

**BELMONT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES
CHENERY MIDDLE SCHOOL COMMUNITY ROOM
JANUARY 29, 2013**

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

1. **OPENING BUSINESS**

1.1 Call to order

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

2. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 6:35 p.m. on a motion offered by Laurie Slap and seconded by Anne Lougée, it was

VOTED unanimously (5-0) on a roll call vote to enter Executive Session for the purpose of discussing contract negotiations with non-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 it would return to Open Session at the conclusion of Executive Session.

3. **OPEN SESSION**

3.1 Call to order

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

Ms. Graham acknowledged the passing of Mr. Dan Scharfman and asked for a moment of silence in his memory.

3.2 Pledge of Allegiance

Ms. Graham led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3.3 Citizens' Concerns

There were no citizen's concerns.

3.4 Adjustments to the Agenda

Ms. Graham stated that under major business, item 4.2, Mr. Richards addressing breathalyzers, would be moved to 4.1 to go as the first major business item.

4. MAJOR BUSINESS

4.1 Breathalyzer Update – Dan Richards

Mr. Dan Richards, Principal of Belmont High School explained to the School Committee the plan to use breathalyzers at Belmont High School dances. The idea initially came from students who were hoping to find a way to allow dances to once again be held at the high school. Mr. Richards acknowledged that part of his job is the social/emotional development of children and that dances are one way to address students' social/emotional development. Mr. Richards also stated that dances are a significant fundraiser for students to help allay the cost of prom tickets. Mr. Richards presented the results of a student survey, which he stated gives a "strong message that students would both come to dances sober and take a breathalyzer test." Mr. Richards also surveyed 74 high schools in Massachusetts, and found that 95% of these schools have a breathalyzer.

Mr. Richards and Ms. Griffiths demonstrated how the breathalyzer works. Mr. Richards stated that they will be used privately and students will have an opportunity to take the test a second and third time if they have a positive result the first time.

This year is a pilot year, and there is a draft of policy for the use of the breathalyzer.

Students will have the opportunity to try the breathalyzer during a lunch period next week, so that students can have fun learning about it. Mr. Richards explained that the breathalyzer will only be used at school dances, not during the school day. Mr. Richards stated, "The breathalyzer is a pre-condition to have dances. It is one tool that gives a loud and clear message that drugs and alcohol will not be tolerated at school."

February 9th, there will be a Semi-Formal dance, Fundraiser for Belmont High School.

4.1 (b) Ms. Graham explained that Dan Scharfman was the Secretary. Ms. Graham announced that she would take nominations for interim secretary for the School Committee until April 2014. Mr. Cunningham nominated Ms. Griffiths.

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

VOTED unanimously to appoint Ms. Griffiths as Interim School Committee Secretary.

Laurie Graham acknowledged that town members have asked about replacing Dan Scharfman. Ms. Graham welcomed people viewing the School Committee meeting to run for School Committee. Ms.

Graham advised that in order to run for School Committee, one must get their signature papers from Town Hall, gather 50 signatures, and have the completed document submitted to the Town Clerk by February 12th, 2013.

4.2 Belmont High School Program of Studies – Exhibit B-1 Course Selection Sheets – Exhibit B-2

Mr. Richards explained that the Belmont High School Program of Studies is reviewed once a year in October. Mr. Richards stated that, “We want to make sure courses reflect student interests, 21st Century Skills, and prepares students for college and career. We do not want to remain stagnant.” Mr. Richards explained that any instructor with a new course idea is encouraged to submit, and the proposals should utilize the resources and tools we currently have.

Mr. Arto Asadoorian, Director of Fine and Performing Arts explained the two new visual arts courses being offered at Belmont High School.

- Figure Sculpture will focus on human and animal forms and would be open to all students in grades 9-12. It will use the mediums of clay, plaster, wood, wire, and stone.
- Mixed Media will include techniques in wood block carving, collograph, bookmaking, and collage.

Mr. Asadoorian explained that existing funds and staff would be used for these courses, and that these courses would replace a section of photography and ceramics. These would be full year courses and would presumably be at no extra cost, as these courses would use the budget currently allocated to photography and ceramics sections that these courses would replace.

Ms. Deb McDevitt and Ms. Colleen Foley presented their proposal for a Global Certificate Program. The course is open to all students and will include specific course work, an interdisciplinary portfolio of projects and reflections, and a global action project.

Ms. Foley explained that the Global Certificate program seeks to...

- Better prepare students for an interconnected world
- Give students the opportunity to develop an interest and expertise in a global issue or culture
- Provide interdisciplinary learning experiences
- Create experiential and real world learning opportunities
- Reinforce the development of 21st century skills such as problem solving, critical thinking, research and analysis, as well as oral and written communication

4.3 Capital Budget Requests for FY14 – FY19 - Exhibit C

Mr. DiCologero presented the capital budget requests for FY14. He stated that these requests are presented to the Capital Budget Committee annually by the School Department and other Town Departments. There were 17 items listed in order of priority with the highest priority being school-wide security. The total dollar amount for capital budget requests for FY14 is \$1,038,000.

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

VOTED unanimously to accept the Capital Budget requests for FY 2014-2019.

4.4 Vote to approve Superintendent's Contract 2013-2014 – Exhibit E

Ms. Graham stated that the School Committee was very grateful that Dr. Kingston accepted the extension of his contract.

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

VOTED unanimously to approve the contract for Dr. Thomas Kingston for 2013—2014 – Exhibit E.

4.5 Gift Acceptance Draft Motion – Exhibit D

Dr. Kingston read the following draft motion regarding a gift to the Belmont Public Schools from an anonymous donor.

In accord with Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44, Section 53A, the Belmont School Committee gratefully accepts an anonymous gift of \$50,000 for use at the discretion of the Superintendent on behalf of the Belmont Public Schools. The conditions of the gift are as follows:

The purpose of the gift is to provide support for new ventures, not to replace or supplement spending on existing programs.

All funds provided must be devoted to programmatic activities. No administrative charge, regardless of label, may be paid out of this gift.

Unless otherwise agreed, the funds must be spent down by December 2013.

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

VOTED unanimously to approve the gift acceptance – Exhibit D

5. **REPORTS**

5.1 Chair's Report

Ms. Graham announced the following events:

- All That Jazz fundraiser – January 26 – members honored Mr. Dan Scharfman by renaming their annual scholarship the Dan Scharfman Scholarship.
- 46 students received honors from the Boston Globe Art Awards
- Mr. Jim Davis, Director of Athletics was selected as the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators State Award of Merit winner.
- Jeremy Kittle Band will perform with the Chenery Middle School Orchestra – February 1

- Sounds of the 80s concert and dance party – February 2
- Annual FBE Auction – March 16

Ms. Graham announced that on January 31, there will be a community forum at the Belmont Public Library. The architect working on a proposed plan for the Underwood Pool and Park will be there to give a presentation and answer questions from community members.

Ms. Graham explained the process that has normally taken place when a seat on the School Committee becomes available due to someone leaving before the end of their term. The School Committee accepts letters of interest from community members who are then interviewed by the Board of Selectmen and School Committee. Ms. Graham stated that since there is such a short amount of time until the next election, the School Committee has decided instead to encourage people to run for the open seat and ask any questions they may have about the process.

5.2 Superintendent's Report

Dr. Kingston explained that has submitted his mid-cycle goals review to the School Committee. The Committee will review the goals and discuss them at the February 2 School Committee meeting. Dr. Kingston invited School Committee members to contact him with any questions or concerns.

Dr. Kingston reported on a meeting he attended with other Superintendents and High School regarding concerns about NEASC. He noted that other districts are questioning the value added with participation in NEASC. Dr. Kingston stated a letter of concern will be submitted to NEASC through EDCO and he hopes to arrange a one-on-one conversation with them in the future.

Dr. Kingston stated that enrollment and enrollment projections continue to be a concern. The Class Size Advisory Group will be submitting their report to Dr. Kingston next week. He will provide copies to the School Committee for a future agenda.

Dr. Kingston stated that the School Safety Advisory Committee has been visiting the schools to determine what needs to be done to improve safety. They are meeting weekly to create recommendations for safety and security. These recommendations will be presented to the Capital Budget Committee.

Dr. Kingston announced the creation of an advisory group to review the old feasibility study as well as the current draft of the Statement of Interest for the renovation of Belmont High School. He is asking the group to provide recommendations to be presented to the Board of Selectmen before the April 10 deadline for the Statement of Interest submission.

5.3 Director of Finance, Business and Operation's Report

Mr. DiCologero provided the School Committee with a summary sheet detailing the second quarter report. He stated that he expects a positive year-end balance.

6. **SUBCOMMITTEE/LIAISON UPDATES (as needed)**

6.1 Student Representative

There was no report from the Student Representative.

6.2 Finance Subcommittee

Mr. Cunningham stated that the Finance Subcommittee has been working on budget proposals and reviewing town estimates. Dr. Kingston added that it the School Department has a wonderful working relationship with Mr. David Kale, Town Manager and Ms. Kelley Hebert, Assistant Town Manager.

6.3 Policy Subcommittee

Ms. Graham stated that the Police Subcommittee has been working on the 4000 Series, which relates to personnel policies. The updated policies will be presented to the School Committee as a whole packet. She also noted that the School Security Advisory Committee is reviewing the Emergency Response Manual, which is out of date. Once their review is complete, new procedures will be needed.

6.4 Curriculum & Instruction Subcommittee

Ms. Graham announced that the Curriculum & Instruction Subcommittee will meet on February 4.

6.5 Capital Budget Committee

Ms. Lougée stated that the Capital Budget Committee will meet on February 14 to discuss ways to prioritize projects.

6.6 Warrant Committee

Ms. Slap stated that David Kale presented the Warrant Committee with information on town finances at their last meeting.

6.7 Wellington Building Committee

Ms. Graham stated that a fence with a gate has been built on the lower school playground. It is still being determined when the roof top units can be installed. They have to be installed during daylight hours.

7. **OTHER BUSINESS**

7.1 Consent Agenda

7.2 Personnel Items – Informational
There were no personnel items.

7.3 Business Items
There were no business items.

7.4 Approval of Minutes

January 8, 2013

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

VOTED 4-0-1 with Ms. Lougée abstaining as she had been absent from the meeting to approve the minutes of January 8, 2013.

8. **FUTURE BUSINESS**

January 31, 2013
Policy Subcommittee Meeting
SAB Conference Room – 9:00 a.m.

February 4, 2013
Curriculum & Instruction Subcommittee Meeting
SAB Conference Room – 9:30 a.m.

February 5, 2013
Finance Subcommittee Meeting
SAB Conference Room – 8:00 a.m.

February 5, 2013
School Committee Meeting
CMS Large Community Room – 7:30 p.m.

February 11, 2013
Joint Meeting – Board of Selectmen/School Committee
Selectmen's Meeting Room – Town Hall – 5:00 p.m.

February 12, 2013
School Committee Meeting
CMS Large Community Room – 7:30 p.m.

February 26, 2013
Finance Subcommittee Meeting
SAB Conference Room – 8:00 a.m.

9. **ENCLOSURES**

AP Environmental Science Trip Proposal

10. **ADJOURNMENT**

At 10:00 p.m. on a motion offered by Ms. Lougée and seconded by Mr. Cunningham, it was

VOTED unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by


Pascha Griffiths, Secretary