School Committee Minutes

Town Hall Meeting Room

Monday, July 11, 2016

6:00 p.m.

Members attending: SusanMary Redinger, Mary Traphagen, Jennifer Bedford, Jon Green, Maureen Babcock, Lorraine Leonard and Linda Dwight.

Absent: Nancy Lancellotti

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

Peter Rowe read the vision statement

**Public Commentary –** Maryann Marcoux – HES handbook – Safe arrival procedure

**Introduction of New Interim School Business Manager, Peter Rowe**

Dr. Dwight introduced Peter Rowe as the Finance Director for the school department. Peter will begin working 2 to 2.5 days per week starting after Labor Day. SusanMary Redinger invited School Committee members to stop by and meet with Peter.

**Hildreth Elementary Handbook Review**

Sue Frederick presented to the Committee for approval the proposed changes to the Hildreth Elementary School Handbook. The major changes incorporated into the handbook are updating the morning arrival procedures and adding information regarding the use of security cameras in the school. After discussion, some revisions were made regarding the morning arrival procedures.

Mary Traphgen made the motion and Jennifer Bedford seconded that we accept the HES 2016-17 handbook as amended.

VOTE 4/0

**Anti-Bullying Plan Update**

Sue Frederick reported that during the past year a Committee was formed to review the Anti-Bullying policy and make appropriate changes. The Committee met in January, February and finalized the policy in March. They used the check sheet provided by the state and developed language to meet the state requirements.

Jennifer Bedford made a motion and Mary Traphagen seconded to approve the Anti-Bullying Policy as amended.

VOTE 4/0

**Board of Selectman/School Committee Vote on Applicants for Interim School Committee Member**

The Committee met with Board of Selectman members Lucy Wallace, Stu Sklar, Ron Ricci, Alice vonLoesecke and Ken Swanton (via conference call) to vote to fill the vacancy on the Committee created by Jennifer Bedford’s resignation. Of the six residents that volunteered to fill the vacancy, three (Patty Wenger, Jason Cole and John Ruark) attended the meeting and spoke about their qualifications and interest in serving on the Committee. Ron Ricci made the motion and Alice vonLoescecke seconded to nominate Patty Wenger to fill the vacancy.

VOTE 6/3

(Voting in Favor: Ricci, vonLoesecke, Swanton, Redinger, Bedford and Traphagen.

Opposed: Green, Sklar, Wallace).

Both the School Committee and the Board of Selectman thanked all of the residents for their interest in serving the town and encouraged them to stay involved.

**Year End Financial Review and Budget Close Out**

Lorraine Leonard reviewed the FY16 Budget close out. A surplus of $50,460 will be available to the town for free cash in an effort to reduce the cost of unemployment due to the change in custodial services. Lorraine Leonard reviewed the FY16 School Outside Funding Report and explained the change in the subsidy for School Choice.

Mary Traphagen made a motion and Jennifer Bedford seconded to reduce the School Choice subsidy to $145,000.

VOTE 4/0

**Superintendent Evaluation**

SusanMary Redinger reported that Dr. Dwight received a rating of proficient in Instructional Leadership, Family and Community Engagement and Professional Culture and a rating of Exemplary in Management and Operations. SusanMary Redinger read the following comments:

In her second year as Harvard’s Superintendent, it is the School Committee’s collective opinion that Dr. Dwight has met her Professional Practice, Student Learning and District Improvement Goals. She has received a rating of “proficient” in three of the four performance standards and a rating of “exemplary” in the standard of Management and Operations. Committee members consistently recognized her leadership and communication skills and found her responsive to the needs of the school community. On key issues she has collaborated with key stakeholders by forming advisory groups, holding public forums and meeting with various boards and committees. “She has worked tirelessly to advance the goals of the District and she keeps the best interest of the students at the forefront of her decision making”.

One member saw room for improvement in creating/managing the joint SC/Superintendent goals citing work still to be done on the District Dashboard, User Fees and the Science Lab ventilation projects. These goals should be reviewed during the next goal-setting/strategy session to determine if and how they will be realized.

Dr. Dwight’s “performance this year stands out in particular for the shepherding of the HES Building Project with both the MSBA and the town of Harvard.” Not only has the District qualified for MSBA funding with a town vote at ATM, under Dr. Dwight’s management Harvard has met deadlines early thus allowing work to continue throughout the summer.

She has demonstrated a commitment to growth and innovation for the district through her work with the leadership team, the faculty and advocating for technological advances that impact teaching and learning.

Dr. Dwight “has initiated a number of significant improvements to the school facilities and is managing them simultaneously while adhering to schedule and cost requirements. We are fortunate to have this individual leading our District.

“In her second year, Dr. Dwight has embraced her work as Superintendent of Harvard Public Schools”. She “is personable, empathetic, and has strong interpersonal and communication skills. I appreciate her hard work and commitment to growth; in our conversations she has articulated a worthy vision and good ideas for areas of innovation and growth for the district and is leading progress on many fronts”.

“In her actions and words, she is guided by the vision statement of the Harvard Public Schools, with the faculty, parent community, larger local community, and, most importantly, individual students being the beneficiary of that vision. As a member of the School Committee, it has been my pleasure to work with Dr. Dwight”.

As the Committee and Dr. Dwight move into the third year of implementing DESE’s Superintendent Evaluation a more collaborative approach to the process of goal setting and review could aid the committee in supporting Dr. Dwight’s growth and development while ensuring that her efforts continue to align with the district’s mission, vision and strategic plans. Dr. Dwight is a true asset to our community and we look forward to our ongoing partnership with this extraordinary individual.

Jennifer Bedford made the motion and Mary Traphagen seconded to approve the End of Cycle Summative Evaluation for the 2015/2016 school year.

VOTE 4/0

**Superintendent Report**

Dr. Dwight reported on the following:

*HES building project update:*

* Met with the subcommittee of the School Building Committee to develop the OPM interview questions.
* Selected dates for the OPM application reviews and interviews.
* Completed the RFS template through on-line collaboration with MSBA
* Submitted the RFS ad to Marie Sobalvarro for posting on the Central Registry. Submitted the RFS ad to the Lowell Sun for 2 weeks of advertising.

Summer dates of note:

* July 13th: official posting of the RFS to the Central Registry
* July 18th: we host a walk-through of the site for interested applicants
* July 20th: last date for interested applicants to send in questions.
* July 27th: applications are due to the district.
* August 3rd: members of the School Building Committee review the applications and select top 3 or 4 for interviewing.
* August 9th: interviews of the short listed applicants.
* August 17th: our OPM selection turned in to MSBA.
* September 12th: MSBA meeting to approved our OPM.

*Calendar change:*

Despite the careful review by the committee and others, the approved 2016/17 calendar is short one day. According to our policy IC, the calendar must have 5 inclement weather days built in and our 2016-2017 calendar has only 4. We have made the change and need a vote of the School Committee to approve the correct end date of June 21st.

Mary Traphagen made the motion and Jennifer Bedford seconded to include 5 inclement weather days and have an ending date of June 21, 2017.

VOTE 4/0

*Grant Funding:*

The Governor’s budget no longer includes funding for the Full Day Kindergarten grant. This means $20,000 loss in our budget for FY17. This grant has been in existence for many years and has helped to fund the classroom aides in the grade. The goal of the grant was to help districts plan for and offer full-day kindergarten as an option for families. Most districts have done this, and so the funding has been decreasing and word of it’s discontinuation has been around for several years.

*Dean of Students Hired for One Year Pilot Program*

Julie Horton has been hired as the new Dean of Students at the Bromfield School for the 2016/2017 school year. She will continue to teach two classes in addition to serving as the Dean.

*Waiver Granted:*

The DESE approved a waiver in order to hire Peter Rowe as the School Business Manager. The plan is for Peter to begin working a few summer days and then up to 2.5 days a week starting in September. His office will be on the 2nd floor of the Bromfield House.

*Conference Registration:*

The MASC Conference in November is offering an early-bird savings of $100 for individuals registering by July 15th. We would like to take advantage of this for any members of the School Committee that would like to attend for any portion of the 4 day event.

**MSBA Feasibility Study Vote**

In order to move our project forward with MSBA, it is required to sign a Feasibility Study Agreement. We need a recorded vote of this Committee that authorizes the Chair or another member of the School Committee as the authorized signer.

Mary Traphagen made the motion and Jennifer Bedford seconded that the chairwomen of the

School Committee, SusanMary Redinger is the authorized person to sign the MSBA Feasibility Agreement.

VOTE 4/0

**Project Update**

Dr. Dwight shared with the Committee the progress on the summer projects underway at The Bromfield School including the parking lot, science lab furniture and ventilation and bathroom renovations.

**Personnel Spreadsheet for FY17**

Dr. Dwight reviewed the Personnel spreadsheet for the FY17 school year which is currently showing a surplus of $114,797 due to new teachers being hired at a lower rate than was budgeted.

**Review meeting minutes**

SusanMary Redinger made a motion with no objection to approve the minutes of the June 13th meeting as amended.

VOTE 4/0

SusanMary Redinger made a motion with no objection to approve the Executive Session Minutes of May 23rd as amended.

VOTE 4/0

**Report Out of Liaisons**

**Maureen Babcock** reported that DEAC has gotten the results of their survey and will be making them public as well as finalizing the newsletter to send out. DEAC will not meet again until September. Maureen will keep tabs on what’s going with the housing market. There are currently 20 homes being built that will be ready in the fall. Dr. Dwight explained that those students will not be able to attend school until they take residency in their new home. The district is working on a welcoming plan for students who start school during the year. Maureen will work on arranging a meeting for Peter Rowe to meet with Thatcher Kezer from MassDevelopment after Labor Day.

**Jennifer Bedford** reported that HES School Council met in June and worked on the final comments to the school improvement plan. It was a spirited meeting that ran late, but ended on a productive note. The School Council has two new members, teacher representative, Lisa Hopkins, and parent representative Demet Guntas.

SusanMary Redinger asked members to send goal suggestions to her or Dr. Dwight by August 1st so that they can be made part of the packet.

**Agenda Items**

HES School Improvement Plans

TBS School Improvement Plans

Bromfield Handbook

DDM discussion

Goal setting for the year/map out year

Policy

Bus efficiency

Kindergarten update

Review Liaisons

Superintendent goals

**Commentary:**

SusanMary Redinger - Expressed appreciation and gratitude to Jennifer Bedford. Your thoughtful demeanor, intelligence and way of looking at things have really made a difference and we will miss you.

Jennifer Bedford – It has been a pleasure and honor to be a part of this committee and to serve the town. There is a lot to miss in Harvard.

Mary Traphagen – Worked with Jennifer as Girl Scout leaders as well and as a parent and in so many other ways I will miss her.

Maureen Babcock – exciting to have so many candidates interested in serving on the School Committee.

Jon Green – Wish the very best to Jennifer and appreciate the effort, guidance and leadership she has given in service to the Committee.

**Adjournment**

SusanMary Redinger with no objection made the motion to adjourn at 8:48 p.m.

VOTE 4/0

Respectfully submitted:

Mary Zadroga