

**BELMONT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES**  
**CHENERY COMMUNITY ROOM**  
**MAY 7, 2019**

Present: Ms. Susan Burgess-Cox, Chair  
Ms. Kate Bowen  
Ms. Amy Checkoway  
Mr. Michael Crowley  
Ms. Tara Donner  
Mr. John Phelan, Superintendent  
Ms. Janice Darias, Assistant Superintendent  
Mr. Anthony DiCologero, Director of Finance, Business and Operations

Absent: Ms. Andrea Prestwich, Secretary

**1. OPENING BUSINESS**

1.1 Call to order

Susan Burgess-Cox called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.

1.2 Pledge of Allegiance

Susan Burgess-Cox led the Pledge of Allegiance.

1.3 Citizen's Concerns

Julie Crockett, parent and community member suggested there be a School Committee representative on the Belmont High School Building Committee in order to have an active role in addressing priorities for all students. Chair Susan Burgess-Cox explained there has always been a School Committee representative on the Belmont High School Building Committee and the reason there is not one currently is because the previous representative did not run for re-election to the School Committee and the Town Moderator is in the process of determining who the next representative will be.

1.4 Adjustments to the Agenda

There were no adjustments to the agenda.

1.5 Chair's Report

Susan Burgess-Cox updated the School Committee on upcoming events in theater, music and parent lecture series.

1.6 Student Representative Report

Belmont High School students Phoebe Gray, Lilah Isenberg and Grace Kane updated the School Committee on the spring sports programs at Belmont High School. They stressed how important sporting events are for the morale of students. They also discussed upcoming plays scheduled at Belmont High School.

#### 1.7 Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Phelan thanked the Student Representatives for presenting. He announced Girls Rugby Coach Kathryn McCabe was named Rugby Coach of the Year. Belmont High School Girls Rugby was the first MIAA sanctioned rugby team in the U.S. to win the state championship.

The last day of school is June 17. Summer enrichment classes are being held once again at Chenery. Superintendent Phelan encouraged everyone to look at the great offerings.

The Capstone Project presentations took place at Belmont High School last week. There were over 60 amazing projects on display.

The Building Bridges event sponsored by Belmont Against Racism took place last week and was a great success. Educators from around the state discussed hiring and retaining staff of color.

### 2. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

### 3. MAJOR BUSINESS

#### 3.1 Belmont Against Racism (BAR) – Exhibit A

BAR members Kathryn Bonfiglio, Charlene O'Connor and Meg Anderson spoke to the School Committee about the great partnership with Belmont Public Schools over the years. They commended the School Administrators and School Committee on their work for racial equality on behalf of the staff and students. They also thanked Rosa Innis for her work as METCO Director. Thanks to Mary Pederson and Consuelo Abrisqueta for organizing Building Bridges, an upcoming event featuring guest speaker Commissioner Riley from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Participants discussed ways to increase diversity in staff hiring. Superintendent Phelan noted the many events that BAR has supported over the years.

#### 3.2 Configurations Working Group Report Out – Exhibit B

Assistant Superintendent Darias thanked the staff members who took part in the in Configurations Working Group. The group was formed to study the different options for grade configuration for grades K-6. They met twice and completed several tasks to help them determine the pros and cons of the various options. Based on their work, the group is recommending grouping grades K-3 in the four elementary schools and 4-6 in Chenery. This will allow for the removal of the modulars at Burbank since there will be more space inside the building. At Butler, Wellington and Winn Brook, space will be available for other uses including an additional classroom if necessary. At Chenery, the new configuration will enable the modulars to be removed since there will be more space inside that building as well. The group believes it will also be beneficial to have grades 5 and 6 be with younger grades.

### 3.4 Minuteman Report Out

Superintendent Phelan updated the School Committee on his recent meeting with Minuteman Superintendent Ed Bouquillon and Belmont Town Representative to Minuteman Jim Gammill. Belmont's Minuteman member status will expire on July 1, 2020. Three years ago Belmont decided to withdraw from Minuteman for several reasons including member tuition being more than non-member tuition. The Minuteman building project was being developed and the Town of Belmont wanted to build a smaller school than Minuteman had suggested. Once Belmont decided to withdraw from Minuteman, a task force was created to look into other options for vocational education for Belmont students. The task force studied several different vocational education programs including Minuteman and came to the conclusion that Minuteman would be the best option for Belmont. There are two options available to Belmont with regards to Minuteman; they can nullify the exit letter or allow the letter to go through and ask the Minuteman School Committee to vote Belmont back in. The School Committee and Board of Selectmen will have to discuss the options over the summer and School Committee will need to vote in the fall whether or not they choose to rejoin Minuteman.

### 3.5 BHSBC Update – Exhibit C

Superintendent Phelan provided the School Committee with a presentation showing what the Belmont High School campus will look like over the summer and into the fall. Work will begin on June 10<sup>th</sup> but will not impact the school year academics, athletics or other events. As of June 18<sup>th</sup> the campus will become a construction site.

Phase one will take place during the following school years: 2019/20 and 2020/21.

Phase two will take place during the following school years: 2021/22, 2022/23.

During the summer of 2019 the campus will be fenced off and closed to the public including the parking lot side by the auditorium. Only designated Town of Belmont and Belmont Public School staff will be allowed on site. The high school will post summer hours for the public. The summer hours will be held at Chenery Middle School to allow the public to meet with members of the high school staff if necessary.

During the 2019/20 school year the traffic pattern around the high school campus will change. Drivers coming to school will enter the campus in the same way they do now but will access a new driveway loop that will take them out to Hittinger Street. There will be a new sidewalk on Underwood Street and a pedestrian/biking pathway along the pond at the intersection of Orchard Street and Concord Avenue. The number of parking spaces will not change during this time.

Athletic Director Jim Davis has been working on practice schedules for all fall and spring sports due to the shortage of fields during construction. There are also plans for alternate space for the Recreation Department.

Construction employees will all be CORI'd and badged by the Belmont School Department staff.

Superintendent Phelan presented the following construction timeline.

- 2018/19 school year – Design detailed plans
- Summer 2019 – Break ground on BHS site

- Start construction on Phase One (9-12 portion of the building)
- Summer 2021 – Students in grades 9-12 move into new school; construction starts on Phase Two (Grades 7 & 8)
- Summer 2023 – Students in grades 7 and 8 move into completed school
- Construction complete for new 7-12 school

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

##### **4.1 Finance Subcommittee**

The Finance Subcommittee met last week and discussed the second quarter budget.

##### **4.2 Policy and Procedure Subcommittee**

The Policy and Procedure Subcommittee met yesterday. They discussed the RFP process for the private/public partnership for the rink. They also discussed the lights at Harris Field. Superintendent Phelan wrote a letter to abutters of the field explaining the need for additional field usage during construction. The letter was delivered today.

##### **4.3 Curriculum and Instruction Subcommittee**

The Curriculum and Instruction Subcommittee is meeting May 10<sup>th</sup> to discuss the new High School English Capstone and May 17<sup>th</sup> to discuss the new Social Studies Civics course.

##### **4.4 Capital Budget Committee**

There was no report from the Capital Budget Committee

##### **4.5 Warrant Committee**

The Warrant Committee met yesterday to discuss funding for the police department renovation and will meet again tomorrow night.

##### **4.6 Belmont High School Building Committee**

The Belmont High School Building Committee has been meeting regularly. They recently discussed the valued engineering items to eliminate in order to bring down the construction cost.

##### **4.7 Community Path**

Town Meeting voted \$1 million for the new path design.

##### **4.8 Financial Task Force II**

There was no report from the Financial Task Force II.

##### **4.9 High School Traffic Working Group**

There was no report from the High School Traffic Working Group.

#### **5. OTHER BUSINESS**

##### **5.1 Consent Agenda**

## Vote on Disposal of Surplus Technology Equipment – Exhibit D

The School Committee is required to vote on items that are considered surplus due to the fact that they are no longer in working condition or are out of date. The Technology Department submitted a list of these items for the School Committee's approval.

On a motion offered by Tara Donner and seconded by Kate Bowen, it was **VOTED** 5-0-1 to approve the disposal of the surplus technology items listed in Exhibit D.

Jim Davis, Director of Athletics, Health and Wellness, submitted a list of items for disposal. These items are not in compliance with current safety standards of NFHS rules/regulations.

On a motion offered by Tara Donner and seconded by Kate Bowen, it was **VOTED** 5-0-1 to approve the disposal of the surplus items listed in Exhibit E.

5.2 Personnel Items

5.3 Business Items

5.4 Approval of Minutes

April 23, 2019

On a motion offered by Michael Crowley and seconded by Tara Donner, it was **VOTED** 5-0-4 to approve the minutes of April 23, 2019 as amended.

## 6. FUTURE BUSINESS

Upcoming Meetings:

May 14, 2019

Finance Subcommittee Meeting  
SAB Conference Room – 8:00 a.m.

May 21, 2019

President's Service Awards  
CMS Chorus Room (141) – 6:15 p.m.

May 21, 2019

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

May 28, 2019

Finance Subcommittee Meeting  
SAB Conference Room – 8:00 a.m.

## 7. ENCLOSURES

Strategic Plan  
School Committee Goals  
September 2019 Grade 9 Trip to New York City  
May 1, 2019 Enrollment

## 8. ADJOURN

At 8:50 p.m. on a motion offered by Tara Donner and seconded by Amy Checkoway, it was **VOTED** 5-0-1 to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted by   
Susan Burgess-Cox, Chair