

School Committee Minutes  
Town Hall Meeting Room  
Monday, February 13, 2012  
6:00 p.m.

Members attending: Keith Cheveralls, Piali De, SusanMary Redinger, Patty Wenger, Kirsten Wright, Maureen Babcock

Keith Cheveralls called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

Patty Wenger made a motion and Kirsten Wright seconded to accept the minutes of the January 23, 2012 meeting.

VOTE (4/0) to accept Piali De abstained due to absence.

### **Student Report**

Student Council member, Katie Chambers reported that the Science Fair was held this past Friday and was very successful and fun. Both girls and boys basketball teams are doing well in the playoffs. The Model UN club traveled to Boston for the Harvard Model UN conference this past weekend and look forward to their trip to Russia in April. French students will be traveling to Quebec City at the beginning of March.

### **Superintendent Report**

Dr. Connelly reported that the gas conversion project is complete and the gas system is on line at both schools. Dr. Connelly informed the committee that at Chef Paul's request, he and Chef Paul had come up with alternative ways of reducing his payroll by \$2,600 from January through June 2012. The alternatives include reductions in sub coverage and reduction of coverage on early release days. A Quadboard meeting is scheduled to meet February 29, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. The "Day on the Hill" is scheduled for Tuesday, March 27, 2012 at the State House in Boston.

### **School Committee Report**

SusanMary Redinger reported that neither HES School Council nor the Town Master Plan Steering Committee has met.

Kirsten Wright reported that the Bromfield School Council is working on the climate survey, transition from grade 8 to 9, and the school improvement plan.

Piali De reported that all seven of the NEASC standing committee reports have been approved. Much work is being done in planning for the visiting committee who will be in Harvard Sunday through Wednesday, April 29, April 30, May 1 and May 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Maureen Babcock reported that DEAC met on January 30<sup>th</sup> and that Joe Connelly did a great job fielding a number of financial questions related to the education of Devens residents and the Mass Development contract. Joe forwarded specific questions to Naomi Stonberg for legal opinion and has the answers ready for Maureen to deliver back to Devens residents. The Devens community will be hosting a meeting on the Vicksburg Square topic on February 27<sup>th</sup>. Two more hearings are scheduled on Tuesday, February 21, at 7:00 p.m. in Harvard, Thursday, March 1<sup>st</sup> in Ayer and the Super Town Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 28<sup>th</sup>.

Keith Cheveralls suggested an agenda for March 12<sup>th</sup> be the Enrollment and Capacity Report data as it pertains to long range planning and enrollment. Keith also reported that he would be working with Superintendent Connelly to develop a flexible work schedule as soon as confirmation has been obtained from MTRS determining allowable earnings for Joe. Keith Cheveralls was pleased to report that through a great deal of cooperation and in the best interest of the entire town, Lorraine Leonard, Joe Connelly, Mark Force and Rich Nota were able to

come to agreement that the town would hand down a 2003 dump truck for School Department use. A new truck for the School Department remains on the Capital Plan for purchase in 2015.

### **FY12 – Monthly Financial Report and Year End Projection**

Lorraine Leonard updated the committee on the FY12 budget through January 31, 2012. Of note is the cost for the gas conversion exceeding the warrant article by over 25K, although there are still incentive rebates expected. The committee will invite the Harvard Energy Advisory Committee to a future meeting to look at and explain these overages. Lorraine also added a new technology line to be used specifically for the technology capital plan purchases.

### **Bryce Mattie and Students – Model UN conference report and St. Petersburg trip update**

Bryce Mattie and several of the Model UN students who attended the Model UN Conference in Boston spoke about the experience. The students referenced world issues, meeting new people from all over the world, creating diplomacy and learning the cultural perspectives from other countries as some of the fantastic things they experienced. Mary Egan and Bernadette Staddler gave an update on the status of the St. Petersburg SPIMUN trip to Russia. All necessary fund raising has now been successfully achieved and the focus is more on planning to be abroad. To prepare for the rigorous debate students are diligently researching their assigned topics and countries. In addition, Charles Sennott, a Harvard citizen has agreed to share his experience in Egypt. All involved are looking forward to this experience and the committee looks forward to hearing about their trip upon their return. Keith Cheveralls read a very positive letter of commendation to Ms. Mattie from Principal O’Shea for her dedication and commitment to providing this educational experience for students.

### **Review and take action on 2012-2013 School Calendar**

Dr. Connelly presented the proposed 2012-2013 School Calendar for School Committee approval. The calendar was built with 185 days (5 days built in for snow days). There were also four teacher professional development dates identified in the calendar. There was some debate about the quality of professional development in the two days before school starts rather than further into the year when the focus is not on opening the doors for school.

SusanMary Redinger made a motion and Patty Wenger seconded to approve the 2012/2013 school calendar as presented.

VOTE (4/0/1) to accept

The early release days will be added after the Professional Development Committee determines the dates.

### **FY13 Total Operating Budget including all sources or revenue and expense - Vote**

Dr. Connelly presented the FY13 total operating budget totaling \$14,084,681 which includes \$11,483,279 from omnibus funds and \$2,601,402 from subsidies. Dr. Connelly pointed out that since the approval of the Draft #2 budget on January 9<sup>th</sup> two additional resignations/retirements will free up an additional \$42,745. It was recommended that the School Committee approve funding the \$20,000 that will allow the HES World Language Program to continue next year and leaving the remaining \$22,745 in the HES salary account to cover the possibility of needing a 5<sup>th</sup> section of grade 4 or to fund the remaining items in the “Unmet” above level service list. Keith Cheveralls noted that this budget commits to opening up school choice slots to replace graduating school choice seniors. It also commits to the continuation of educating the Devens students and offsetting user fees into the omnibus budget.

Piali De made a motion and SusanMary Redinger seconded to move that we approve \$14,084,681 total operating budget, including all sources of revenue and expense for school year 2012/2013.

VOTE (5/0) to accept

### **Administrative Restructuring Updates – School Union Study**

Dr. Connelly reported that the School Union Study Subcommittee met last Friday with Superintendent Bates and Mary Brolin from Boxborough and had a very productive discussion. In addition, Pam DeGregorio will be meeting with Boxborough's Special Education staff this week. A twelve member committee has been assembled as a "fact finding" subcommittee that will provide the School Committee an in-depth report on how a school union might work and the effect it would have on Harvard. The committee has already generated close to 100 questions, most have been placed into categories of staffing, logistics, cost impacts/benefits, education benefits and disadvantages, and job specifications and how they might change. The committee also has made plans to meet with Tri-Town School Superintendent Bernie Creeden to ask about how that union model has been working. The School Union Subcommittee will deliver its final report to the School Committee by the second meeting in March. Chairman Keith Cheveralls said the committee will plan a public hearing on the issue before making a decision to pursue the possibility with Boxborough by April 9<sup>th</sup>. If the School Committee decides in April to continue pursuing the union, it would still be a "non-binding" decision. The final terms and condition of what a union agreement would look like probably wouldn't be in place until the start of school 2014.

The committee would like to have a combined public hearing on the Boxborough Union Study and the FY13 Public Budget.

### **Superintendent Evaluation Instrument Procedural Guidelines**

Dr. Connelly met with SusanMary Redinger and Kirsten Wright last week to review sample instruments and procedures to accomplish the School Committee goal "Sup't and School Committee Evaluation Instrument". The committee reviewed the proposed document which used a rating system with 4 performance levels and it is the same system that will be used in the new teacher evaluation document. The committee discussed some revisions to the document. The Subcommittee plans to have revisions made and utilized by the second meeting in March. The Superintendent Evaluation needs to be completed before the board disseminates in early May.

### **School Committee "Self Evaluation" Instrument and Procedure**

The committee reviewed the School Committee "Self Evaluation" document and will have the self assessment completed before the end of the term. The committee will vote to make the document official at the first meeting in March and then the individual committee members will complete the assessment and returned by the second meeting in March. The committee may make this evaluation instrument into a formal policy.

### **Future Agenda Items**

Energy Advisory  
Policy Subcommittee – core mission vision  
Strategic Plan Review  
Second Report on Goals  
Enrollment Capacity Report

**Commentary**

Keith Cheveralls – Applauded the Finance Committee and CPIC for asking tough challenging questions – the process does work. Wow! about these kids tonight they were confident, eloquent and articulate.

Piali De – Thanks for another great meeting.

SusanMary Redinger made a motion and Patty Wenger seconded to adjourn at 8:40 p.m.

VOTE (5/0)

Respectfully submitted

Mary Zadroga  
Recording Secretary