

**SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES  
TOWN HALL MEETING ROOM  
Monday, February 11, 2008**

Members attending: Virginia Justicz, Stu Sklar, Brian Stevens, Will Verbits (arrived at 7:24 p.m.) and Thomas W. Jefferson

**Call to Order** – Stu Sklar called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m.

**Minutes**

Virginia Justicz made the motion and Brian Stevens seconded to accept the minutes from the January 28, 2008 meeting as drafted.

VOTED (3/0) to accept the motion. (Virginia Justicz (Yes), Stu Sklar (Yes) Brian Stevens (Yes).

**Student Report**

Sam Leahy informed the Committee that the Student Council would be selling carnations on Valentine's Day for a fundraiser, that the Hockey team had won on Saturday night, that the Drama Critique was scheduled for Wednesday, and that the Student Council would enter the data obtained from the Student Survey regarding Start Times.

**Athletics**

Bromfield Principal, Jim O'Shea and Athletic Director, Pam Alexander, gave a powerpoint presentation regarding the athletic program. Jim stated that the athletic program is a strong one and part of the core of the school. Participation is very high with approximately 1/3 of student population participating. They have added some new sports but are careful not to dilute the program. Pam advised of recent recognitions. Program costs total \$201,102.00, which includes the coaches' stipends, and are supported solely by user fees. Bromfield's athletic fees are the highest in the state. Pam suggested that she would like to see stipends covered through the budget and user fees only cover the balance. There was a discussion regarding selecting qualified coaches and the fact that the stipends are covered under the Teachers' Contract. Also discussed adding intramural program and resources for the fitness room.

**Strategic Planning Committee Report**

Virginia Justicz gave an update on the Strategic Planning Committee. The committee will meet on February 24, 2008 to finalize the process.

**Superintendent Report**

Dr. Jefferson informed the Committee that Director of Special Education, Charles Horn, had submitted his letter of intent to retire this coming summer. He thanked Charles for his dedication to students and said it was a pleasure to have worked with him.

Dr. Jefferson commented about the Science Fair at Bromfield. He was impressed with the participation and the quality of work from Grades 6 through 12. He also thanked Deb Pierce, Science Department Chair, and her staff for their hard work.

### **Other Reports**

Virginia Justicz and Stu Sklar reported that they had both attended the MASC training last weekend. They felt it was a good opportunity to network with other school committees. They also relayed a compliment Bromfield had received from a Lowell committee member who was very impressed with the Drama Festival.

### **MassDevelopment RFP**

Dr. Jefferson gave an overview of the RFP and its impact on the Harvard school system. He stated that the bid could be an educational and financial positive step for Harvard. The bid has the potential to generate revenue which may mitigate budgetary needs without the need for immediate overrides. There was a question and answer session with the public. Discussed class size impact, real estate market, facility capacity, resources, term of contract, and using the revenue for secondary funding not core so as not to become dependent upon it. The RFP is due by February 15, 2008.

### **Policies**

The Committee had a second reading of the following policies: EA, EB, EBA, EBAB, EBC, EBCD, EC, ECA, EDC, EEA, EEAE, EEAEC, EFC, EFI AND EK. There were two punctuation errors on Policy EEA.

VOTED Will Verbits made the motion and Brian Stevens seconded to accept the policies in their entirety with the punctuation correction to Policy EEA..  
(4/0) to accept the motion. (Will Verbits(Yes), Virginia Justicz (Yes), Stu Sklar (Yes) Brian Stevens (Yes).

The Committee asked that the policies be placed on the website.

### **FY08 Budget**

Lorraine Leonard, School Business Manager, provided an updated budget through January 31, 2008. There is currently a deficit of \$5,000.00. She is working on a final fuel projection analysis to determine the further impact on this year's budget. She informed the Committee that a spending freeze had been implemented today for all non-essential spending.

## **FY09 Budget**

The Committee discussed the proposed list of budget reductions which had been prepared at the Tri-Board's request. Lorraine explained Omnibus bottom line versus Warrant Articles to the Committee. The Committee discussed going back to the Tri-Boards for another attempt to retain some of the reductions. They discussed whether to request to keep the Special Education position or to keep the Technology items, which have no recurring impact, in the budget. Also, discussed which was a better tool for teaching, SmartBoards or textbooks.

Brian Stevens made the motion and Will Verbits seconded to amend the FY09 Budget Regular Omnibus to \$11,318.705 with Warrant Articles for \$55,000-Special Education Position, \$10,000-Benefits for Special Education Position and \$9,000-Textbooks to be added to the funding.

VOTED (4/0) to accept the motion. (Will Verbits(Yes), Virginia Justicz (Yes), Stu Sklar (Yes) Brian Stevens (Yes).

## **Gifts**

The Harvard PTO submitted the following four (4) donations:

1. \$1,800.00 HES Principal's Account
2. \$2,100.00 TBS Principal's Account (i.e. \$900 MS and \$1,200 HS)
3. \$7,305.00 Media Lab – 7 SuccessMaker licenses
4. \$2,000.00 ConnectED

Virginia Justicz made the motion and Brian Stevens seconded to accept all four donations for the PTO.

VOTED (4/0) to accept the motion. (Will Verbits(Yes), Virginia Justicz (Yes), Stu Sklar (Yes) Brian Stevens (Yes).

The Committee asked that a thank you letter be sent to the PTO. They further asked the public to support the PTO by volunteering.

## **Contract**

Lorraine Leonard presented a contract for the Committee's review and approval. It was a one year contract for Huntington Controls amounting to \$525.00 per month for their services. They were the only bidder. Lorraine suggested combining future service contracts with other town buildings in an effort to receive more competitive bidding.

Will Verbits made the motion and Brian Stevens seconded for the Chair or his designee to accept and sign the service agreement.

VOTED (4/0) to accept the motion. (Will Verbits(Yes), Virginia Justicz (Yes), Stu Sklar (Yes) Brian Stevens (Yes)

Virginia Justicz made the motion and Brian Stevens seconded for the Committee to go into Executive Session for the purposes of discussing contract negotiation and to return to regular session.

VOTED (4/0) to accept the motion. (Will Verbits(Yes), Virginia Justicz (Yes), Stu Sklar (Yes) Brian Stevens (Yes).

### **Executive Session**

Roll call vote to reconvene into open session.

Brian Stevens made the motion and Will Verbits seconded to authorize the Superintendent to execute an RFP per the guidelines discussed during executive session and to authorize the chair or designee to sign such a proposal on behalf of the Harvard Public Schools.

VOTED (3/1) to accept the motion. (Will Verbits(Yes), Virginia Justicz (No), Stu Sklar (Yes) Brian Stevens (Yes).

### **Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 11:16 with roll call.

Minutes submitted,

Jackie Smith  
Recording Secretary