

**BELMONT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES
CHENERY MIDDLE SCHOOL COMMUNITY ROOM
MARCH 11, 2014**

Present: Ms. Laurie Graham, Chair
Ms. Anne Lougée, Secretary
Mr. Kevin Cunningham
Ms. Lisa Fiore
Ms. Elyse Shuster
Ms. Laurie Slap
Dr. Thomas Kingston, Interim Superintendent
Ms. Janice Darias, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction
Mr. Anthony DiCologero, Director of Business, Finance and Operations

Also present: Ms. Beth Young, Student Representative
Ms. Deb McDevitt, Curriculum Director for Social Studies
Ms. Deb Darlington, Curriculum Director for Science and Technology
Mr. Steve Mazzola, Director of Technology
Mr. Roger Colton, Advisor to the BPS on Solar Panels

1. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Executive Session for the purpose of discussing strategy with respect to Collective bargaining given that a discussion in Open Session may have a detrimental impact on the School Committee's bargaining position.

2. **OPENING BUSINESS**

2.1 Call to order

Ms. Graham called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

2.2 Pledge of Allegiance

Ms. Graham led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2.3 Citizens' Concerns

There were no citizens' concerns.

2.4 Adjustments to the Agenda

Ms. Graham stated that Beth Young would provide the Student Representative Report first.

Ms. Young reported that students at Belmont High School will be organizing coffee hours to raise money for the homeless. The money will be donated to Mary's House, a local shelter for families. A blood drive was held at the high school recently and forty students signed up to donate blood. The musical, Legally Blonde was a great success.

2.5 Chairman's Report

Ms. Graham updated the Committee on recent and upcoming events throughout the town.

2.6 Superintendent's Report

Dr. Kingston discussed the need for more crossing guards. He asked anyone who may be interested in applying to be a crossing guard to contact the Belmont Police Department.

Dr. Kingston updated the School Committee on Police Dog Grim's visits to Belmont High School along with his handler, Officer Corey Taylor. Grim has been meeting with students in the cafeteria during lunches to acclimate him to noisy crowds. Dr. Kingston stated that Grim is well behaved and alert and the students have enjoyed meeting him. He explained that there is a consortium of police K-9 officers who work together to conduct drug searches in schools. Advance notice is given prior to a search.

A search takes approximately ten to fifteen minutes. Before a search begins an administrator will call for the students to shelter in place and the dogs are led with trainers through the corridors. If a dog detects an illegal substance it has to be seconded by another dog. Belmont Public Schools has a Memorandum of Agreement with the Belmont Police Department and dog searches will begin within the next few weeks. Dr. Kingston stated that he wants to be sure that the grounds are secure and there are no substances in the building.

Ms. Darias reported on the Coordinated Program Review that was conducted by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in January 2013. At the time of the review there were two areas out of eighteen that needed to be addressed. One area of concern involves English Language Learners and how much instruction they are receiving and the other had to do with licensure of instructors. Ms. Darias and Ms. Lindsey Rinder, Director of English will develop a corrective action plan which may require additional staffing.

2.7 Director of Finance, Business and Operations' Report

Mr. DiCologero stated that he has been reviewing the FY15 budget with the Finance Subcommittee. There are also plans to review the budget with the Education Subcommittee of the Warrant Committee once meeting dates are established. He has also developed the 2014 Statement of Interest for the renovation of Belmont High School which must be sent to the Massachusetts School Building Authority by April 11. In addition, Mr. DiCologero has been preparing for two financial audits in March that will include reviews of the financials from FY13 and the full day kindergarten grant.

3. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

There was no unfinished business

4. **MAJOR BUSINESS**

4.1 iPad update

Ms. McDevitt (Director of Social Studies), Ms. Darlington (Director of Science & Technology), and Mr. Mazzola (Director of Technology) provided a video presentation on the use of iPads at the high school. Included were interviews with teachers explaining how the use of iPads in their classrooms has impacted student learning. The teachers all agreed that the addition of iPads has been helpful; allowing students to be more organized as well as providing regular and reliable access to online resources.

4.2 Solar Panel update – Exhibit A

Mr. Colton updated the School Committee on the status of the Wellington solar panel project. He explained that Broadway Electric, the firm that was contracted to install over 500 solar panels on the Wellington School, is closing operations as a family corporation. The Wellington project is under due diligence review by e-NRG, a firm that may decide to take over the project under the exact terms of the current contract. Belmont Public Schools also has the choice to terminate the agreement. Mr. Colton recommended that the BPS wait until e-NRG completes its due diligence, but identified other alternatives. Dr. Kingston recommended no action on the part of the School Committee until e-NRG completes its due diligence.

4.3 2014-2015 Belmont Public Schools Calendar – Exhibit B

Ms. Darias presented the draft version of the 2014-2015 school calendar explaining changes from previous years and suggested the School Committee review the calendar in order to vote on it at the next meeting.

4.4 Modeling Group Report – Special Education – Exhibit C

Dr. Kingston presented a brief overview of the Special Education Modeling Group report which was received last Friday. The group was chaired by Mr. Ken Kramer, Director of Student Services. Dr. Kingston explained that the report would be available for viewing on the Belmont Public Schools website.

5. **SUBCOMMITTEE/LIAISON UPDATES (as needed)**

5.1 Student Representative

Ms. Young presented her report at beginning of the meeting.

5.2 Finance Subcommittee

Ms. Slap stated the Finance Subcommittee met this morning to continue a review of the FY15 budget. She noted that they had received a set of questions from the Warrant Committee Education Subcommittee which they are reviewing.

5.3 Policy and Procedure Subcommittee

No report.

5.4 Curriculum & Instruction Subcommittee

The Curriculum & Instruction Subcommittee will meet next week for a presentation by Principal Kristen St. George about grade 5 class structure changes.

5.5 Capital Budget Committee

The Capital Budget Committee has scheduled meetings to review requests from different departments. The School Department request as well as the requests from the Consolidated Facilities Department will be reviewed this Friday morning.

5.6 Warrant Committee

No report.

5.7 Wellington Building Committee

No report.

6. **OTHER BUSINESS**

6.1 Consent Agenda

6.2 Personnel Items - none

6.3 Business Items – none

6.4 Approval of Minutes

February 25, 2014

On a motion offered by Ms. Lougée and seconded by Ms. Slap, it was

VOTED 5-0 with 1 abstention to approve the minutes of February 25, 2014.

7. **FUTURE BUSINESS**

Upcoming Meetings:

March 14, 2014

Capital Budget Committee

Town Hall, Room 4 – 8:00 a.m.

March 18, 2014
Finance Subcommittee Meeting
SAB Conference Room – 8:00 a.m.

March 25, 2014
Finance Subcommittee Meeting
SAB Conference Room – 8:00 a.m.

March 25, 2014
School Committee Meeting
CMS Large Community Room – 7:30 p.m.

8. **ENCLOSURES**

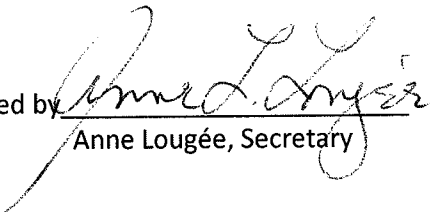
March 1, 2014 – Enrollment
March 1, 2014 – Enrollment indicating changes
2014 MCAS Schedule
Leave of Absence Return Plans for 2014-2015

9. **ADJOURNMENT**

At 9:25 p.m. on a motion offered by Ms. Slap and seconded by Ms. Shuster, it was

VOTED unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by



Anne Lougee, Secretary