

**BELMONT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES  
CHENERY MIDDLE SCHOOL COMMUNITY ROOM  
MAY 23, 2017**

Present: Dr. Lisa Fiore, Chair  
Ms. Susan Burgess-Cox, Secretary  
Mr. Thomas Caputo  
Mr. Murat Bicer  
Ms. Kate Bowen  
Ms. Andrea Prestwich  
Ms. Janice Darias, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction  
Mr. Anthony DiCologero

Absent: Mr. John Phelan, Superintendent

1. **OPENING BUSINESS**

1.1 Call to order

Dr. Fiore called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

1.2 Pledge of Allegiance

Dr. Fiore led the Pledge of Allegiance.

1.3 Citizens' Concerns

There were no citizens' concerns.

1.4 Adjustments to the Agenda

1.5 Chair's Report

Dr. Fiore provided an update regarding upcoming events in the schools and town such as the many musicals and plays. She reminded everyone that Monday is Memorial Day so school will not be in session. Dr. Fiore reminded everyone of the presentation provided by Superintendent Phelan at the May 9<sup>th</sup> School Committee meeting regarding the placement of modular classrooms at either the Butler or Burbank School. The materials from that meeting are posted on the Belmont Public Schools website for community members to review. There will be ongoing conversations related to this topic and Superintendent Phelan will make a recommendation to the School Committee regarding his choice of location at either the June 6<sup>th</sup> or June 20<sup>th</sup> meeting. The School Committee will not vote on the location but will accept the Superintendent's recommendation or suggest further action. The My 9<sup>th</sup> meeting is also available for viewing on the Belmont Media website.

## 1.6 Student Representative Report

Belmont High School students Owen Loveluck and James Kitch provide an update of activities taking place at Belmont High School including prom which took place last Friday and was a great success. They also updated the School Committee on the student survey created to look at the perceptions and opinions related to homework from both students and teachers. Principal Richards suggested that the students present their data in conjunction with teachers who are doing similar work. A presentation will take place on June 7<sup>th</sup> at a faculty meeting.

## 1.7 Superintendent's Report

Assistant Superintendent Janice Darias announced that the Staff Recognition Ceremony will take place on May 24<sup>th</sup>. This is an annual event which honors faculty and staff of the Belmont Public Schools for their years of service.

Assistant Superintendent Darias reminded everyone of the Memorial Day celebrations which will take place on Friday, May 26<sup>th</sup>.

## 2. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

## 3. MAJOR BUSINESS

### 3.1 SEL Update – Exhibit A

Assistant Superintendent Darias shared an update on the work being done on Social Emotional Learning (SEL) in the Belmont Public Schools. This is the second year of the Strategic Plan Initiative and SEL is one of the top two focus areas of the strategic plan. Teachers and administrators are learning what practices are working and what needs progress. Ms. Darias spoke about the Climate Surveys she developed with facilitator Rachel Poliner. The surveys measured the impact of the following:

- Is our school environment conducive to SEL?
- Is there evidence that SEL skills and principles are being demonstrated in the environment?
- What is the experience in our schools for students, educators, and parents/guardians?

The goal was to use the data as a tool to determine trends and patterns of success and areas requiring improvement. The surveys conducted include:

- A Parent/Guardian Climate Survey;
- A Student Climate Survey; and
- A Climate Survey for Unit A (all educators including: teachers, guidance counselors, and nurses).

Assistant Superintendent Darias provided an overview of the results indicating the areas where the climate of BPS is positive and those that need improvement. She invited everyone to view the presentation on the Belmont Public Schools website.

### 3.2 Special Education Reserve Fund and Amended FY18 Budget Discussion and Vote – Exhibit B

Mr. DiCologero explained the reasons for an amendment to the FY19 Draft 2 Budget which the School Committee voted to approve at the April 25<sup>th</sup> meeting. The amendment adds an additional line in the budget for a Special Education Reserve Fund. The Municipal Modernization Act of 2016 is new legislation that allows towns and municipalities to create a Special Education Reserve Fund to pay for unanticipated or unbudgeted costs for special education, out-of-district tuition or transportation. The funds can be distributed from the Special Education Reserve Fund after a majority vote of both the School Committee and the Board of Selectmen.

This Special Education Reserve Fund is different from the Special Education Stabilization Fund for the several reasons. First, the SPED Stabilization Fund requires a 2/3 vote of Town Meeting to release the funds. Those votes are held in May or June which requires budget freezes starting between October and January. Second, the new SPED Reserve Fund requires a vote of both the School Committee and the Board of Selectmen to release the funds. These votes can be done early enough in the school year to prevent freezes. Finally, once this fund is established, the School Committee can include a separate line item in their budget to appropriate monies into the fund. The SPED Stabilization Fund required an appropriation by Town Meeting.

Mr. DiCologero explained the only change from Draft 2 of the FY18 budget is the addition of this line item to show the Special Education Reserve Fund. There is no change in the dollar amounts of any line items.

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

**VOTED** unanimously to establish a Special Education Reserve Fund, in accordance with M.G.L. c.40A § 13E.

On a motion offered by Mr. Bicer and seconded by Ms. Bowen, it was

**VOTED** unanimously to amend the vote to approve the FY18 budget, taken on April 25, 2017, by approving the FY18 Draft 3 General Budget, which includes a new line item for a Special Education Reserve Fund, funded at zero dollars.

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

##### 4.1 Finance Subcommittee

The Finance Subcommittee met earlier in the day and discussed the Special Education Reserve Fund.

##### 4.2 Policy and Procedure Subcommittee

There was no report from the Policy and Procedure Subcommittee.

4.3 Curriculum and Instruction Subcommittee

The Curriculum and Instruction Subcommittee will meet on June 16<sup>th</sup>.

4.4 Capital Budget Committee

The Capital Budget Committee will meet on June 1<sup>st</sup> at 8:00 AM.

4.5 Warrant Committee

The Warrant Committee will meet Wednesday, May 24<sup>th</sup> to review articles for Town Meeting.

4.6 Belmont High School Building Committee

The Belmont High School Building Committee will meet on June 15<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 AM.

4.7 Community Path Committee

There was no report from the Community Path Committee.

4.8 Library Long Range Planning Committee

There was no report from the Library Long Range Planning Committee.

5. **OTHER BUSINESS**

5.1 Consent Agenda - none

5.2 Personnel Items - none

5.3 Business Items – None

5.4 Approval of Minutes

May 9, 2017

May 4, 2017

On a motion offered by Ms. Bowen and seconded by Mr. Bicer, it was

**VOTED** unanimously to approve the minutes of May 3, 2017 as amended.

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

**VOTED** 5-0-1 to approve the minutes of May 4, 2017 as amended.

6. **FUTURE BUSINESS**

Upcoming Meetings:

June 6, 2017

Finance Subcommittee Meeting  
SAB Conference Room – 7:30 a.m.

June 6, 2017

School Committee Meeting  
CMS Large Community Room – 7:00 p.m.

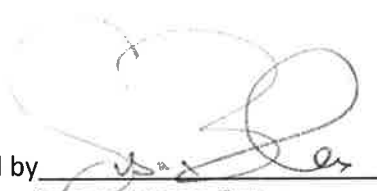
7. **ENCLOSURES**

Strategic Plan  
2017 PLT Conference Schedule

8. **ADJOURN**

At 8:15 p.m. on a motion offered by Mr. Bicer and seconded by Ms. Bowen, it was

**VOTED** unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by   
Susan Burgess-Cox, Secretary