School Committee Minutes

Hapgood Room, Old Library

Monday, April 11, 2016

6:00

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

SusanMary Redinger called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

Kenneth Lin read the vision statement.

**Public Commentary –** None

**Student Report**

Kenneth Lin reported – Fourth quarter has started, next week is the April break. The Spanish and French Honor Society will hold their induction ceremony at Volunteers Hall, Tuesday, April 12th. On April 13th, The Bromfield School will hold their Spring Instrumental Concert. This is Mr. Reynold’s last year of teaching and this will the last concert he conducts at The Bromfield School. We would like to see all the townspeople come out and honor Mr. Reynolds for his career here in Harvard. The concert is on April 13th and starts at 6:30 p.m.

**HES Parent Survey Results**

Hildreth Principal, Sue Frederick thanked the Hildreth Elementary School Council for creating a parent survey that was sent to parents in January 2016. The survey window was open for two weeks, and parents were notified via email, the school website and Twitter. 239 people responded to the survey. The School Council and faculty will review the survey data and will use this information to inform the School Improvement Plan. The major themes showing strengths at HES are having great teachers, a sense of community and happy learning environment. The major themes that showed where improvements are needed were more communication, more differentiation specifically with regard to math, more opportunities for parents to volunteer and more play/longer lunch. Next steps: The Report Card Committee is reviewing survey results and exploring next steps, examining the types and frequency of communication to parents in order to create a plan for future communication, will work with grade levels and vertical teams regarding differentiation for students, will work to improve communication with regards to intervention information for those students receiving intervention services, will explore opportunities for volunteering and parent participation. We will continue to celebrate successes.

**Superintendent report**

Dr. Dwight shared the following information in her report:

* The Baseball Booster Club would like to donate equipment and material in the amount of $1,219.10 to the district for use by the baseball team.

Jennifer Bedford made the motion and Nancy Lancellotti seconded to move that we accept the donation of $1,219.10 from the Baseball Booster club to be used by the baseball team.

VOTE 3/0

* Hildreth Elementary building project update –

\*The residents in town voted in support of the $500,000 phase one.

\*MSBA verified our submission of the Building Committee form and the enrollment data.

\*Progress continued on the remaining documents for the preliminary phase.

* Travel Request – 5th grade team, under the leadership of advisor Rob Cullinane, requests permission to attend Nature Classroom next fall.

Jennifer Bedford made the motion and Nancy Lancellotti seconded to move that we approve the request for an overnight field trip to Natures Classroom in Ivoryton, CT for the dates September 26th -3 0th for the fifth grade.

VOTE 3/0

* Two candidates will be interviewed this week for the Finance Director/School Business Manager position. They were two of the three applicants to apply with town and school experience.
* We will be sorry to see Jim leave Bromfield after 10 years of leadership. He has added a great value to our leadership team. Dr. Dwight is meeting with departments and grade levels staff to gain their input on the important aspects of the school they would like to see maintained and growth opportunities.
* Between 20 and 30 parents and faculty attended the hour long parent safety forum. The building administrators, Chief Sicard, Chief Denmark and Dr. Dwight answered questions and acknowledged feedback. The safety forum yielded important back and forth feedback about the district’s process of assessing and communicating threatening situations. As a take away from the forum we learned the importance of sending a 2nd communication once matters were resolved with as much information as possible as to the outcome of the investigation. We also heard the importance of sharing the seriousness/consequences of the threats to students as preventative measures. Our crisis team will review the feedback and plan for its inclusion in our process. Due to the increase in threats across the state, SusanMary Redinger asked Dr. Dwight to invite the Police Chief to attend an upcoming School Committee meeting to share protocols in place for our community in the event of a threat.

**Budget Update and funding recommendations**

**Parking lot bid approval**

Dr. Dwight shared funding recommendation and potential revenue sources to fund projects where bids came in over the budgeted amounts.

**TBS Parking Lot** - The lowest bid is $55,000 over the allocated amount.

Nancy Lancellotti made the motion and Jennifer Bedford seconded to further encumber the Devens account by $55,000 for purposes of renovating the parking lot at Bromfield.

VOTE 3/0

**HVAC –** Ken Beck from BLW offered two options - Option 1 with a cost of $301,703 would change the original proposal by eliminating additional insulation in the ductwork. Option 2 with a cost of $278,300 would also eliminate 1 smaller air handler and the additional insulation in the ductwork. The Committee discussed the options and decided the best option would be Option 1.

Nancy Lancellotti made the motion and Jennifer Bedford seconded to move to appropriate up to $30K from the Devens fund to supplement the previous appropriation to fund the HVAC Ventilation - Option 1

VOTE 3/0

**Science Lab Furniture -** Two companies have expressed interest and provided cost estimates for this project. Nancy Lancellotti reviewed the two proposals with the Committee. It was decided that the LONGO Company product would provide a quality long-lasting upgrade to these science classrooms. Shaw Trust could fund up to two rooms. The Committee discussed whether there would be money anywhere that would allow us to add another room in order to renovate a total of three rooms this summer. It was recommended to renovate two rooms this year and have a long term look at how to fund the remaining four rooms. It is important to get started. The rooms to be renovated this year are one Chemistry/Biology lab room and a Physics room. The vendor is on state contract.

Nancy Lancellotti made a motion and Jennifer Bedford seconded to move that we take from Shaw Trust fund up to $235,000 for the purpose of moving forward with the purchase and installation of the Science Lab furniture.

VOTE 3/0

**Personnel hiring approval**

Dr. Dwight shared that due to a higher population of ELL students she is requesting to increase the ELL teacher’s FTE from .5 to 1.0 for the 2016/2017 school year. The cost would be approximately $27,000. Dr. Dwight shared that due to enrollment projections for the 2016/2017 school year she is recommending a long term substitute teacher be hired for grade 1. The cost would be approximately $50,000. Dr. Dwight indicates that an increase in the Circuit Breaker offset by $50,000 and an increase in off-set to kindergarten and preK programs could fund this proposal.

Jenifer Bedford made a motion and Nancy Lancellotti seconded to move to increase the ELL teacher from .5 to full time and hire an additional teacher/ long term substitute for the 2016/2017 school year.

VOTE 3/0

Jennifer Bedford made the motion and Nancy Lancellotti seconded to increase the Circuit Breaker offset by $50K for this current budget year.

VOTE 3/0

Jennifer Bedford made a motion and Nancy Lancellotti seconded to move to increase the offset from the Kindergarten program by $40K and the PreK program by $40K for the current year.

VOTE 3/0

**School Choice**

Dr. Dwight presented the administrative team’s recommendation for School choice with openings to be in the following grades:

Grade 6 -2

Grade 7 – 1

Grade 8 -1

Grade 9 – 2

After discussion the School Choice openings were revised to:

Grade 6 – 4 new students

Grade 9 – 2 new students.

Jennifer Bedford made a motion and Nancy Lancellotti seconded to move that the 6 school choice openings be added as follows: 4 students for the incoming grade 6 and 2 students for the incoming grade 9

VOTE 3/0

School Choice enrollment will be at 62 students for the 2016/2017 school year.

**Legal counsel change**

SusanMary Redinger recommended changing the school’s current legal counsel. Several School Committee members were in attendance at the MASC conference this fall and were impressed with Ms. Elizabeth Valerio’s presentation. Ms. Valerio is a principal of Deutsch Williams Boston. Ms. Valerio has extensive experience in representing clients in collective bargaining, arbitrations and labor relations.

Jennifer Bedford made the motion and Nancy Lancellotti seconded to hire Deutsch and Williams and authorize our Chair to contact Elizabeth Valerio and enter into an agreement.

VOTE 3/0

**Vote the last day of school**

**The committee agreed to vote the last day of school**

SusanMary made the motion and Nancy Lancellotti seconded to approve the last day of school as an early release on Monday, June 20th.

**Topics for student advisory and meeting date**

The next meeting with the student advisory is scheduled for May 13th. SusanMary Redinger asked for topic ideas to discuss with students at this meeting.

**Review meeting minutes**

SusanMary Redinger with no objections approved the minutes of the March 28th meeting as amended.

VOTE 3/0

**Report Out from Liaisons**

Maureen Babcock reported that there is a DEAC meeting tomorrow night. The DEAC would like a Harvard representative. Meetings are as needed and have recently been held with six weeks or longer between meetings. Meetings last about 2 hours. It was doubtful that any member would be able to attend the meeting tomorrow night but the Committee will definitely have someone in place for the next meeting.

Jennifer Bedford reported that the HES School Council will meet after Spring break.

Nancy Lancellotti reported that the Bromfield School Council is scheduled to meet tomorrow.

Nancy Lancellotti reviewed the updated information for the April 2016 Parent Connection newsletter. After the April 25th meeting the final draft will be reviewed and sent out to parents by May 1st.

SusanMary Redinger reported that CIPIC met this morning to go over status of what was approved at the Annual Town meeting. SusanMary Redinger reported that the HES Building and Visioning Committees will meet the week of April 26th.

Lorraine Leonard gave the Finance report – The FY16 budget is currently showing a $42,656 surplus. Ms. Leonard is hopeful that after one more month she will be able to close out some of the line items that have not been fully expended. She suspects there will be savings in some of the maintenance accounts such as utilities.

**Suggested Future Agenda Items**

Social Media presentation

Attendance on Good Friday

Vacation/time off policy – excused absences

Feedback from trips.

**Interested Citizen** – Spencer Marks, Bolton Road, Harvard, MA – interested in sponsoring a Foreign Exchange student.

**School Committee Commentary**

Maureen Babcock - the Choral Concert under the direction of Rebecca Ufema was outstanding.

Jennifer Bedford - the 6th grade overnight trip to the Boston Science Museum, albeit little sleep, was great.

SusanMary Redinger – the Middle School Drama Society performed two 40 minute plays that they will bring to Drama Fest next week. Superstar Productions will be performing Alice in Wonderland on May 6th, 7th and 8th.

Dr. Dwight signed 2 contracts to hire a French teacher from New York City and a Spanish teacher who is getting his Master’s Degree in Spain this summer.

**Adjournment**

SusanMary Redinger with no objections adjourned the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

VOTE 3/0

Respectfully submitted:

Mary Zadroga