 11, 2009 at 7:00. There is a link to the report on the psharvard website.

Stu Sklar reported that on April 14, 2009 the Suburban Coalition will sponsor "Breakfast on the Hill". All are invited and welcome to attend. Head count needed to order food.

Volunteer Events available:

June -PTO funfair needs a chair

April 4 - Harvard Schools Trust Gala attend play, then dinner, great food. Information available at harvardschoolstrust.org.

On going – Script program – gift cards bought at face value PTO gets a percentage in return. Will be sold at town meeting. Available on PTO web site.

Bromfield School Improvement Plan

Jim O'Shea did a thorough power point presentation on the mid year report of the School Council goals. He provided information on the progress the school has made on each goal.

Superintendent Report

Tom Jefferson reported that Bryce Mattie has been accepted to participate in the China exchange program to be held for 3 weeks this summer. On March 25, 2009 there will be training on the Renzulli software as a learning style component. Kristin Vanderveen has been doing podcasting with her class which is a helpful approach to meeting the needs of

some learning styles. Skype technology was set up as a way for an AP honors teacher to continue to teach her class from home, while out of work unexpectedly. Tom and Mary Wilson from the town library are drafting a formal arrangement to collaborate common goals and program overlap.

Policy Review – Section G – seconding

Willie Wickman made a motion and Virginia Justicz seconded to accept Policy Section G as amended.

VOTED (4/0/1) to accept the motion. . (Virginia Justicz (Yes), Stu Sklar (Yes) Patty Wenger (Yes), Willie Wickman (Yes), Keith Cheveralls (Abstain).

Superintendent Evaluation

Stu discussed the Massachusetts of School Committee (MASC) suggested superintendent evaluation process in which each member writes an individual evaluation to the chair, the chair compiles them and puts together a report to be read at an open session meeting. Individual written contributions of the evaluation become public record.

Keith Cheveralls made a motion and Patty Wenger seconded to follow MASC guidelines to conduct the superintendent evaluation.

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

Individual written submissions are due to Stu on April 13, 2009 and the evaluation will be presented at the April 27, 2009 school committee meeting.

Update FY09 Budget

The committee held a discussion regarding the 9C cuts. Willie reminded the board that the Triboard minutes indicate that if the target \$350,000 target was not all needed, funds could be returned to the various town boards. Stu will consult with George McKenna and Leo Blair regarding potential courses of action.

FY10 Budget

Discussion regarding the FY10 and the schools obligation to cover a \$75K deficit by increasing the Devens offset. Keith Cheveralls made a motion and Patty Wenger seconded to approve the FY10 budget.

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

Willie noted for the record that her vote reflected a concern over the process, lack of understanding as to the drivers, the \$70,000 deficit and not a lack of support for the items included within the budget.

Capital Planning

There was discussion regarding adding SmartBoards to the capital list. The committee, with the recommendation of the superintendent, agreed to go forward with the request.

Keith Cheveralls made a motion and Patty Wenger seconded to accept the friendly agreement to add smartboards to the list of capital items previously distributed..

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

New Business

Enrollment/Facilities Committee

The Committee agreed to table this discussion pending their March 17, 2009 meeting with selectmen.

Gifts

Tom reported that the Harvard Schools Trust sponsored our membership in the Primary Source consortium. This group provides high quality professional development focused on global issues.

Adjournment

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting.

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 11:15 p.m.

Minutes submitted,

Mary Zadroga

Recording Secretary