

School Committee Minutes  
Upper Town Hall  
Monday, March 11, 2019  
6:15 p.m.

Members attending: SusanMary Redinger, Shannon Molloy, Jon Green, John Ruark, Sharlene Cronin, Maureen Babcock, Aziz Aghavev and Linda Dwight. Absent: Chloe Cushing.

SusanMary Redinger called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m.

Sharlene Cronin read the vision statement.

**Public Commentary:** Kara Huchowski, Shaker Road – budget cuts.

**Student Report:** None

**Trip Approval:**

Kristin McManus attended the meeting seeking approval for the Business Professionals of America Club to attend the National Leadership Conference from May 1<sup>st</sup> to May 5<sup>th</sup> in Anaheim, California. Approximately 10 students plan to attend. The cost of the trip would be \$800 to \$1,000 (inclusive of staff costs). The group has held fundraisers and applied for a Harvard Schools Trust grant to offset costs to families.

John Ruark made the motion and Sharlene Cronin seconded to approve the trip for the Business Professionals of America as presented.

VOTE 5/0

**Representative Jen Benson and Senator Jamie Eldridge**

SusanMary Redinger introduced Representative Jen Benson and Senator Jamie Eldridge. Jen Benson and Jamie Eldridge discussed the bills being presented by the Governor, Senate and House that proposes to change the state's foundation budget formula which has been woefully underfunded to Massachusetts districts. The commitment from the Senate, House and Governor is to pass a bill to increase funding but the details have not yet been worked out. A public hearing is scheduled for March 22<sup>nd</sup> in Boston to debate the bill. When asked how school committees could support the bill, Benson and Eldridge recommended staying engaged during the process, endorse a resolution and send testimony to be used at the hearing. SusanMary Redinger thanked Representative Benson and Senator Eldridge for coming, and hopes to continue the tradition in years to come.

**Joint Resolution Presentation by HTA Leadership**

Melissa Niland spoke in support of the resolution to increase funding for Massachusetts Public Schools through the Promise Act Bill. The new formula would benefit the Harvard Public Schools with an increase in state funding of approximately \$228,000. The increase would help to support many of the programs in our schools. The HTA is asking the School Committee to endorse the resolution and together send a strong message in support of changing the

foundation formula. In supporting the bill and resolution, we support the entire Commonwealth.

Shannon Molloy made the motion and Sharlene Cronin seconded to have the Harvard School Committee adopt the resolutions in support of increased funding for Massachusetts Public Schools through the Promise Act.

VOTE 5/0

### **Superintendent's Report**

**\*Students Completed a Real-World Project** – Students were asked to use their creativity, research, and technology skills to create a viable design for the sound booth construction project in the Cronin Auditorium. The teacher, Cindy Fontaine, had the students take measurements, research designs and then use computer programs to render their ideas. We were invited into the class for student presentations. Dr. Dwight would like to invite the class to present the ideas to the School Committee at a future meeting.

**\*Commissioner Riley and Senator Eldridge Visited** – Commissioner Riley and Senator Eldridge learned more about our district when they visited classrooms at both schools and spent time learning about our fresh lunch program. The third-grade students shared their project-based learning focused on the final 80 days of school. Students brainstorm ways to improve the school. They then work in groups to write letters for permissions and/or grant money. They create a timeline and execute their plan with limited guidance from the teacher, Dawn-Marie Ayles. The students were full of pride as they shared their ideas with the visitors.

**\*Heritage Fair** – Students in Grade two shared songs from around the world and their research projects with families and community members. Each student researched a country important to their family or family origin. This project, designed to celebrate other cultures, evolved from the teachers' work in the area of inclusion.

**Foundation Speaker Event** – The MTA held an event at the Littleton Library on Friday, March 1<sup>st</sup> on Foundation budget reform. Dr. Dwight attended along with several members of the HTA leadership. The attendees outlined the benefits of the Promise Bill that is being supported by Senator Eldridge and our local union leaders. We will discuss the HTA request for us to sign the joint statement of support.

**\*Science Fair** – Community members joined faculty members in providing student feedback on their Science Fair projects. The well attended event benefited from several changes, including the narrowing from Grades 6-12 to Grades 9-12 with middle school students holding their own event separately. The middle school students visited the older students and learned what to expect.

**\*NEASC Visit** – Two administrators from NEASC visited on February 26<sup>th</sup> to evaluate the middle school ramp and hear an update on potential solutions to the compliance issues. Scott Hoffman and Dr. Dwight met with them and detailed our work to date with Abacus Architects and the Advisory Committee.

### **School Building Update**

SusanMary Redinger reported that the School Building Committee met last Thursday to do value engineering in order to reduce the budget by approximately \$1.2 Million. SusanMary

Redinger handed out a list of the items that have been move. The biggest change is to the beam product that will be changed from glulam (wood type material) to steel. Not a recommendation the working group took lightly. The School Building Committee left an allowance to add something to the steel beams to make them look and feel more welcoming if need be. The next School Building Committee meeting is Thursday, March 14, 2019.

**Budget Reduction Recommendations and Vote**

Dr. Dwight presented a list of cuts to meet the \$150,000 in the FY20 budget reductions in order to meet the recommendation by the Finance Committee. In conjunction with the budget cut list was a request from Dr. Dwight to the Committee to pay three employees \$5,000 and one employee \$3,000 in recognition of commitment and value. The Committee was unable to come to consensus on the budget cut list or the stipend recommendation. SusanMary Redinger suggested that both budget cuts and stipends be tabled to the next meeting.

**Stipend Request and Vote**

Dr. Dwight advocated funding of \$18,000 to give stipends to four contracted employees this year and for the funds to renegotiate the elementary Principal, elementary Associate Principal, and Facilities Director’s salaries for the FY20 budget. The \$5,000 stipends would be paid to Josh Myler, Scott Mulcahy, Jon Snyder and \$3,000 stipend to Paul Correnty in recognition of their on-going commitment to the school district. John Ruark asked the Committee to consider reducing the stipends from \$5,000 to \$3,000. Jon Green suggested waiting until the end of the year and making the stipends contingent upon availability of funds. No decision was made and the item will be discussed again at the next meeting.

**Norms Review**

SusanMary Redinger asked the Committee to review the School Committee Operating Norms and recommend any changes be brought to the reorganization meeting in May.

**Reassign Subcommittee and Liaison Commitments**

The Liaison Assignments were updated as follows: \* represents a change

Liaison Assignments	Current Liaison
Board of Selectmen	SusanMary Redinger*
FinCom	SusanMary Redinger
DEAC	John Ruark
SEPAC	Jon Green
TBS School Council	Shannon Molloy*
HES School Council	Shannon Molloy
CPIC	SusanMary Redinger
HEAC	John Ruark
Park and Recreation Representative	Jon Green
State Representative	Shannon Molloy*
CASE	Linda Dwight
HCTV	Jon Green

Vendor Warrant Signing	Shannon Molloy/Sharlene Cronin*
<b>Subcommittee Assignments</b>	
Budget	SusanMary Redinger/Shannon Molloy*
Policy	John Ruark/Shannon Molloy
Superintendent Review	SusanMary Redinger
Building Committee	SusanMary Redinger
<b>School Committee Advisor</b>	
Athletic Advisor	John Ruark
Wellness Committee	Shannon Molloy

The School Committee is required to vote at an Open Meeting to change the name of the member(s) who are authorized to sign the bill warrant at Town Hall.

John Ruark made the motion and Jon Green seconded to reassign vendor warrant signing to Shannon Molloy as primary and Sharlene Cronin as secondary.

VOTE 5/0

### **Grant Approval**

The following grants were presented for approval:

Jessica Peterson Scholarship Fund - \$500 – Therapy Animals for Refresh Day on March 20<sup>th</sup>.

Fanfare - \$588.60 – Jazz Music Library

Fanfare - \$410.96 – Keyboard stands and Piano Bench

SusanMary Redinger made the motion and Sharlene Cronin seconded to approve the grants from Fanfare and the Jessica Peterson Scholarship Fund as presented.

VOTE 5/0

### **Agenda Items**

Budget cuts

Stipends

Policy

Youth at Risk Survey

SC Self-assessment

Public Hearing on Budget

Budget book Executive Summary

Revolving fund review

### **Approval of Meeting Minutes**

Seeing no objection SusanMary Redinger moved to approve the minutes of the February 25<sup>th</sup> meeting as amended.

VOTE 5/0

### **Liaison/Subcommittee Reports**

Shannon Molloy reported that HES School Council met and had a robust discussion on the student survey data. They will continue evaluating the data at their next meeting.

John Ruark reported for the HEAC record that the manual for the solar panels on HES is being stored in a filing cabinet in the Volunteer Room at Town Hall.

John Ruark reported that DEAC met and renewed their goals for 2018/2019. They discussed and planned for the next survey that will take place in approximately a year to a year and a half from now.

SusanMary Redinger reported that she and John Ruark award prizes to two Science Fair projects. Emily Douglas was awarded one of the prizes for her research on vaping. Chloe Cushing and Saige McFarland were awarded a prize for their research on the effectiveness of face wash on bacteria. Both John and SusanMary agreed that judging is very rewarding and that it is an honor to see the great work students are doing.

### **Closing Commentary**

John Ruark had a chance to participate as a liaison at the Civic Cup over the weekend. John Ruark thanked Shannon Molloy for all the work she did in setting up the Civic Cup event. It was a great event. John Ruark thanked Linda Dwight, the leadership team and administration for the hard work on the budget. John appreciates the open mindedness of looking at new ideas. John would like to communicate to the town that we are going into less than level service with this budget. We are making up for it with the hard work of teachers and administrators.

Sharlene Cronin reiterated the Civic Cup event and how it had a lasting effect on the younger kids. Her first-grade son's eyes were wide open when he saw the cup.

With no objections, SusanMary Redinger adjourned the meeting at 9:32 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Mary Zadroga