

**BELMONT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES
CHENERY MIDDLE SCHOOL COMMUNITY ROOM
January 31, 2012**

Present: Ms. Laurie Graham, Chair
Ms. Rebecca Vose, Secretary
Ms. Laurie Slap
Mr. Dan Scharfman
Mr. Kevin Cunningham
Ms. Anne Lougée
Dr. Thomas Kingston, Superintendent of Schools
Ms. Janice Darias, Assistant Superintendent
Mr. Anthony DiCologero, Director of Finance, Business and Operations

1. OPENING BUSINESS

1.1 Call to Order

Ms. Graham called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Community Room of the Chenery Middle School.

2. EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 6:30 p.m. on a motion offered by Mr. Cunningham and seconded by Ms. Vose, it was

VOTED unanimously (6-0) on a roll call vote to enter Executive Session for the purpose of discussing Collective Bargaining with union personnel given that a discussion in Open Session may have a detrimental impact on the School Committee's bargaining position.

The Committee announced that they would return to Open Session at the conclusion of the Executive Session.

3. OPENING BUSINESS

3.1 Call to Order

The School Committee returned to Open Session at 7:30 p.m. in the Community Room of the Chenery Middle School.

3.2 Citizen's Concerns

There were no citizen's concerns.

3.3 Pledge of Allegiance

Ms. Graham led the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

3.4 Adjustments to the Agenda

There were no adjustments to the agenda.

3.5 Chairman's Report

Ms. Graham announced that the Foundation for Belmont Education Gala and Auction is on March 17, 2012, and tickets are now available online. She noted that it will be a busy weekend with the high school spring play as well, and encouraged people to attend the auction on Saturday evening and the play on the other nights it will be performed, to support both events in Belmont that weekend.

There will be two budget forums for the public to share feedback, concerns, and ask questions. They are on Wednesday, February 15, 7:30 p.m., and on Thursday, February 16, 8:00 a.m. Both are in the Selectmen's Board Room. There will also be a joint meeting with Board of Selectmen on Wednesday, February 8 at 8:00 a.m. in the Selectmen's Board Room.

Mr. Cunningham added that the FBE had a meeting last night to brainstorm future projects.

Ms. Graham noted that the registration for spring classes through Community Education was held at Belmont High School yesterday evening, and continues by mail or in person at the School Administration Building. She encouraged citizens to consult the (pink) brochure they received in the mail, and sign up for classes.

3.6 Superintendent's Report

Dr. Kingston noted that he has proposed bi-weekly meetings of the joint management-labor group reviewing the new educator appraisal system. The group will be examining all of its components. One of the first components that will be addressed is the school committee's evaluation of the superintendent

3.7 Director of Finance, Business and Operations' Report

Mr. DiCologero distributed an updated list of Capital Budget Requests for FY13. There were five items added to the original list: town-wide telephone system software upgrade; repair large hot water tank at BHS; installation of natural gas co-generation system to provide electricity, heat, and hot water to the BHS pool area; installation of large air flow ceiling fans at BHS field house, and Wellington cafeteria and gymnasium; facilities audit in preparation for Buildings and Grounds consolidation. Two items were deleted from original capital request: ventilation for BHS ceramics studio (which can be accomplished for less money using FY12 operating funds); BHS pool pump system (was replaced at the time of repair work when system failed in FY12). There is no change to the items on the multi-year requests (FY14 through FY18).

Dr. Kingston asked the School Committee to endorse the changes to the Capital Budget Request for submission to the Capital Budget Committee, which has its meeting on Thursday, February 2nd.

Ms. Graham invited members to ask questions. Mr. Cunningham asked how long the telephone system upgrade would take, and about the hot water tank at the high school. Mr. DiCologero explained that the upgrade might take several days to complete. He confirmed that there has been an increased need for repairs to the tank (which is original to the building and forty years old), and this project will essentially make it "new." Mr. Cunningham asked about the facilities audit. Mr. DiCologero confirmed that an external agent would conduct the audit. Mr. DiCologero said the amount requested, \$100,000, was based on the work that was done on the Town buildings. Ms. Lougee asked more about the facilities audit and its purpose. Mr. DiCologero noted that the facilities audit was completed for the Town. It includes an inventory of all facilities, including the systems in all buildings and their status. Ms. Vose asked about the ceiling fans, especially the request to install them in a brand new school (the Wellington). Mr. DiCologero said that the recommendation came from Mr. Domenici, who spends time at the building and feels it would enhance the fuel efficiency. Ms. Vose asked why it wasn't part of the design of the building. Dr. Kingston added that it is a request to the Capital Committee because it was not in the original design. Mr. Scharfman asked if the building is performing as it was designed. Dr. Kingston and Mr. DiCologero will investigate the project further. Ms. Vose agreed that endorsing the list does not mean it will be funded. Ms. Graham will share the information with Mrs. Bruschi, who is on both the Capital Budget Committee and the Wellington Building Committee. Mr. Scharfman commented on the need for renovation of Belmont High School, and the concern about investing more in capital expenditures. Mr. Cunningham asked for additional information about the high school project and its status with Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA). Ms. Graham asked Mr. DiCologero to send the MSBA Statement of Interest to the School Committee.

On a motion offered by Mr. Cunningham and seconded by Ms. Vose, it was

VOTED unanimously (6-0) to approve the submission of the Belmont School Department Capital Budget Requests, Fiscal Years 2013-2018, to the Capital Budget Committee, with a proviso that an amended request may be submitted pending additional information on the Wellington ceiling fans and the facilities audit.

4. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

No unfinished business.

5. MAJOR BUSINESS

5.1 Discussion and Adoption of School Committee Goals – Exhibit A

The School Committee reviewed and discussed two documents with their goals, both in terms of the content of the goals and the format in which they were presented. Mr. Scharfman had drafted a document in narrative form. Ms. Lougée had drafted one in a bulleted list with an overall objective, of preparing students for college, career, and life-long learning.

The members of the School Committee discussed the need to differentiate the role of School Committee from that of the Superintendent. As such, items such as hiring effective educators are not in the purview of the School Committee. In addition, Dr. Kingston noted the district already has a mission and vision, posted on the web site, and also explained that the district Leadership Council is currently in the process of reviewing those documents. It was decided to proceed with the narrative format, but to re-order the information and clarify the role of the School Committee.

Mr. Scharfman will use the suggestions of the members to create another draft of the document for their review.

5.2 Discussion of Solar Panel Project – Exhibit B

Ms. Graham asked Mr. Roger Colton and Ian Todreas, Co-Chairs of the Belmont Energy Committee, to join the committee at the table. He responded to questions that had been posed previously by Mr. Scharfman. How much progress is made in emissions reductions with this project? It would reduce by 750 tons, or an emission reduction of 0.25% on an annual, town-wide basis. It would represent an almost 6% reduction of the municipal use.

Ms. Graham asked Mr. Cunningham to share the questions he had discussed with Mr. DiCologero. One was about the economic model behind the project. The other was regarding the possible risks. Mr. Colton explained that in the worst case scenario, the schools have solar panels on their roofs that don't produce electricity, and would be buying electricity from the Belmont Light Department as they do today. If the project proceeds this year, 2012, when the tax credits are in place, there will not be a problem if they go away in 2013, since the project will already be done.

Ms. Graham noted that the vote tonight is only to authorize the Superintendent to form a committee, not to put solar panels on the schools. Mr. Scharfman asked about roofs that need clearing when there is too much snow, and asked that it be addressed through the committee. Mr. Colton noted that the Department of Energy Resources (DOER) provided a lot of support to the Town during the ESCO project, and is interested in making sure the project succeeds.

Ms. Slap made a motion, seconded by Ms. Vose, that the School Committee authorize the Superintendent to summon an exploratory, advisory committee to form recommendations about installing solar panels on School Department properties, and that the advisory committee report its recommendations to the School Committee for review and action no later than May 15, 2012.

Mr. Cunningham asked if the advisory committee would explore all solar panel options, or the option suggested by Mr. Colton. Dr. Kingston recommended that the committee focus on the proposal that has been brought forward.

On a motion offered by Ms. Slap, and seconded by Ms. Vose, it was

VOTED unanimously (6-0) to amend the motion to specify that the exploratory, advisory committee form recommendations regarding implementation of the Belmont Solar Initiative.

On a motion offered by Mr. Scharfman and seconded by Ms. Slap, it was

VOTED unanimously (6-0) to authorize the Superintendent to summon an exploratory, advisory committee to form recommendations regarding implementation of the Belmont Solar Initiative about installing solar collector panels on School Department properties, and that the advisory committee reports its recommendations to the School Committee for review and action no later than May 15, 2012.

5.3 First Reading of Update to Policy 6015: Education for Students with Special Needs and Disabilities – Exhibit C

Ms. Graham explained that the policy is updated to include both students who need Individual Education Plans as well as 504 plans. Dr. Kingston noted that these changes are the result of suggestions from the federal Office of Civil Rights. Ms. Graham explained that the revisions to the policy makes the current practice explicit, and makes explicit that there is a compliance officer (the Director of Student Services) to oversee its implementation. The policy subcommittee will develop procedures. A separate policy for personnel will address 504 plans for employees, and will be consistent with this policy.

The policy will be brought forward to the next meeting for a second reading and a vote.

6. REPORT OF SUBCOMMITTEES/LIAISONS

6.1 Wellington Building Committee

Ms. Graham noted that the punch list at the Wellington is ongoing. In particular there is a concern raised by neighbors about the noise from the roof-top units (RTUs). One of the RTUs needs to be moved for compliance issues (separate from the noise issue). The Planning Board will hold a neighborhood meeting on February 9, 6:00-9:00 p.m., at the Wellington School to discuss these concerns. Members of the Wellington Building Committee, Ms. Graham (as a member of the Wellington Building Committee), Dr. Kingston, and Planning Board members will be present.

6.2 Finance Subcommittee

The Finance Subcommittee is meeting weekly with Dr. Kingston and Mr. DiCologero, both the details of the FY13 Budget and the larger issues, such as Special Education. At the same time, they are developing ideas for a long-term plan, and will work on this with the Board of Selectmen. Ms. Graham asked the subcommittee to propose dates for the School Committee to address these issues. Ms. Slap and Mr. Cunningham will attend the formative meeting of the Education Subcommittee of the Warrant Committee, to be held on Wednesday, February 1st.

6.3 Student Representative Update

The Student Representative was not present.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

7.1 Consent Agenda

There were no items for the consent agenda.

7.2 Personnel Items – Informational

7.3 Business Items – None

7.4 Approval of Minutes

On a motion offered by Mr. Scharfman, and seconded by Mr. Cunningham, it was
VOTED unanimously (6-0) to approve the minutes for October 28, 2011, as amended.

On a motion offered by Mr. Scharfman, and seconded by Mr. Cunningham, it was
VOTED unanimously (6-0) to approve the minutes for January 6, 2012, as amended.

On a motion offered by Ms. Slap, and seconded by Mr. Cunningham, it was
VOTED unanimously (5-0-1) to approve the minutes for January 13, 2012, as amended.

On a motion offered by Mr. Scharfman, and seconded by Ms. Lougée, it was
VOTED unanimously (6-0) to approve the minutes for January 17, 2012, as amended.

8. FUTURE BUSINESS

Upcoming Meetings:

February 7, 2012
Regular School Committee Meeting
CMS Large Community Room
7:30 p.m.

February 8, 2012
Joint Meeting of School Committee and Board of Selectmen
Selectmen's Board Room
8:00 a.m.

February 14, 2012
Regular School Committee Meeting – Student Advisory Council
CMS Large Community Room
7:30 p.m.

February 15, 2012
Budget Forum
Selectmen's Board Room
7:30 p.m.

February 16, 2012
Budget Forum
Selectmen's Board Room
9:00 a.m.

9. ENCLOSURES

None

10. ADJOURNMENT

At 9:30 p.m. on a motion offered by Mr. Scharfman and seconded by Ms. Slap, it was

VOTED unanimously (6-0) to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by



Rebecca Vose, Secretary