

School Committee Minutes  
Town Hall Meeting Room  
Monday, May 11, 2009  
7:00 P.M.

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

Call to Order – Thomas Jefferson, Superintendent, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and welcomed new member, Piali De, and returning member, Patty Wenger. He also thanked the outgoing Chair, Stu Sklar.

**Election of Officers**

Patty Wenger made a motion and Piali De seconded to nominate Keith Cheveralls as Chair.  
VOTED (5/0) to accept the motion. . (Virginia Justicz (Yes), Stu Sklar (Yes) Patty Wenger (Yes), Keith Cheveralls (Yes), Piali De (Yes).

Piali De made a motion and Stu Sklar seconded to nominate Virginia Justicz as Vice Chair.  
VOTED (5/0) to accept the motion. . (Virginia Justicz (Yes), Stu Sklar (Yes) Patty Wenger (Yes), Keith Cheveralls (Yes), Piali De (Yes).

Stu Sklar made a motion and Virginia Justicz seconded to nominate Patty Wenger as Secretary.  
VOTED (5/0) to accept the motion. . (Virginia Justicz (Yes), Stu Sklar (Yes) Patty Wenger (Yes), Keith Cheveralls (Yes), Piali De (Yes).

**Minutes**

Stu Sklar made a motion and Piali De seconded to approve the Minutes from the April 27<sup>th</sup> meeting at the next meeting on May 26<sup>th</sup>.  
VOTED (5/0) to accept the motion. . (Virginia Justicz (Yes), Stu Sklar (Yes) Patty Wenger (Yes), Keith Cheveralls (Yes), Piali De (Yes).

**Student Report**

Molly O'Rourke-Friel reported that Middle School Drama received a gold medal for its play, "Tales of Trickery" and three students also won awards. She further reported that that Middle School Band and Chorus will participate in the Great East Music Festival at Six Flags. She also reported on the State Science Fair.

Rachael Kipps reported that Bromfield will hold a Blood Drive on May 18<sup>th</sup>, the Iced Coffee House was postponed, AP Exams were winding down, the car crash simulation will be held on Thursday, and Prom and Celebration are on Friday.

## **School Committee Reports**

Stu Sklar reported that the Suburban Coalition's Annual Meeting is scheduled for May 20<sup>th</sup> in Dedham and the Municipal Partnership Act with Jamie Eldridge as Chair will hold its meeting this Friday. He further reported that HES School Council elected its new community member, Carlene Phillips. The Council also needs new parent members and interested parties should contact Mary Beth Banios. The Parent Communication Survey showed that parents preferred to receive communications electronically. Curriculum Night was a success. The Council is working on updating the website and has started a Google calendar of school events. Piali De recommended both schools utilized the Google calendar idea. Stu further informed the Committee that the School Improvement Plan will be in draft form by the end of June.

Virginia Justicz welcomed back Piali and Patty. She thanked the Town for supporting the School's Warrant Articles and Keith for his work on them. She recommended that the Health Insurance discussion stay an active topic.

Piali De stated that she was glad to be on the Committee and was looking forward to working with the members.

Keith Cheveralls informed that it was Teacher Appreciation Week which is co-sponsored by the PTO and the School Committee.

Patty Wenger thanked everyone for their help with Celebration. She invited the public to the open house on Friday from 9:00-10:00 p.m.

## **Superintendent Report**

Dr. Jefferson sympathized with Leominster School District and its oil spill. He commented that natural gas was the way to do. He gave an update on the HES School Closing due to the H1N1 virus, and thanked Mark Force, the custodial staff and the nursing staff for their efforts. He has applied for a waiver of the make up day with ESE and will let the Committee know as soon as possible. He advised that the next DEAC meeting was scheduled for May 19<sup>th</sup>. He also informed that the Middle School Drama Festival prompted many requests for School Choice openings.

## **Old Business**

### **FY09 Budget Report**

Lorraine Leonard provided a FY09 Budget Report updated through April 30<sup>th</sup>.

### **FY10 ARRA – Stimulus Funding**

Dr. Jefferson advised that the stimulus amount was still unknown and that he was in the process of drafting the IDEA grant.

### **Superintendent Evaluation and Contract**

The Chair questioned why the Committee did not vote on the evaluation and why only the former Chair signed the new contract. Stu Sklar, former Chair, stated that the Committee followed the MASC Guidelines and past practices. He further stated that the bottom line was that the Superintendent met expectations. Patty Wenger stated that she would like the policy to be that the Committee review the actual written evaluation and contract before they are asked to vote on it. Virginia Justicz stated that it was the Chair's prerogative. Keith asked the Superintendent his perspective, and Dr. Jefferson stated that his evaluation was the only public document, and that he had asked his Administrative Council to conduct evaluations on his performance. Piali De stated that she believed the Committee had always voted on the evaluation in the past so that the evaluation was the voice of the Board, and then the Chair would discuss it with the Superintendent.

Piali De made a motion and Patty Wenger seconded to vote on the evaluation that was read at the Meeting on April 27<sup>th</sup>.

The Committee discussed the motion. Virginia suggested they go forward as is and that a policy perspective was necessary in the future. Stu felt they should honor what the Committee voted to do last March and follow the MASC guidelines. He also noted that the MASC Guidelines as well as the Committee's policy were silent on the issue.

Piali withdrew her motion. She stated for the record that she felt it was not an evaluation of the board without a vote of board.

The Committee then discussed the extension of the Superintendent's Contract. Dr. Jefferson and Stu Sklar indicated that it was basically the same contract with some minor language changes. The Chair requested the Committee allow him to speak with School Counsel on the language changes and report back to the Committee at the next meeting. The Committee agreed. Piali De stated again there were some process points and that the document should be signed by all members. The Chair asked Dr. Jefferson to inform School Counsel of the new Committee. Stu Sklar stated for the record that the February 3, 2005 Contract was only signed by the Chair.

### **New Business**

#### **Liaison for Sub-Committees**

The Committee appointed the following new liaisons for the sub-committees:

Board of Selectmen – Keith Cheveralls  
FinCom – Keith Cheveralls and Virginia Justicz  
Policy – Virginia Justicz and Keith Cheveralls

Facilities Task Force/Land Use/Indoor Air Quality – Patty Wenger and Virginia Justicz  
DEAC – Keith Cheveralls & Piali De  
SEPAC – Virginia Justicz  
Bromfield School Council – Stu Sklar  
HES School Council – Patty Wenger  
Capital Planning – Keith Cheveralls  
Suburban Coalition – Stu Sklar  
HEAC/Energy Subcommittee – Patty Wenger  
Strategic Planning – Piali De  
Stipend – Virginia Justicz  
ZBA/Planning Board – Keith Cheveralls  
Contract Negotiations – Virginia Justicz

### **School Committee Goals**

The Committee discussed the process for goal setting. Piali De asked Dr. Jefferson to prepare a District Report. She will send a timeline to the Chair and the Recording Secretary as to the process and members will send their goals for a compilation. The Committee will discuss further at the next meeting.

### **Meeting Schedule**

The Committee decided to change the regularly scheduled June 8<sup>th</sup> meeting as it is Special Town Meeting to June 9<sup>th</sup> and to add another meeting on June 29<sup>th</sup> if necessary.

### **Data Driven Decision Making for School Boards**

The Chair stated he would send the Committee a link to the National School Board Association's "Improving School Board Decision Making" and asked the Committee to review the document for goal setting and budget planning purposes.

### **Future Agenda Items**

The Chair read Policy BEDB to the Committee regarding agenda items. He suggested the public send their items one week prior to a meeting and that Committee members will give their items at the end of each meeting for the next meeting. The Committee also discussed sending out packets electronically.

### **Gifts**

No gifts were presented.

### **Adjournment**

Patty Wenger made a motion and Stu Sklar seconded to adjourn the meeting.

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:38- p.m.  
Minutes submitted,

Jackie Smith  
Recording Secretary