

**BELMONT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES
CHENERY MIDDLE SCHOOL COMMUNITY ROOM
MARCH 19, 2013**

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

Also in attendance: Tomas Reimers, Student Representative
Ms. Mary Pederson, Human Resources Manager

1. **OPENING BUSINESS**

1.1 Call to order

Ms. Graham called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

1.2 Pledge of Allegiance

Ms. Graham led the Pledge of Allegiance.

1.3 Citizens' Concerns

There were no citizens' concerns.

1.4 Adjustments to the Agenda

Ms. Graham stated that since the Student Advisory Council was not in attendance, the first item of major business would be 3.2.

1.5 Chairman's Report

Ms. Graham updated the Committee on recent community, school, and sporting events that have taken place or will take place in the future.

1.6 Superintendent's Report

Dr. Kingston announced that as of today, the last day of school will be June 21.

Dr. Kingston brought to the attention of the School Committee, Exhibit E in the packet, which explains which teachers currently on leave will be returning next year.

Dr. Kingston noted that the final report for the Coordinated Program Review has been received with two minor findings, which were expected. He stated that he is pleased with the work of the entire staff who enabled Belmont Schools to be in compliance. Dr. Kingston thanked Ms. Darias for her work coordinating the Coordinated Program Review.

Dr. Kingston announced that the school administration and Belmont Education Association (BEA) had begun impact bargaining over the Education Evaluation System. The BEA has proposed some changes to the program, which they are entitled to do. He stated that working through the agreement will take several weeks but he is hoping to have an agreement by this summer.

Dr. Kingston stated that he had reviewed a draft report from the Walker Partnership. The report explores and evaluates several special education programs. He had asked for a review of Belmont's relationship with the LABBB Collaborative. Dr. Kingston stated that he has reviewed the draft report and it is very informative and will reassure people about the value of the partnership with LABBB.

Dr. Kingston informed the School Committee that he has requested \$57,500 from the oversight committee of the town's Education Fund for the initial down payment on the new kindergarten through grade 5 mathematics series. This money would allow the purchase of initial materials and subscriptions.

Dr. Kingston stated that the Foundation for Belmont Education dinner and auction was a great success. He noted that the online auction is still available for people who would like to take part.

Ms. Darias explained to the School Committee that the date for the MCAS long-form composition have been changed by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education due to the snow day on March 19. The new date will be March 25, which unfortunately is the first day of Passover. Ms. Darias explained that there will be a make-up date on March 28 for any student who cannot attend school on March 25.

Ms. Darias mentioned that two Belmont teachers will be attending Earthwatch next week. They will be working with scientists in Nova Scotia studying the environment and wildlife and will Skype with their students updating them on what they are learning.

1.7 Director of Finance, Business and Operations' Report

Mr. DiCologero explained the Statement of Interest (SOI) to the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA), which was included in the School Committee packet. He stated that once the School Committee approved the SOI, it must be approved and signed by the Board of Selectmen before it is sent on to the MSBA.

Mr. DiCologero stated that some school department administrators have been taking part in the interviews for the new Facilities Manager, a position which will be shared by the School Department and Town. Two candidates will be interviewed tomorrow and a third on Friday.

2. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

There was no unfinished business.

3. **MAJOR BUSINESS**

3.1 Student Advisory Council

The Student Advisory Council was not in attendance.

3.2 Statement of Interest to MSBA and vote to approve – Exhibit A

Dr. Kingston thanked his group of advisors including Pat Brush and Jenny Fallon for their work in helping create the Statement of Interest (SOI), which will be submitted to the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) for the renovation of Belmont High School. Much of the information gathered for the Statement of Interest was taken from a feasibility study done in 2004. Dr. Kingston explained that there are a number of priorities that MSBA looks at when considering the SOI. Mr. DiCologero explained the 4 priorities that Belmont has listed.

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

Resolved: Having convened in an open meeting on March 19, 2013 the School Committee of the Town of Belmont, in accordance with its charter, by-laws, and ordinances, has voted to authorize the Superintendent to submit to the Massachusetts School Building Authority the Statement of Interest Form dated March 19, 2013 for the Belmont High School located at 221 Concord Avenue, Belmont, MA which describes and explains the following deficiencies and the priority categories for which an application may be submitted to the Massachusetts School Building Authority in the future

Priority 3 - Prevention of the loss of accreditation – based on facilities-related conditions cited in the most recent report from the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), dated February 22, 2013;

Priority 4 – Prevention of severe overcrowding expected to result from increased enrollments;

Priority 5 - Replacement, renovation or modernization of school facility systems, such as roofs, windows, boilers, heating and ventilation systems, to increase energy conservation and decrease energy related costs in a school facility;

Priority 7 - Replacement of or addition to obsolete buildings in order to provide for a full range of programs consistent with state and approved local requirements;

and hereby further specifically acknowledges that by submitting this Statement of Interest Form, the Massachusetts School Building Authority in no way guarantees the acceptance or the approval of an application, the awarding of a grant or any other funding commitment from the Massachusetts School Building Authority, or commits the Town or the School District to filing an application for funding with the Massachusetts School Building Authority.

VOTED unanimously to approve the Statement of Interest (SOI) to the MSBA for the renovation of Belmont High School - Exhibit A

3.3 Personnel Policies (4000 Series) (first reading) – Exhibit B

Ms. Mary Pederson, Human Resources Manager joined the School Committee at the table to explain the revisions to the School Committee Personnel Policies (4000 Series). She noted that most of the changes were minor housekeeping issues but that some policies were merged into one. School Committee members discussed the changes and offered suggestions for other minor changes.

3.4 Math Series and vote to approve – Exhibit C

Ms. Darias explained that the School Committee is being asked to approve the math series that was presented at a previous School Committee meeting. She stated that she has been working with the publisher to arrange for the School Department to pay half of the cost during FY14 and is also working with the Town to arrange for a donation from the Education Fund.

Ms. Darias explained that the training in the new math system will be offered on a day during the summer and again on a day during the school year. The plan is to provide stipends through the Title II Grant for a leader in each grade level who will act as liaison and be able to train other teachers.

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

VOTED unanimously to approve the *Envision Math Common Core 2012* Math series – Exhibit C

3.5 2013-2014 Calendar – Exhibit D

Ms. Darias updated the School Committee on the early release days for the 2013-2014 Calendar. She stated that the administrators had discussed different starting day options due to the fact that Rosh Hashana falls on the first Wednesday of September, which has traditionally been the first day of school. She said it was decided to continue with that tradition but staff members are and have always been permitted to take the day off for religious observance. Teachers will also make sure that students are not penalized for taking that day.

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

VOTED unanimously to approve the Belmont Public Schools 2013-2014 Calendar – Exhibit D

3.6 Vote on School Choice

Dr. Kingston explained that under the law, each year the School Committee is required to vote on whether the district will accept out of district tuition paying students. Due to class size pressures, he is recommending that the School Committee decline to take part in School Choice for the 2013-2014 school year.

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

VOTED *unanimously In accord with MGL Chapter 76, Section 128, Belmont Public Schools decline to participate in School Choice for the 2013-2014 school year.*

4. SUBCOMMITTEE/LIAISON UPDATES (as needed)

4.1 Student Representative

Tomas Reimers updated the School Committee on events that have taken place at Belmont High School such as the Mr. Belmont Pageant and a blood drive. He stated that spring sports have begun and also talked about a battling robots competition that was put on by an engineering class.

4.2 Finance Subcommittee

Ms. Slap and Mr. Cunningham spoke about the Finance Subcommittee's meeting earlier in the day where they discussed how best to prepare for the upcoming public forums.

4.3 Policy Subcommittee

Ms. Graham stated that she will take the School Committee suggestions regarding the Personnel Policies back to the Policy Subcommittee for review.

4.4 Curriculum & Instruction Subcommittee

The Curriculum & Instruction Subcommittee will be meeting next Monday, March 25 to discuss iPad initiatives.

4.5 Capital Budget Committee

Ms. Lougée stated that the Capital Budget Committee has been meeting every Thursday morning to review department requests.

4.6 Warrant Committee

Ms. Slap stated that the Warrant Committee met last week and they are preparing for the April Town Meeting.

4.7 Wellington Building Committee

Ms. Graham stated that there is still work going on to finalize the rooftop units. There is a community meeting scheduled for April 10 at the Wellington to hear community concerns or comments about noise levels.

5. **OTHER BUSINESS**

5.1 Consent Agenda

5.2 Personnel Items - None

5.3 Business Items – None

5.4 Approval of Minutes

There were no minutes to be approved.

6. **FUTURE BUSINESS**

Upcoming Meetings:

School Committee Work Session
March 20, 2013
SAB Conference Room – 9:00 a.m.

Curriculum & Instruction Subcommittee Meeting
March 25, 2013
SAB Conference Room – 9:30 a.m.

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

Budget Discussion
April 1, 2013
Wellington Community Room – 7:00 p.m.

Budget Discussion
April 4, 2013
Selectmen's Meeting Room – 9:00 a.m.

School Committee/Board of Selectmen Joint Meeting re: Underwood Pool Study
April 5, 2013
Selectmen's Meeting Room – 8:00 a.m.

7. **ENCLOSURES**

Letter to Floyd Carman
Final Report: Coordinated Program Review
DESE letter re: Fiscal Review

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

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

VOTED unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by



Laurie Graham, Chair