School Committee Minutes

Hapgood Room, Old Library

Monday, February 8, 2016

6:00 p.m.

Members attending: SusanMary Redinger, Mary Traphagen, Jennifer Bedford, Nancy Lancellotti, Linda Dwight, Lorraine Leonard. Absent: Kirsten Wright and Maureen Babcock

SusanMary Redinger called the meeting to order at 6:03 p .m.

Linda Dwight read the Vision Statement

**Open to Interested Citizen’s Commentary**

None

**Student Report**

None

**Superintendent Report**

* Dr. Dwight and Sue Frederick attended the MSBA Story of a Building event in Lexington, MA at the newly built Joseph Estabrook Elementary School. The day was full of information shared by MSBA staff, district leaders from several school districts, town managers, and school committee members. They emphasized the importance of cooperation between all school and town entities, ways to keep the public informed and involved, and the critical creation of the educational plan and vision to guide building decisions. Our project manager, Elena, was in attendance.
* Dr. Dwight presented teacher feedback from the January 18th professional development day.
* Dr. Dwight reported that Rich Nota is preparing the RFP for the construction of the Bromfield upper parking lot. He will pass it along for School Committee to review when the draft is completed.
* Three administrators have seen the movie “Most Likely to Succeed”. We plan to meet with members of the Harvard Schools Trust who were also in attendance at the movie viewing to discuss whether and how we might bring the movie to the Harvard Community. The rights of the movie are selectively given to requesting groups for a fee. The premise of the movie is to promote project-based learning and question the relevancy of traditional subjects taught in schools for the past 100 years. The director of the movie followed students through the process at an innovative public school in CA named High Tech High.
* Students and supervising faculty are preparing for the Model UN trip to Greece over February break. Jim O’Shea, Bryce Mattie and Dr. Dwight will be meeting to discuss the final details and review any concerns.
* The first vendor has drafted plans for us to consider for science lab furniture. We will be meeting on Wednesday, February 10th. A second vendor is scheduled to visit the classrooms on February 8th.

**Vote to sign the MSBA Initial Compliance Certification (ICC)**

SusanMary Redinger asked for an official vote of the Committee to approve the signing of the MSBA Initial Compliance certification. Both Superintendent Dwight and School Committee Chair Redinger’s signatures are required. Dr. Dwight answered a question about incentive reimbursement points by explaining that based on your construction plan (i.e. using collaborative spaces or creating an environmentally sustainable building) you can earn incentive reimbursement points to increase the construction reimbursement rate.

Mary Traphagen made the motion and Nancy Lancellotti second to authorize the School Committee Chair, SusanMary Redinger to sign the MSBA initial compliance certification.

VOTE 4/0

**K-wing public forum planning and sub-committee formed**

SusanMary Redinger explained that MSBA is approaching this project from a building project stand point and not a K-Wing project. It will be useful to change communication and refer to this project as the “HES Renovation Project” which could include more than the K-Wing. SusanMary Redinger announced that a public forum will be held at HES on February 25th. The forum will lead by Dr. Dwight and Ms. Frederick and will include tours and provide ample time for questions to be answered. This forum will be the first of many in order to get the message out as to what is being done and why. The voters will be asked to approve a warrant article and ballot question to approve $500K gross ($267K after reimbursement) in order to begin the first phase of the HES Renovation Project.

Additional communication plans include Dr. Dwight visiting the Hildreth House for lunch to share information on the HES Renovation. Dr. Dwight has reached out to the Village Nursery School to bring the message about the project to pre-school parents. Dr. Dwight is waiting to schedule something at Devens. SusanMary Redinger agreed to write an article to broadcast in the PTO News Blast. Principals will be asked to remind parents to attend town meeting. Dr. Dwight agreed that she will reach out to the National Honor Society to provide child care for the town meeting.

The Committee discussed setting up a School Building Sub Committee for the HES Renovation Project. Two School Committee members will serve on the Sub-Committee and also serve on the larger School Building Committee. In addition, two members will serve on the Visioning Committee. The Visioning Committee will be responsible to help write the Ed Plan for the project which is due May 10th.

* The School Building Subcommittee members will be SusanMary Redinger and Nancy Lancellotti.
* The Visionary Subcommittee members will be Mary Traphagen and Jennifer Bedford.

**Mid-year update on District Improvement Plan and School Committee/Superintendent Goals**

Dr. Dwight presented the 2016 mid-year update to the Harvard Public Schools District Improvement Plan. The presentation identified each Core Value (Student Achievement, Personal Growth, Partnership, Resources, and School Climate) and the percentage of the goal completed for each.

**Review and approve selected policies form section J and K**

The Committee reviewed the district’s restraint policy (Policy JKAA- Restraint of Student in the Harvard Public Schools) as updates were made by school administration to bring the policy into compliance. After review the Committee asked for a few sentences to be reworded. Dr. Dwight agreed to make the changes and bring back to the next meeting for approval. Mary Traphagen read through Policy KCD-E – Grant Application and Approval Process as a first read. The policy will be brought back to be adopted at the next School Committee meeting.

**Newsletter Brainstorm**

SusanMary Redinger asked members to review the School Committee newsletter produced by Patty Wenger a few years back. The Committee agreed this is a good way to communicate with people about the problems we are trying to solve. The Committee agreed that a web based communication would be the best way to get the newsletter out with the option of a printed version available at various place around the town and schools. Nancy Lancellotti agreed to put something together with the idea of sending out something monthly.

**Update on the Parking Lot project**

SusanMary Redinger reviewed the status of the Bromfield Parking lot project and – next steps. The Board of Selectman, Historical Commission and Conservation Commission all agreed to support the parking lot project as amended. This gives us the green light all around to begin. Rich Nota is working on an RFP that will go out and the project is currently scheduled to be done over the summer. The project will be listed as a Capital project on the town’s list but the school will not be asking for funding as this project will be funded using $275,000 from the Devens fund.

**Finance Committee decision update**

SusanMary Redinger explained that the Finance Committee agreed to increase the FY17 school budget by $24,000 to eliminate the need to increase user fees. The Finance Committee declined to authorize more funding and suggested that if the schools wanted more money to off-set user fees they would need to present their request as a warrant article at the annual town meeting. SusanMary Redinger asked the Committee for their input on whether to go forward with a request to voters to fund the additional $100,000. The Committee agreed that because they will be asking for $500K for the HES Renovation Project, and that project takes precedence, it would tough to ask for an additional $100K. No one would want the two warrant articles to compete. The Committee was very appreciative that of the Finance Committee’s vote to approve $24,000 and will regroup with the athletic advisory to see what to do next.

**Review the cable memorandum of understanding – (Tabled)**

**Review of Minutes**

Mary Traphagen made a motion and Jennifer Bedford seconded to approve the minutes of the Monday, January 25th meeting as amended.

VOTE 4/0

**Report Out from Liaisons, Financial Report**

Lorraine Leonard presented the FY16 budget to actual. Lorraine is currently projecting that 100% of the budgeted amounts for each line item will be spent. The bottom line surplus remains at $45,139. It is still too early to tell if there will be any savings in the utility line.

Jennifer Bedford – HES School Council will not be meeting until March.

Nancy Lancellotti –shared that a few members of the Bromfield School Council are interested in getting more information about the Acton Boxborough Stem Technology Fair –It is similar to a science fair but individuals come in from different science careers to share information. The Bromfield School Council is now thinking they would like to put together something for our students. It would most likely be an evening event in the fall. Folks will continue to explore the idea to see how it is done and to connect with the necessary contacts. The projected date for the Bromfield Stem Technology Fair would be the fall of 2016.

Mary Traphagen –no report.

Linda Dwight reported that the Athletic Advisory met and talked about fund raising. The Fundraising Subcommittee has not yet met. Jim O’Shea has met with team captains to see if they have any school spirit ideas. The captains were asked to tag a few kids on their teams to spear head the effort.

SusanMary Redinger reported that the Master Plan Steering Committee is scheduled to present their plan to the public on March 3rd with a snow date of March 10th. The Capital Committee continues to work on the book that will be presented at all town meeting. The HES renovation project and a new tractor are the two school projects moving forward. The “All Boards” met and Finance Director, Lorraine Leonard reported out on the state of the town, recaps and how all the figures go together. Town Administrator, Tim Bragen reported out on the state of the state, projects and budgets.

The Committee agreed to award Barnes and Noble gift cards and certificates to Science Fair winners.

**Suggest Future Agenda Items**

Cable MOU

Policy

Science Lab

Superintendent Review

School Committee Self evaluation

Budget Book

**Open to Interested Citizens; and Closing Commentary**

Mary Traphagen – will be thinking of good people who might want to be on school committee

Jennifer Bedford-is looking for good people to serve on the school committee also.

Linda Dwight – today was a tricky day – very happy to report that all students arrived home safely.

Linda wanted the public to know that a lot of thought about student and staff safety went into the decision.

SusanMary Redigner - the superintendent has a thankless job on a snowy morning – you have people who are upset either way. I know you don’t make the decision lightly. SusanMary thanked Linda for her capacity and for sweating it out. Everyone is home safe and hope that people recognize that this decision was not made lightly. Perhaps people can recognize we live in New England and you may need to go to school with snow on the ground. Thanks to Linda for taking the heat.

SusanMary Redinger made a motion with no objection to adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted: Mary Zadroga