

**BELMONT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES  
CHENERY MIDDLE SCHOOL COMMUNITY ROOM  
JANUARY 20, 2015**

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

1. **OPENING BUSINESS**

1.1 Call to order

Ms. Slap called the meeting to order at 7:01 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 Chair's Report

Ms. Slap provided the remaining timeline for the work of the Town-wide Financial Task Force (FTF) of which she, Ms. Graham, Superintendent Phelan and Mr. DiCologero are members. The FTF will vote its recommendations to the Board of Selectmen (BOS) at its meeting this Friday morning. The BOS will receive the report at its meeting on Monday, January 26.

Ms. Slap thanked Superintendent Phelan for all of the updates the School Committee has been receiving through his newsletters. Ms. Slap provided a timeline for the budget preparations and updated the School Committee on the workings of the new Labor Management Team.

Ms. Slap updated the School Committee on recent and upcoming events in the town and schools.

## 1.6 Student Representative Report

There was no student representative in attendance.

## 1.7 Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Phelan updated the School Committee on two recent trips to New York taken by Belmont High School students. One group of students in the Fine and Performing Arts Department attended two Broadway plays and participated in an acting workshop. Another group of students participated in a Model UN competition. He reported that the recent Martin Luther King Breakfast was a great success and thanked METCO Director, Diane Wiltshire for all her work putting the event together.

Superintendent Phelan noted that the next meeting of the Health and Wellness Committee will be held on January 22. He also mentioned that he has begun to schedule meetings in February and March with PTO/PTA and the METCO parent groups so that he and any School Committee members who are able to attend can discuss the FY16 budget.

## 2. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

There was no unfinished business.

## 3. **MAJOR BUSINESS**

### 3.1 Professional Learning Team Report – Exhibit A

Faculty members Ms. Kathleen Calhoun, Ms. Jessica DeFrances and Ms. Danielle Pandolfo presented the Professional Learning Team report. They explained that the lessons were created to help students with the understanding of math using visualization. This method of teaching includes conceptual understanding, computational fluency and problem solving. The lessons involve:

- Using visual representations to solve word problems
- Using models to solve a problem and explain your thinking
- Using graphic organizers to solve multi-step word problems
- Using sentence starters and transition words to help explain your thinking

The teachers explained that by the end of the year they hope to increase student understanding and performance in mathematical problem solving with a focus on a subset of students with language comprehension, visual perceptual, and conceptual weaknesses.

### 3.2 Vote on BHS 2015-2016 Program of Studies

Ms. Slap explained that the School Committee is required to vote on the Belmont High School Program of Studies each year. The School Committee had reviewed the BHS 2015-2016 Program of Studies at a previous School Committee meeting.

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

**VOTED** unanimously to approve the 2015-2016 Belmont High School Program of Studies.

### 3.3 FY15 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Budget Update – Exhibit B

Mr. DiCologero presented the FY15 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter budget update. He explained that this is a snapshot of the budget halfway through the fiscal year. Mr. DiCologero explained in detail the different subcategories of accounts, what each line item represented, and whether it showed a positive balance or deficit. The subcategories include: salaries/fringe benefit expenses, grade-level and district-wide instructional and administrative expenses; general transportation expense; utility costs; and student services and Special Education services (including services to in-district students and tuitions for students placed in out-of-district programs).

Mr. DiCologero noted that at this time, the School Department is projecting a total general fund year-end deficit of approximately \$500,000. He explained that although is the same projection as the first quarter update, the second quarter projected deficit reflects cost savings measures that were implemented beginning in October 2014 and an additional \$245,000 in estimated cost reductions for the remainder of the school year. The projected savings have been offset by additional mandated costs since the first quarter projection.

### 3.4 FY16 Budget Discussion

The School Committee continued their discussion of the FY16 budget as it relates to the current fiscal year deficit, growing enrollment, and increasing mandated costs.

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

### 4.1 Finance Subcommittee

The Finance Subcommittee met earlier in the day. They will be providing dates for upcoming meetings.

### 4.2 Policy Subcommittee

There was no report from the Policy Subcommittee.

### 4.3 Curriculum & Instruction Subcommittee

There was no report from the Curriculum & Instruction Subcommittee.

4.4 Capital Budget Committee

The Capital Budget Committee will begin meeting in February

4.5 Warrant Committee

The Warrant Committee will January 28 to discuss the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter reports from Town and School Departments.

4.6 Wellington Building Committee

There was no report from the Wellington Building Committee.

4.7 Financial Task Force

The Financial Task Force will meet this Friday at 8:00 a.m.

5. **OTHER BUSINESS**

5.1 Consent Agenda - none

5.2 Personnel Items - none

5.3 Business Items – None

5.4 Approval of Minutes

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

**VOTED** unanimously to approve the minutes of January 6, 2015.

6. **FUTURE BUSINESS**

Upcoming Meetings:

January 28, 2015

Finance Subcommittee Meeting with the Education Subcommittee of the Warrant Committee  
SAB Conference Room – 4:30 p.m.

January 29, 2015

Finance Subcommittee Meeting with the School Committee  
SAB Conference Room – 7:30 a.m.

February 3, 2015  
Finance Subcommittee Meeting with the School Committee  
SAB Conference Room – 7:30 p.m.

February 3, 2015  
School Committee Meeting  
CMS Large Community Room – 7:00 p.m.

February 9, 2015  
Joint Meeting – School Committee/Board of Selectmen  
Selectmen’s Meeting Room – 6:00 p.m.

7. **ENCLOSURES**

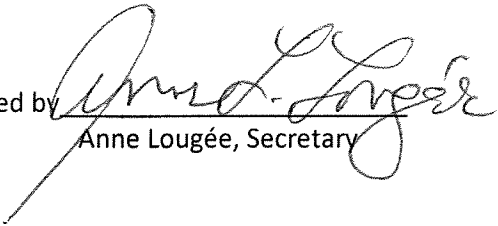
Professional Learning Teams Presentation

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

At 8:40 p.m. on a motion offered by Ms. Lougée and seconded by Ms. Shuster, it was

**VOTED** unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by

  
Anne Lougée, Secretary