

School Committee Minutes
Town Hall Meeting Room
Monday, June 28, 2010
7:00 pm.

Members attending: Keith Cheveralls, Virginia Justicz, Piali De, Patty Wenger, Kirsten Wright, Maureen Babcock, Lorraine Leonard and Thomas Jefferson

Keith Cheveralls called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

Liaison and subcommittee Reports

Virginia Justicz reported that the SEPAC chairs are interested in sending out a parent survey. They discussed sending out some of the same questions from their survey from three years ago to see how things are progressing.

Piali De reported that the Instructional Leadership subcommittee met to define their charter which will be to come to the school committee with recommendations for instructional leadership.

Patty Wenger reported that the calendar subcommittee will not be making a recommendation until September as the committee is unable to get a majority of attendance over the summer.

Kirsten Wright reported that the Bromfield School Council met on June 8th to discuss the School Improvement document. There is one vacancy on School Council with two interested candidates. Will wait until September to vote so that there will be a better response. Kirsten shared a letter from Scott Hoffman regarding the loss of Dr. Harris. Dr. Harris was a great friend to The Harvard Public Schools and will be greatly missed. Keith Cheveralls has documents of the schools' history put together by Dr. Harris and in the near future something will be done in order to honor Dr. Harris for his contribution to the Harvard Public Schools.

Maureen Babcock updated the committee on two housing projects that are underway at Devens. The Green Housing project has yet to choose a developer. The Vicksburg Square project has three developers interested in the project, but is waiting until the community is more informed through outreach so that there is community support for the project.

Keith Cheveralls reported that this is the last school committee meeting held under the old open meeting law. Starting July 1st, the new process for opening meeting law will begin. The new law encourages openness; although the changes are burdensome the end result will be complete transparency. All items that will be discussed at a meeting must be listed on the agenda. Piali De suggested that the new requirements for the open meeting law should be synthesized with a power point presentation for committee members to review. The committee will look for a Friday morning meeting to look at the changes together. Keith will visit with the Board of Health on July 13th to follow up on the memorandum of understanding with regard to air quality in the K-Wing at Hildreth Elementary School. Keith Cheveralls reported that the Suburban Coalition membership is due and asked that Thomas Jefferson speak with the Board of Selectman with regard to dues payment as the school and selectman flip flop paying the dues on alternate years.

The annual town meeting date has been changed to April 2, 2011 with the town election changing to April 5, 2011. Thomas Jefferson recommended two changes to the early closing date to accommodate the election.

Virginia Justicz made a motion and Piali De seconded to authorize the Superintendent to change the Wednesday, April 11 early release day to Tuesday, April 6 in order to accommodate the election.

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

Tom Jefferson will communicate back to the town clerk that we are able to accommodate an early release day for the April 5th election. As well, the school community will be notified of the change.

The HTA contract will be brought to formal vote at the July 12th meeting.

Interviews for the Hildreth Elementary School interim principal have gone well; the superintendent will bring a proposed contract to the committee for review at the July 12th meeting.

Superintendent Report

Thomas Jefferson updated the committee on the kindergarten enrollment and recommended that two choice student be transferred from the half day program to the full day program to even out the numbers.

Piali De made a motion and Virginia Justicz seconded to authorize the Superintendent to offer the full day kindergarten option to two choice students currently enrolled in the half day program.

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

Personnel Updates –Julie Cook has resigned from her position as art teacher for The Bromfield School to accept a position in Westford. Plans are being finalized for a one year replacement for Thomas Reynolds sabbatical leave.

HES School Council Playground Committee Update

Member of the School Council Playground Committee reported on the progress of the playground project. Much work has been done in determining the site for the new playground structure. The final proposal is that the current site remains the site for the new playground structure.

Virginia Justicz made a motion and Piali De seconded to approve the site selection recommendation of the Playground Subcommittee with the potential of expansion as noted.

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

There was discussion with regard to funding the project which has an approximate cost of \$65,000.

2009/2010 Budget Update

Lorraine Leonard presented the 09/10 budget overview stating the budget is in good shape for the end of the year. Final numbers will come in as well as encumbrances before the FY10 budget can be closed out. If we had left over money in FY10 we could pay forward a collaborative fee or out of district tuition or we could reduce a subsidy.

Review and Re-Vote Continuance of Devens Education Contracts

The committee reviewed the Devens education contracts for grades PreK-5 and grades 6-12. It is the wish of the committee and Mass Development to continue the contract through June 30, 2013.

Piali De made a motion and Patty Wenger seconded that the school committee reaffirms and acknowledges the desire to specifically continue the contract with Mass Development for an additional year.

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

Thomas Jefferson will communicate the committees' action to Mr. Ramirez.

Policy Section – Section H, F and Exit Interviews – 1st Reading

First reading of policy H and F. Piali De indicated that there may need to be more substantive language for file HF as it relates to contract negotiations. Also the HTA should be given the opportunity for input. The policy will be forwarded to Kathleen Doherty and she will forward it to colleagues.

The Exit Interview policy was discussed and the committee needs to gather information on best practices and answers to questions about how information is shared and review before the policy can be approved.

School Committee and Subcommittee Goals for 2010/2011

Each subcommittee should come up with a goal relative to their committee that is deliverable. Piali De will compile the list into a report to be discussed as a group. The Superintendent's goals will be specific responsibilities established from the school committee goals.

Future Agenda Items

2010/2011 budget update with regard to the impact of new employees

Follow up on goals discussion

Bromfield and HES handbook review

BOS – chat with Ron Ricci

Boxborough School Committee visit on July 12th

Review of bullying policy

Executive Session

Patty Wenger made a motion and Virginia Justicz seconded that the School Committee enter in to executive session, as authorized by Chapter 39, Section 23B of the

Massachusetts General Laws, at a meeting for which 48 hours notice has been given for the sole purpose of discussing non union compensation matters.

Following the executive session, the Committee will not return to open session.

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:55.

Mary Zadroga
Recording Secretary