School Committee Minutes

Upstairs of the Town Hall

Monday, January 9, 2017

6:00 p.m.

Members attending: SusanMary Redinger, Mary Traphagen, Nancy Lancellotti, Jon Green, Patty Wenger, Linda Dwight and Peter Rowe. Absent: Maureen Babcock

SusanMary Redinger called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

Chloe Cushing read the Core Value Statement.

Open to Interested Citizen Commentary – None

**Student Report:** Chloe Cushing reported that the Varsity Girls’ Basketball team just won a game and has been playing very hard against some very good teams. School work has become more intense at this critical time of year. Some sophomores and juniors have recently gotten their PSAT scores back. Student Council is hosting the Snowflake dance on January 20th for students in grades 7 & 8. The Snowball dance for student in grades 9-12 will be held in February.

**Superintendent Report:** Dr. Dwight reported that Acton Boxborough had their 4th suicide over the weekend. She sent out a letter to parents with links for support. One of the links gave information about an event called “Building Emotional Resiliency in our Youth”. The event is being held in Stow at the First Parish Church of Stow and Acton on Thursday, January 26th from 7 to 8:30 On December 19th Harvard presented an event to interested members of the community in Volunteers Hall to hear Steve Boczenowski, from Groton, share his personal experience with his son’s suicide and all that he has learned through research and continued work with others on the topic of suicide prevention. He shared warning signs and helpful steps and resources for family members. School counselors and administrators shared specific helps at Bromfield and offered follow up meetings for specific family concerns. We are planning to invited Steve back for a follow up meeting and hold a morning event to allow people to come at a more convenient time.

MSBA hosted a kick-off meeting with members of our School Building Committee (SBC) on January 5th. They provided information about the 2 upcoming phases; feasibility study and schematic design. We discussed the timeline and upcoming steps. The upcoming months between now and early June will include gathering input from stakeholders, developing an educational program, exploring multiple options and finally selecting a preferred option. Weekly meetings will be necessary to complete these critical steps. Subsequent to the MSBA kick-off meeting, the joint SBC and School Visioning Committee met with NV5 and Arrowstreet. Our agenda including reviewing the Arrowstreet contract and voting its approval. We bring that contract to you tonight for your vote of approval.

Following our PD day of cross grade collaboration, the teachers and administrators are planning to visit each other’s buildings across the district. These visits will help develop deeper conversations about curriculum and students’ learning throughout their K-12 experience in the Harvard Public Schools.

One Call has helped us remove snow from the campus twice already. The first storm helped us to iron out some of the potential issues with equipment and expectations. Mark worked closely with the team to smooth out the procedures. He will continue to oversee this important process for ensuring the safety of our students and staff.

**Review policy**

The Committee reviewed, amended or eliminated policies in Section D and L as follows:

DJE, DK and LDA – amended

DJF, DJG, DN, LA and LB – reviewed

DKA and DM – eliminated

Patty Wenger made a motion and Nancy Lancellotti seconded to approve policies DJE, DJF, DJG, DK, DKA, DM, DN, LA, LB and LDA presented as reviewed, eliminated and/or amended as agreed upon by the committee.

VOTE 5/0

**School Committee and Superintendent mid-year goal review**

Dr. Dwight and the Committee reviewed the status of the Joint School Committee/Superintendent Goals as well as the Superintendent goals for the 2016-2017 school year.

SusanMary Redinger led the conversation with regard to the Joint Goals.

1. Contract Negotiations – In progress
2. HES Renovation – 15% completion
3. User Fees – work needs to be done to come up with a plan prior to June

Dr. Dwight led the conversation with regard to the Superintendent Goals.

1. Strengthen Leadership Team – 50+% completion
2. Innovation – 50% completion
3. Networking – 70% completion

**Technology proposal review**

Dr. Dwight presented the technology lease worksheet showing the iPad and Macbook leases for 2015 through 2021. The spreadsheet showed the price for each lease. The cost for the proposal for FY18 is $300,000 which will give students in grades 5-12 either a Macbook or an iPad.

Peter Rowe reviewed the Devens revolving fund year end balances through FY17 that shows there is money in the Devens account to fund the 1: World initiative for grades 5-12th grades. On an ongoing basis these leases would be affordable and sustainable using Devens funds. Our investment in technology is consistent with our Vision Statement that students engage in learning how to access and apply knowledge, think critically and creatively, and communicate effectively. They continue to develop the confidence and ability to collaborate, contribute, and adapt in an ever-changing world.

Mary Traphagen made the motion and Patty Wenger seconded to approve the technology proposal as presented to be funded through the Devens revolving fund for up to $300,000.

VOTE 5/0

**Diversity work update**

Dr. Dwight shared with the Committee the continued work being done with the Diversity Committee. Dr. Dwight recently met with Roland Gibson and Sharon McCarthy who are in the process of surveying people to form a smaller steering committee to work on diversity. The steering committee will be tasked with communicating out the work that is planned. The group will come up with Vision and Mission statement and the hope is to bring lots of people together. SusanMary commended Dr.Dwight for her work on diversity and for bringing it to the town level.

**MSBA kick-off information and design firm contract approval**

The Massachusetts School Building Authority held their kick off meeting on January 5, 2017. The objective of the meeting was to introduce the project team and discuss the project goals, procedures and schedule. The School Committee will need to approve the contract with Arrowstreet and also will need to vote to authorize the School Building Committee to approve payments for expenses.

The amounts allocated at ATM for the Feasibility Study are as follows:

Owner’s Project Manager $108,000

Designer: $228,000

Environmental and Site Testing: $100,000

Other: $ 64,000

TOTAL $500,000

Nancy Lancelotti made the motion and Mary Traphagen seconded to approve the contract for the HES Renovation Project with the designer, Arrowstreet in accordance with the recommendation of the School Building Committee.

VOTE 5/0

Mary Traphagen made the motion and Patty Wenger seconded to authorize the School Building Committee to approve expenses for the HES building project.

VOTE 5/0

**Review Town Report**

SusanMary Redinger presented a draft of the School Committee’s Annual Report and asked that an edits be sent to her prior to final review on January 23rd. Mary Traphgen thanked SusanMary for writing the report.

**Review meeting minutes**

SusanMary Redinger with no objection approved the minutes of the December 12th meeting as amended.

**Liaison/Subcommittee reports**

Mary Traphagen reported that the HES School Council is interested in knowing if the School Committee would like to institute a home work policy. Currently, there does not appear to be a MASC policy regarding homework. Sue Frederick will come to a meeting to present any recommendations the School Council has. The council is starting work on the student survey.

Jon Green reported that SEPAC is working on a survey that will hopefully go out soon. No new information regarding HCTV.

Nancy Lancellotti reported that TBS School Council will be meeting on Wednesday. They will be discussing TV production classes and computer science offerings as well as the round table advisory process and wellness opportunities.

Patty Wenger reported that CPIC met today. Projects were ranked two weeks ago. The Science Labs ranked quite low due to insufficient information available to members. Since then two members have had a chance to walk through and may have reviewed the furniture quotes etc. CPIC is considering clumping the school locks, the dump truck and the Science Labs together and do a BAN (Bond Anticipation Note) that can be paid over five years.

SusanMary Redinger shared an invitation from Marty Walsh to attend “Understanding the American Muslim” being held on Sunday, January 15th from 3 to 5 pm at the Worcester Islamic Center. Please RSVP by Wednesday if you plan to attend. SusanMary Redinger reminded the Committee of the Student Advisory meeting on January 20th from 7 to 7:30 a.m. The topics for discussion are reaction to new science rooms, new administration line-up, and thoughts on Macbooks.

**Future agenda items**

Student Achievement

Policy Subcommittee

Global Competency

Special Education Report

District Improvement Plan update

Parent Survey - TBS

Youth Risk Survey results

**Interested citizen commentary** – none

**Closing commentary –**

Jon Green thanked everyone for the work on diversity and inclusion

SusanMary Redinger shared a story she heard from her church where a mom was sharing a joy. The woman’s kindergartener went home sick from school without her special blanket. The child had struggled in school and the mom had hoped the blanket could be sent home with the older sibling but that didn’t happen. At the end of the day the teacher noticed the blanket had been left behind and drove the blanket to the child’s home. SusanMary wanted to thank teachers that go the extra mile.

The School Committee will be meeting in executive session to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining with the Harvard Teacher’s Association because an open session may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the committee. The committee will not reconvene into open session.

SusanMary Redinger made a motion and Mary Traphagen seconded to go into Executive Session to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining with the Harvard Teachers Association and Dr. Dwight.

Green (Aye), Lancellotti (Aye), Redinger (Aye), Traphagen (Aye), and Wenger (Aye).

Respectfully Submitted:

Mary Zadroga