

**BELMONT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES
CHENERY MIDDLE SCHOOL COMMUNITY ROOM
JUNE 24, 2014**

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

Mr. Andrés Rojas, Selectman

1. **OPENING BUSINESS**

1.1 Call to order

Ms. Slap called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m.

1.2 Pledge of Allegiance

Ms. Slap 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. Slap noted that there were no school events to announce because the last day of school was June 20, 2014. She expressed gratitude for reaching agreements with the Belmont Education Association (for Units A, B, C, and D), and noted that the only contract remaining is with AFSCME, and those negotiations are underway. She expressed a hope that the School Committee members enjoy the change of pace for the summer with fewer meetings and an opportunity for reflection. She asked members to re-read the Modeling Group reports, and noted the August retreat dates (Aug. 20 and 21) and Meet Belmont on August 26. She thanked Dr. Kingston for his three years of service to the Belmont schools, noting the many accomplishments during that time. She noted that John Phelan will begin work on July 1.

1.6 Superintendent's Report

Dr. Kingston thanked the School Committee for the opportunity to be in Belmont and learn from his time here. He also acknowledged and thanked everyone for their work to reach agreement on the contracts with the Belmont Education Association. He expressed hope that the work of the Modeling Groups will benefit the ongoing work of the town's Financial Task Force. He asked Janice Darias to explain the assigned "summer reading" for Leadership Council and School Committee, *Thanks for the Feedback: The Science and Art of Receiving Feedback Well* by Douglas Stone and Sheila Heen.

1.7 Director of Finance, Business and Operations' Report

Mr. DiCologero explained that they are in the process of finalizing expenditures and working with the town to close out FY2014. Mr. Cunningham asked if, with the additional money from the Reserve Fund Transfer, we would be able to close with a zero balance. Mr. DiCologero said yes.

2. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business

3. MAJOR BUSINESS

3.1 Approval of Memoranda of Agreement with Belmont Education Association – Units A, B, C, D – Exhibit A

Ms. Slap and Mr. Cunningham explained some of the changes with the negotiations of these contracts with the Belmont Education Association this time, noting that they were negotiated using Interest-based Bargaining (IBB) and as a coalition with all units bargaining together with the School Committee. Ms. Slap said that it also led to the formation of the joint labor-management committee to continue the conversation. Mr. Andrés Rojas from the Board of Selectmen joined the School Committee for the discussion and votes on the contracts.

Moved: That the Belmont School Committee in plenary session approve the Memorandum of Agreement between the Belmont School Committee and the Belmont Education Association Unit A, dated June 13, 2014. Motion offered by Ms. Lougée, seconded by Ms. Shuster. It was approved unanimously on a roll call vote 7-0-0.

Moved: That the Belmont School Committee in plenary session approve the Memorandum of Agreement between the Belmont School Committee and the Belmont Education Association Unit B, dated June 13, 2014. Motion offered by Ms. Graham, seconded by Ms. Fiore. It was approved unanimously on a roll call vote 7-0-0.

Moved: That the Belmont School Committee in plenary session approve the Memorandum of Agreement between the Belmont School Committee and the Belmont Education Association Unit C, dated June 13, 2014. Motion offered by Ms. Lougée, seconded by Ms. Graham. It was approved unanimously on a roll call vote 7-0-0.

Mr. Cunningham offered some thoughts about the process and the product of the Unit D contract because it introduced job protection and a grievance procedure to this unit for the first time.

He noted that this will present some challenges to the school department because this is a unit that needs flexibility to adapt to the changing needs of students. Offering job security requires more of management for planning, while it recognizes the professionalism of the unit. He noted that a new evaluation system will be developed for the unit, which also produces a related demand on the Human Resources staff and the principals. He noted that this is a challenge to our system, and that it will work most successfully if the administration can develop a system to declare needs and assess the staff members' skills based on the needs of the students. He noted that this is the most significant change of all the contracts. Ms. Slap added that the plan is to develop the evaluation system next year and bring it to the School Committee for approval.

Moved: That the Belmont School Committee in plenary session approve the Memorandum of Agreement between the Belmont School Committee and the Belmont Education Association Unit A, dated June 13, 2014. Motion offered by Ms. Lougee, seconded by Ms. Graham. It was approved unanimously on a roll call vote 7-0-0.

3.2 Acceptance of Gifts:

❖ White Field House Improvements – Exhibit B

Ms. Slap introduced Frederick Jones, a Belmont community member who along with others is raising funds and soliciting volunteers to make improvements to the White Field House. Mr. Jones spoke about the gift to repair and enhance the White Field House. He explained why they were motivated to do this project, both for the many students who use the facility, and also to preserve this historic building in Belmont, which is a memorial to a war hero, a Belmont High graduate who fought in WWII and died in the Battle of the Bulge. He explained that the building functions mainly as an athletic locker room. The lockers date back to 1948, and don't function for modern athletic equipment. Many of the athletes don't even use the lockers. There are four locker rooms. One had new lockers put in several years ago with support from the Belmont Boosters. The primary goal is to replace all the old lockers to make it look like the one room with newer lockers. There are other repairs that they hope to do depending on fundraising, such as electrical work, including putting in exit lights and replacing the emergency lighting, and cleaning and painting the building. The Brendan Grant Foundation is partnering with the group, and will serve as the fiscal agent for the project.

Gerald Boyle, Director of Facilities for town and school buildings, and Jim Davis, Director of Physical Education, Athletics, and Student Activities, also attended the meeting, and noted their appreciation for the work as well as the collaborative nature of the project development and oversight.

Members of the School Committee and Mr. Rojas thanked Mr. Jones and all those participating in this project for their dedication to the town and commitment to working together to improve this facility. Mr. Cunningham noted in particular the challenges of a long list of capital projects and the inability of town funds to cover all of them, and thanked the volunteers and donors for their support.

Ms. Slap asked about the timeline for the work. Mr. Jones said that \$40,000 had been donated to date, and that the work would begin immediately.

Dr. Kingston explained that the motion listed the amount of \$50,000 because it needs to be a specific amount. If more money than that is raised, the School Committee can accept a second gift at a later date.

Moved: That, In accord with Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44, Section 53A, the Belmont School Committee gratefully accepts gifts and services from various donors in an equivalent amount not to exceed \$50,000 for repairs and enhancements to the White Field House. Motion was offered by Ms. Shuster and seconded by Ms. Fiore. It was approved unanimously 7-0-0.

- ❖ Anonymous donation of \$50,000 to pay teachers to develop an index of online materials and resources.

Ms. Darias explained that the money will be used to pay teachers (at the summer curriculum rate) to research, select, and annotate digital resources and materials for use in teaching and learning throughout the school system. Forty-five teachers have been selected to do the work, and will be submitting the resources to Ms. Darias during the summer. The resources will be collected in an index that will be shared with all BPS teachers on a Google web site. The resources may be used by teachers during instruction, shared with parents, and also shared with students. This is an evolving project that has great potential for our teachers and students. We are very grateful to the donor for the funding to complete this work.

Moved: That, In accord with Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44, Section 53A, the Belmont School Committee gratefully accepts an anonymous gift of \$50,000 to support teams of teachers to research available content and pedagogical resources available in electronic formats and to summarize and publish evaluated, annotated reports of findings. Motion was offered by Ms. Fiore and seconded by Ms. Graham. It was approved unanimously 6-0-0.

3.3 Action on PARCC Recommendation

Dr. Kingston referenced the presentation made by Ms. Darias at the June 10, 2014 School Committee meeting, which included the administration's recommendation to administer the PARCC assessment in 2015 for grades 3 through 8 using the paper-based test. Mr. Cunningham noted the risk of changing assessments in terms of the discontinuity of data. Dr. Kingston acknowledged the challenge of the cross walking of data from one assessment to another, but did not feel it jeopardized the data that will be received about students' performance on the PARCC. Ms. Fiore commented that, while she questioned the state and national trends around assessment, she did not feel that this vote should be impacted by those concerns.

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

VOTED (5-0-1) with one abstention to approve the recommendation to administer the PARCC assessment using the paper-based test to students in grades 3 through 8 in the spring of 2015.

3.4 Proposal for AP Art Students Trip to Paris – Exhibit C

Ms. Darias explained that the proposal for this trip is the same as the one that the School Committee approved in the spring of 2013 and that was scheduled to take place in April 2014. The trip was cancelled due to low enrollment. The trip leader, Belmont High School Art Teacher Mr. Milowsky, missed the May 15 deadline for submitting this new trip proposal for the April 2015 trip because he was on leave. The administration recommended making an exception to the deadline and approving the trip.

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

VOTED unanimously (6-0-0) to approve the proposal for the AP Art Student Trip to Paris as outlined in Exhibit C.

Ms. Graham requested that a timeline of fundraising for the trip be provided to the School Committee in the fall.

3.6 Superintendent's Evaluation – Exhibit E

Ms. Slap explained the process of evaluation, and thanked the School Committee members for submitting their responses to each of the standards of the Superintendent Rubric as well as the three goals (professional practice, student learning, and district). She read the ratings for each standard and goal, as well as the overall rating, and read the summary statements compiled from the submissions of all the members. Dr. Kingston expressed his appreciation for the thoughtful, comprehensive feedback by School Committee members.

3.7 Operations Modeling Report – Exhibit F

Dr. Kingston and Mr. DiCologero summarized the Operations Modeling report submitted by the members, who included Gerald Boyle, Director of Facilities, Alfred Domenici, School Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds, Anthony DiCologero, Director of Finance, Business, and Operations, Rebecca Vose, appointee to the Capital Budget Committee, and Michael McAllister, Butler School Principal. The report notes the challenges of deferred maintenance as well as the successes that have been achieved through proactive planning and finding efficiencies.

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

VOTED unanimously (6-0-0) to receive the Operations and Maintenance Advisory Group report marked as Exhibit F.

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

4.1 Student Representative

Rising senior Max Davidowicz reported on the student elections: he, Beth Young, and Tom Zembowicz will be returning as Student Representatives, and will be joined by Sarah Stewart and Daniel Vernick. He also reported that approximately 100 students (25 more than last year) have already signed up for Marching Band.

4.2 Finance Subcommittee

The Finance Subcommittee did not meet.

4.3 Policy Subcommittee

The Policy Subcommittee did not meet. Ms. Graham noted that that new members are needed for this subcommittee.

4.4 Curriculum & Instruction Subcommittee

The Curriculum and Instruction Subcommittee had no update at this time. They will be meeting in September to review a presentation on a pilot of a new report card for grades K-4.

4.5 Capital Budget Committee

Ms. Lougée reported that the Capital Budget Committee met on June 19th to discuss and review criteria for capital expenditures.

4.6 Warrant Committee

Ms. Slap reported that the Warrant Committee voted to transfer \$200,000 from the Reserve Fund to the Belmont Public Schools at its last meeting.

4.7 Wellington Building Committee

The Wellington Building Committee did not meet.

5. **OTHER BUSINESS**

5.1 Consent Agenda

Request for Permission to Discard Surplus Technology Equipment – Exhibit D

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

VOTED unanimously (6-0-0) to approve the consent agenda.

5.2 Personnel Items - none

5.3 Business Items – none

5.4 Approval of Minutes

June 10, 2014

Mr. Cunningham noted one correction to the minutes in section 1.7.

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

VOTED unanimously (6-0-0) to approve the minutes of June 10, 2014, as amended.

6. **FUTURE BUSINESS**

Upcoming Meetings: none

7. **ENCLOSURES**

June 11, 2014 letter from DESE re: Fiscal Review for Full Day Kindergarten Grant

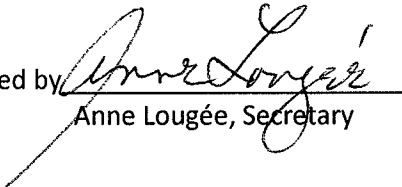
8. **ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. Slap announced that the School Committee would be moving to Executive Session for the purpose of reviewing and approving minutes from Executive Sessions for the purpose of collective bargaining, because doing so in open session would be detrimental. She noted that they would not be returning to open session.

At 9:30 p.m. on a motion offered by Mr. Cunningham and seconded by Ms. Graham, it was

VOTED unanimously on a roll call vote (6-0-0) to adjourn to Executive Session.

Respectfully submitted by


Anne Lougée, Secretary