

School Committee Minutes  
Town Hall Meeting Room  
Tuesday, September 8, 2009  
7:00 P.M.

Members attending: Keith Cheveralls, Virginia Justicz, Stu Sklar, Patty Wenger, Maureen Babcock, Lorraine Leonard, and Thomas Jefferson

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**Minutes**

Patty Wenger made a motion and Virginia Justicz seconded to approve the Minutes from the July 9, 2009 meeting as presented.  
VOTED (4/0) to accept the motion. . (Stu Sklar (Yes) Patty Wenger (Yes), Keith Cheveralls (Yes), Virginia Justicz (Yes).

**Interested Citizen's Commentary**

Dr. Jeffrey Harris asked the Committee to review the policy and curriculum for town government education. He further asked the Committee to consider renaming the Elementary School the "Hildreth" Elementary School. Dr. Jefferson will research both items and report back to the Committee.

**Student Reports**

Ryan Holmes reported that auditions were held for the new Drama Department production. Mitchell Williams reported that school sports had begun. Molly O'Rourke-Friel reported that the opening of school went well, School Council is scheduled to meet next Friday, and she will work with the Council to develop a proposed schedule for Committee members to attend their meetings.

**School Committee Reports**

Stu Sklar reported that Suburban Coalition is scheduled to meet on September 30 at 7:30 p.m. in Framingham with Mike Widmer from the Mass Tax Payer's Association and Jamie Eldridge. Stu will put the details on the school and town website.

Maureen Babcock reported that DEAC is scheduled for meet on September 22<sup>nd</sup>. She stated the renovation at the Shirley School was pleasing and that Evergreen School is a tenant now. She also stated that as a new parent, it was a great start to the school year and a smooth transition for the Devens/ Elementary students.

Virginia Justicz reported that she had attended a couple of FinCom meetings over the summer. The School delivered the requested \$245,000.

Patty Wenger reported on the Energy Advisory Committee. At Bromfield, they are working to regulate the temperature, installing energy lighting and possible solar for \$36,000. At HES, they are working on the gas conversion which should be ready before heating season, and the Power to Save program should be up and running soon. They are now able to compare monthly costs.

Patty further reported on the HES School Council. They met several times over the summer. The School Climate Survey is completed. Patty felt it was a positive experience.

The Chair reported there was no news on the State Ethics Complaint. He met with Glen Koocher who advised that other towns also have committee members with conflicts of interest. Mr. Koocher also advised that Data Driven Decision Making was the way of the future for School Committees. Keith offered to arrange for Glen to provide a training on proper processes for School Committee, School Councils, town boards and administrators. He asked they send questions for Glen to address at the training. Keith asked the Committee to think about regional procurement, and Lorraine Leonard advised that she had some information that she acquired on that topic. Keith asked for a member to attend the JBOS meeting on Thursday, and Virginia offered to attend.

### **Superintendent Report**

Dr. Jefferson reported that the school opening went smoothly. He thanked the staff who worked over the summer for their efforts in that regard. He stated that the key note speaker, Dr. Rob Evans, for convocation was well received. He reported that four new professional staff were hired over the summer – Jacqueline Travers as Physics Teacher, Lori Stalteri as Media Specialist, Carley Monson for Special Education and Susan Downing as School Psychologist. The air conditioners were replaced at HES, and the concrete walkway at Bromfield were also redone. Dr. Jefferson reported that the Town Library requested exploring the possibility of sharing Mark Force as a resource, and if this was agreed upon, a memorandum of understanding would be done. He congratulated Gary Menin and the Invent Team for competing at MIT and advised they may participate in a radio broadcast. Dr. Jefferson informed of elevated lead levels in the water at Bromfield. A mailing was sent to parents advising and explaining the plan of action. He reported on the SmartBoard installation and training at HES. He also reported on the President's Speech to students.

### **HINI Readiness – Director of Nursing**

Colleen Nigus updated the Committee on the HINI readiness at both schools. She attended a meeting with the DPH in August. New Purell dispensers were installed in the schools' common areas. They are focusing on educating students and staff on coughing and sneezing etiquette, handwashing, etc. Flu clinics will be held, and the nurses will be monitoring attendance lists.

## **2009-10 Enrollment**

Dr. Jefferson provided updated enrollment figures. The Committee discussed the increase in Grade 5 enrollment. Dr. Jefferson advised that administration recommended adding 25 tutorial hours for Grade 5 which will result in additional expenditures.

VOTED           Stu Sklar made a motion and Virginia Justicz seconded to approve \$27,000 for additional tutoring support hours in Grade 5 to be reviewed as necessary. (4/0) to accept the motion. . (Stu Sklar (Yes) Patty Wenger (Yes), Keith Cheveralls (Yes), Virginia Justicz (Yes).

## **2009-2010 Total Budget Preview**

Lorraine Leonard presented a budget preview to the Committee. The Committee discussed the format for the Outside Fund Report. The Chair felt the reports were good data points and recommended the Committee digest them.

## **Finance Committee Survey**

The Committee reviewed the proposed school questions for the FinCom Survey. The Committee was unsure as to the point of the survey. Virginia Justicz will talk to FinCom to learn its purpose.

## **Devens Contract and Facilities Lease**

The Committee reviewed the proposed Deven's Contract and Lease for a wing of the Shirley School. The wing will be utilized to run the Preschool program. The Chair requested a more detailed plan, and the Committee also asked to schedule a visit.

## **Future Agenda Items**

Stu Sklar reported that he will be in contact with School Counsel to begin the HTA negotiations.

Pam DeGregorio, Director of Special Education, will be the guest speaker at the next meeting.

## **Executive Session**

Virginia Justicz made a motion and Stu Sklar seconded that the School Committee enter into executive session, as authorized by Chapter 39, Section 23B of the Massachusetts General Laws, at a meeting for which 48 hours notice has been given, for the purpose of discussing:

1. Non-union contract negotiations and
2. Pending litigation

Following the executive session, the Committee will reconvene into open session, for the sole purpose of adjourning.

**ROLL CALL**

**VOTED** (4/0) to accept the motion. (Stu Sklar (Yes) Patty Wenger (Yes), Keith Cheveralls (Yes), Virginia Justicz (Yes).

Minutes submitted,

Jackie Smith  
Recording Secretary