School Committee Meeting

Monday, September 11, 2017

6:15 p.m.

Upper Town Hall

Attendance: Mary Traphagen, Nancy Lancellotti, SusanMary Redinger, Jon Green, John Ruark, Linda Dwight, Peter Rowe. Absent: Maureen Babcock

Mary Traphagen called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m.

Nancy Lancellotti read the Vision Statement.

**Public Commentary** – None

**Trip Approval**

Bryce Mattie along with Sofia MacLean and Anya Begue presented a request for three overnight Model UN conferences during the 2017/2018 school year. The conferences are planned for HMUN - Boston/Harvard University in January, UMassMUN -UMass Amherst in March, and GCMUN in New York City during February break.

SusanMary Redinger made the motion and Nancy Lancellotti seconded to move that we approve the three Model UN trips as presented in the packet.

VOTE 5/0

Julie Burton, Chris Zacharer and Evan Bilafer attended the meeting to request approval to start the Bromfield Association of Rocket Science (BARS) Club. Building rockets will help students to learn about the science of rocketry. The club will help students apply knowledge they learn in math and science classes.

SusanMary Redinger made the motion and Jon Green seconded to approve the Bromfield Association of Rocket Science (BARS) Club.

VOTE 5/0

Deb Pierce attended the meeting to request approval to start a Science National Honor Society at The Bromfield School. The Science National Honor Society would promote and support student research and projects in Science. The Science National Honor Society would provide an organized medium to recognize student involvement and achievement in science and give students a more specific and nationally recognized method to create a portfolio, become involved in a wide variety of STEM activities and to be introduced to a wide range of potential careers in science.

SusanMary Redinger made the motion and Nancy Lancellotiti seconded to approve the National Science Honor Society as presented.

VOTE 5/0

Lisa Terrio attended the meeting to request approval to start a German Club at The Bromfield School. The club would meet twice a month after school to learn German language and culture.

SusanMary Redinger made the motion and Nancy Lancellotti seconded to approve the German Club as presented.

VOTE 5/0

**Grant Approval**

John Ruark made the motion and Jon Green seconded to accept the generous donation of $3,500 from the PTO to be used by teachers and administration at HES to cover incidental expenses incurred.

VOTE 5/0

Anne McWaters attended the meeting to request approval for the Harvard Athletic Association (HAA) to formally donate new basketball equipment to the Hildreth Elementary School. HAA would replace two existing main backboards with Jaypro safety glass backboards, breakaway rims, edge padding and electric height adjusters with key switch operating system. The total cost with installation is $6,494 and HAA would like the school to cover the electrical/installation expense. The School Committee considered the cost of this work in light of the school building project that is proposed.

SusanMary Redinger made a motion and Nancy Lancellotti seconded to move that we accept the HAA proposal to install the basketball backboard equipment and that the School Committee will contribute $1500 from the Shaw Trust toward the installation.

VOTE 5/0

**Math Curriculum Review**

Russ Wass and Julie Horton presented the Mathematics pathways for Grades 6 through 12. In addition, they shared several Math Department accomplishments such as ranking in US News and World Reports, above average SAT scores, advanced scores on MCAS, as well as recognition at the Elizabeth Haskins competition, Math Olympiad, and the American Math Competition.

**Bromfield Dress Code Revision**

Scott Hoffman presented new language that will be added to the student handbook regarding student dress code. In addition to the changes presented the Committee agreed to add the following language:

*Items of clothing or accessories that display offensive images or words that would be considered socially, culturally, or ethnically inappropriate.*

Scott Hoffman is going to add language to explain the “process” which will include treating students with dignity/respect. Lastly, fix the grammar of the first paragraph regarding the “requirements set forth above” AND add an “or” before items in the last bullet.

SusanMary Redinger made a motion and John Ruark seconded to accept the Dress Code language with the additional language from the Acton Public Schools and to include a process that references student’s respect and dignity.

VOTE 5/0

**HEAC Presentation**

David Fay and Brian Smith from the Harvard Energy Advisory Committee attended the meeting to report on the Peregrine Focus Project which is a monitoring system that tracks electrical usage by day. The tool can help find issues and make adjustments or repairs to save energy. HEAC would like to display real-time energy usage in a hallway at Bromfield. HEAC would like to see a student or students taking on the Bromfield energy usage using Energy Monitoring as a Science Fair project or Senior project. HEAC would like the School Committee to consider funding $67K in identified failed components in the HVAC system. The School Committee can add it to the Capital Plan cycle but it is unknown if it will be funded. HEAC received a grant to hire a technician to plan the Bromfield lighting project.

**Superintendent Report**

***Hildreth Elementary building project update***

List of actions completed in the past two weeks

\*Met with members of the working group to outline upcoming steps in the process

\*Held a School Building Committee meeting; topics included site considerations and building sizing/location

\*Coordinated communication with NV5, Arrowstreet, Chief Sicard and Bob Scanlan for a meeting on 9/12

***School Welcome Students and Staff***

The staff convocation speaker, Dr. Rob Evan, shared an uplifting message about the power of teachers to make a difference in the lives of students. He reminded us to find joy in the daily interactions and collaborations. The informal review of his talk was so positive that we are planning to have him return in May. Students started schools on August 30th and we saw lot of smiles and excited chatter. We have created learning environments where most students want to come. This is credit to all involved with the Harvard Public Schools.

***Meeting Date Change***

Our first scheduled meeting in October falls on Columbus Day and Mary Traphagen suggested that we discuss other options for meeting. The meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 10th.

***Science Lab Update***

The science lab sub-committee, town administrators, school leaders, and the science department leader met on September 7th to discuss the timeline and impediments to the project. The remaining hurdle in the project is the lack of a secured plumber due to no bids or an unacceptable bid. After exhausting any other possibility, we are forced to wait until September 20th in hopes that our outreach yields a successful bid in the latest procurement cycle.

Meanwhile students and teachers are displaced, but making the best of the situation. They are focused on ensuring student learning by sharing spaces and collaborating together. Scott, Robin and Julie will continue to work closely with the teachers on this part of the problem.

While we wait until September 20th, we will continue with the concrete boring parts of the project and electrical preparations.

SusanMary Redinger made the motion and John Ruark seconded to move that we appropriate up to $100K from the Devens funds towards the Science Lab project.

VOTE 5/0

***Classroom Walk-throughs as a Priority***

The leaders at both schools made frequent classroom visits a priority goal during our Leadership Summit. They have set time aside on their shared calendars to visit classrooms daily and provide feedback. They are setting a very positive tone with their focus on instructional leadership. At our leadership team meeting the leaders shared the positive impact of their visits; to them, the students, and the faculty. We also shared our other goals for the year, reviewed the District Improvement Plan draft, and spent time discussing Dr. Evan’s book. The Human Side of School Change.

**Goals** – Tabled

**District Improvement Plan** – Tabled

**Vision Statement Revisions**

Dr. Dwight presented three options created by the leadership team to change some language in the Harvard Vision Statement. The Committee discussed the changes and agreed on the following:

The Harvard Public Schools communities, dedicated to educational excellence, guides all students to realize their highest potential by balancing academic achievement with personal well-being in the pursuit of individual dreams. The students engage in learning how to access and apply knowledge, think critically and creatively, and communicate effectively. They develop the confidence and ability to understand diverse perspectives, collaborate, and contribute to their local, national and global community.

SusanMary Redinger made the motion and John Ruark seconded to change the vision statement to the hybrid that was discussed.

VOTE 5/0

**Financial Close-Out**

Peter Rowe explained to the Committee the spending for the Harvard Public Schools for FY17 through June 30, 2017. The major factors negatively affecting total spending for the year, as previously reported, were

1. Custodial Service contract which exceed the budget by $60K separate from snow removal
2. Regular transportation contract increased by $36K
3. Out of District private placement and contracted services cost at $68K
4. Legal services cost at $37K
5. The loss of the state fund Kindergarten Grant at $20K

The overages are largely offset by approximately $150K in salary savings from staff turnover, energy costs under budget by $54K and a projected surplus of $33K in the Special Education transportation account. On balance the savings were able to offset the overages by a small amount: $3,606.

**Meeting Minute Approval**

SusanMary Redinger made the motion and Nancy Lancellotti seconded to approve the minutes of the August 28th meeting as amended.

VOTE 4/0/1 – John Ruark abstained due to absence from the meeting.

**Warrant Approval**

SusanMary Redinger entered into record a list of invoices on three warrants that were signed over the past summer. The signed warrants and the warrant recap of all invoices paid is available for anyone interested in reviewing them.

**Agenda Items for September 25th**

District Improvement Plan

School Improvement Plan

Five-year Capital Plan

Student Advisory Meeting Schedule

Bus Data

Course Enrollment

**School Committee Commentary**

Linda Dwight – of note there was no press present at tonights meeting.

Mary Traphagen – In light of the recent hurricanes that have hit in other parts of our country we are in a very fortunate place.

John Ruark – Very happy to be part of the convocation for the first time and sorry that I could not stick around to hear the speaker.

Adjourn

SusanMary Redinger made the motion and John Ruark seconded to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 p.m.

VOTE 5/0

Respectfully submitted:

Mary Zadroga