

School Committee Minutes
Upper Town Hall
Monday, February 25, 2019
6:15 p.m.

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

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

Mary Traphagen read the vision statement.

Public Commentary: None

Student Report: None

Foundation Budget Discussion:

Dr. Dwight explained how the state Chapter 70 formula works to fund our local school budget. Currently the state contributes 14% to Harvard's school budget. Low poverty districts are funded at a much higher percentage rate. The gap in state aid is paid by the tax payers. There is a proposal to update the funding formula and then fully fund the Foundation Budget Review Commission's recommendation. Senator Eldridge and State Representative Benson will be attending our meeting in March to provide further understanding of the proposal.

Renaming Columbus Day Vote

The Committee discussed whether to change the recognition known as Columbus Day to Indigenous People's Day as a way to celebrate and honor Indigenous peoples, and begin to correct some of the countless wrongs committed against Indigenous people. This change would be identified in the school calendar as well Dr. Dwight will inform the Select board, DESE, MASS and MASC of the change.

Shannon Molloy made the motion and SusanMary Redinger seconded to change the school calendar from Columbus Day to Indigenous People's Day.

VOTE 5/0

2019-20 Calendar

SusanMary Redinger made the motion and Jon Green seconded to move to approve the 2019/2020 school calendar as presented.

VOTE 5/0

School Building Committee Update: Vote on Proprietary Items

SusanMary Redinger explained to the Committee that proprietary vendors for the school building project need to be approved and voted on by the School Committee. SusanMary Redinger presented four proprietary items:

- *NEC for the phone system to ensure it is compatible with existing phones at Bromfield
- *Aerohive for the Wireless Access Points (WAP) to ensure compatibility with current equipment
- *Miracle for the playground equipment so we can re-use the existing play structure and keep it under warranty
- *Milestone for the security cameras to be compatible with the current Milestone software in use throughout the district.

John Ruark made the motion and SusanMary Redinger seconded to vote to approve the four proprietary items that SusanMary Redinger has presented.

VOTE 5/0

School Building Committee Update:

SusanMary Redinger updated the Committee as follows: The 60% completion documents were submitted to MSBA on December 7th. The MSBA reviewed and noted things that were missing on December 28th. The MSBA and district response went to the School Building Committee at their meeting on January 25th. The School Building Committee is committed to holding NV5, Arrowstreet, and Shawmut more accountable. Moving forward the 90% completion submission to MSBA is scheduled for March 19th. The School Building Committee is pushing the designers to get the value engineering done. SusanMary Redinger asked how the Committee would like to be updated in the future. Moving forward there will be a future agenda item to discuss what kinds of information the Committee members need in order to make informed decisions.

Reorganization; Chair, Vice-Chair, Clerk Position Vote

The Committee discussed the reorganization of the Committee with the departure of Mary Traphagen. In accordance with Policy BDB – “In the case of a vacated Chair, the Vice-Chair will automatically succeed to Chair pro tem, SusanMary Redinger will serve as Chair. The Committee then proceeded to take nominations to fill the Vice-Chair role. Shannon Molloy will fill the role of Vice Chair until a new School Committee member is appointed at which time the Committee may choose to reorganize.

John Ruark nominated Shannon Molloy as Vice Chair, SusanMary Redinger seconded. Shannon Molloy accepted.

VOTE 5/0

Mary Traphagen’s assignments that need to be filled.

Student Advisory Council

March 20th – TBS School Council

Signing payroll warrants

Mary Traphagen agreed to stay on the School Building Committee as a community member, the Committee discussed whether another School Committee member should be added in order to retain the membership makeup of two School Committee members to the School Building Committee.

Superintendent's Update

*Financial Update – The preliminary outlook for the budget cuts will impact the school budget by \$150,000. The town is waiting to hear from two final billing entities, but they are not expected to change the dollar deficit by much. The leadership team is looking closely at personnel and other areas of potential reductions. We will bring our recommendations to the committee at our meetings in March.

*Continued Focus on Improving School Culture – The leadership team consulted with two experts on the topic of sexual harassment issues. The women with whom we consulted work on the issues at the collegiate level and they were able to provide guidance and resources for our work at Bromfield. Scott Hoffman and Dr. Dwight met with Chief Denmark and Ted Johnson from Brandeis University regarding the Kingian Pathway to Non-Violence. The Chief received funding to bring the program to Harvard and we are planning to conduct a full day of training on either April 27th or May 11th. We will be inviting several teachers and students to attend.

*Heating Update – Jon Snyder continues to tackle the heating issues at The Bromfield School. He continues to save the district considerable money by learning about and completing complex tasks that would have been contracted out in the past.

*Professional Development: Diversity and Inclusion: Teachers from HES and Bromfield met together on February 6th. We discussed the Inclusion Survey results and then we watched the Teja video that was created last spring. The video included interviews with students and faculty at Bromfield as they shared about their identity and struggles they have encountered. We ended the professional development by participating in a “cross the line” activity to build awareness of the stories and struggles of our colleagues and our students. Teachers awareness of the stories and struggles of our colleagues and our students. Teachers received resources regarding facilitating difficult conversations in their classrooms.

*Arm in Arm and the League of Women Voters co-hosted a speaker on the topic of immigration. This event was originally scheduled for February 12th but was rescheduled to February 21st. This rescheduling date coincided with vacation week, so we had fewer student attendees than expected. But, the event was well attended. The speaker, Dr. Egmont from Boston College, shared the history of immigration, the impact of recent policy changes, and the future outlook of immigration in the US and around the world. At the end he provided resources for further involvement.

Student Advisory Council Topics

*Reaction to the calendar being changed from Columbus Day to Indigenous People Day

*Thoughts on change in the school start time

*Does the SAC feel their meetings with the School Committee are productive and purposeful? What would make them better?

Grant Approval

Dr. Dwight presented the following gifts from the Harvard Schools Trust for approval:

Sammy Rabbit: A story about Big Dreams - \$180

DC Trip Scholarships: \$1,500

John Ruark made a motion and SusanMary Redinger seconded to approve the grants as submitted by Harvard Schools Trust.

VOTE 5/0

Liaison Subcommittee Meet

Shannon Molloy reported that the HES School Council meets tomorrow. The Wellness Subcommittee has not met yet this year. Dr. Dwight will contact Colleen Nigzus to determine the status of the Wellness Committee.

John Ruark reported that HEAC gave an update on the TBS lighting project which is continuing at pace. The Athletic Advisory meets tomorrow.

SusanMary Redinger reported that the Capital Committee met this morning and worked on revising the rating sheets and approved their submission to the Annual Town Report.

Ellen Leicher is looking for School Committee participation for the Grade 6 & 7 Science Fair to be held on March 20th from 9:25 a.m. to 10:25 a.m. John Ruark and SusanMary Redinger agreed to serve as judges for the event.

SusanMary Redinger reported that the School Committee/Superintendent goal for the disposition of The Bromfield House is no longer an appropriate goal in that the School Committee in a previous correspondence relinquished the space to the Selectboard. In that correspondence the School Committee agreed to turn over The Bromfield House to the Selectboard when the Schools are no longer using it.

Agenda Items

Policy

Budget

Benson/Eldridge visit

Youth Risk Survey

Building Project Updates

School Committee Commentary

Dr. Dwight presented a gift to Mary Traphagen for her years of service on the School Committee.

SusanMary Redinger – reminisced about Mary Traphagen’s contributions to the School and community over the past years. People don’t know how much work it is. SusanMary Redinger thanked Mary for all of the work and all of the people of the town who benefitted from her work.

John Ruark commented that Mary Traphagen will be missed and thanked her for all of her hard work and for helping guide him through the process.

Shannon Molloy thanked Mary Traphagen for giving her the insight to how hard the job can be. Mary Trapghaen commented that it has been a very rewarding opportunity. No one can do the job without the support of the people behind the scenes. She appreciates the support of the Committee, it takes everyone. Mary Traphagen agreed that her life has increased in value due

to the ways she had to push herself in this role. She will miss aspects of being with you all. If there is ever a time she can come back she will.

Adjournment

Mary Traphagen made the motion and John Ruark seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 p.m.

VOTE 5/0

Respectfully Submitted,
Mary Zadroga