

**BELMONT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES
CHENERY MIDDLE SCHOOL COMMUNITY ROOM
JANUARY 21, 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: Thomas Zembowicz, Student Representative

1. **OPENING BUSINESS**

1.1 Call to order

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

1.2 Pledge of Allegiance

Ms. Graham led the Pledge of Allegiance.

1.3 Citizens' Concerns

There were no citizens' concerns.

1.4 Adjustments to the Agenda

There were no adjustments to the agenda.

1.5 Chairman's Report

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

1.6 Superintendent's Report

Dr. Kingston announced that he would cancel school for tomorrow due to the weather. He explained that there are 5 snow days built into the school calendar and this will be the third day used. He stated that we will need to add more days in June if we exceed the 5 built in days.

Dr. Kingston explained that the AP Art students are postponing their trip to Paris for a year because they did not have enough students to go this spring. They need the higher number to help with the cost. They had tried to attach themselves to a trip to Paris that the French Language students are taking but the two programs were not similar enough to overlap.

Dr. Kingston updated the Committee on the Higginbottom Pool issues at Belmont High School. The pool had to be closed at the end of December due to elevated chlorine levels. The only way to correctly resolve the problem is to drain the pool, acid wash it and then re-fill. The process should be completed by the beginning or end of the February break. Dr. Kingston explained that the Town will try to provide some assistance for the repairs which may cost up to \$15,000.

Dr. Kingston explained that he has had multiple discussions with Town Administrator David Kale about the budget. They have also been in discussions with the Finance Subcommittee who will be meeting with David Kale in the next few weeks. The main issue driving the budget at this time is school enrollment.

1.7 Director of Finance, Business and Operations' Report

There was no report from the Director of Finance, Business and Operations.

2. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

There was no unfinished business.

3. **MAJOR BUSINESS**

3.1 Review and approval of Belmont Solar Car Trip – Exhibit A

Mr. Leon Dyer, Technical Education teacher at Chenery Middle School presented a trip proposal along with student James Stadler representing the Solar Club Team. The team is proposing a trip to Dallas, Texas to take part in the Solar Challenger 2014. The event will be held on July 18-25. The team is building a solar car that they would like to register to compete in the Solar Challenge. The students and chaperones will fly to Texas and the car will be shipped. The Solar Club Team has received some funding from the community and will continue to do more fundraising.

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

VOTED unanimously to approve the Belmont Solar Car Trip to Dallas, Texas in July 2014.

3.2 Final review and approval of Belmont High School Program of Studies – Exhibit B

Mr. Dan Richards, Principal of Belmont High School updated the School Committee on the presentation he had given at the last School Committee meeting regarding updates to the Belmont High School Program of Studies. He stated that if the School Committee approves the Program of Studies, the additional courses that were proposed will only be included if funding is secured.

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

VOTED unanimously to approve the 2014-2015 Belmont High School Program of Studies.

3.3 Update on Belmont High School Attendance Policy – Exhibit C

Mr. Dan Richards, Principal of Belmont High School updated the School Committee on some pilot programs that have been implemented at Belmont High School.

The open campus program for juniors began after a survey was taken in 2012 that showed students wanted open campus and were willing to work to earn it. Requirements for participation include community service, maintaining good grades, resolving outstanding obligations, no discipline referrals and good attendance. Mr. Richards stated that many students applied and that the program has been successful.

Mr. Richards updated the School Committee on the use of breathalyzers at school events. The breathalyzer was used at the 2013 Spring Fling Dance, 2013 Prom, 6 home football games and 2 home basketball games. Students were randomly breathalyzed at the dances and all passed. There were no incidents at the sports events where the breathalyzer was needed.

Mr. Dan Richards updated the School Committee on the Belmont High School Attendance Policy pilot. The attendance policy pilot involved first educating parents and students on how it works. Mr. Richards gave credit to the high school secretaries for the time they have taken to explain the policy to parents. BHS teacher Ms. Lisa Hurtubise joined Mr. Richards to explain how attendance has improved in her classes since the attendance policy was implemented. Mr. Tyler Normile explained the policy from a student perspective noting that it encourages students to think twice about whether or not they want to miss school. Full implementation of the attendance program is planned for the 3rd and 4th quarters.

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

4.1 Student Representative

Thomas Zembowicz, on behalf of students and outside groups who use the Higgenbottom pool, expressed frustration at the length of time the pool has been out of commission for repair. He then updated the School Committee on several events at Belmont High School: Members of the Model United Nations Team recently returned from a trip to New York where they won awards in debate and diplomacy; Mid-term exams will take place next Monday and Tuesday (noting that this is the first year in a while that two days are being dedicated to mid-terms exams, something that the students appreciate); The mid-term exams will be followed by a homework-free weekend; The semi-formal dance organized by the Student Senate will take place on February 1st; and that the Garden and Food Justice Club have organized a food drive which will take place this week.

4.2 Finance Subcommittee

The Finance Subcommittee will meet tomorrow at 1:30.

4.3 Policy and Procedure Subcommittee

The Policy and Procedure Subcommittee has not met.

4.4 Curriculum & Instruction Subcommittee

The Curriculum & Instruction Subcommittee will meet later this week.

4.5 Capital Budget Committee

The Capital Budget Committee will meet on February 27.

4.6 Warrant Committee

The Warrant Committee will meet next week to discuss 2nd quarter actuals, free cash, and Community Preservation Act proposals.

4.7 Wellington Building Committee

The Wellington Building Committee will meet next week.

5. **OTHER BUSINESS**

5.1 Consent Agenda – none

5.2 Personnel Items - none

5.3 Business Items – none

5.4 Approval of Minutes

January 7, 2014

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

VOTED unanimously to approve the minutes of January 7, 2014 as amended.

January 10, 2014

On a motion offered by Mr. Cunningham and seconded by Ms. Fiore, it was

VOTED 5-0-1 with Ms. Fiore abstaining to approve the minutes of January 10, 2014 as amended.

6. **FUTURE BUSINESS**

Upcoming Meetings:

January 22, 2014

Finance Subcommittee Meeting
SAB Conference Room – 81:30 p.m.

January 24, 2014
Curriculum & Instruction Subcommittee Meeting
SAB Conference Room – 8:30 a.m.

7. **ENCLOSURES**

No enclosures

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

At 9:22 p.m. on a motion offered by Ms. Lougée and seconded by Ms. Slap , it was

VOTED unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by



A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Anne Lougée', is written over a horizontal line.

Anne Lougée, Secretary