

BELMONT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES
CHENERY COMMUNITY ROOM
JUNE 4, 2019

Present: Ms. Susan Burgess-Cox, Chair
Ms. Andrea Prestwich, Secretary
Ms. Kate Bowen
Ms. Amy Checkoway
Mr. Michael Crowley
Ms. Tara Donner
Mr. John Phelan, Superintendent
Ms. Janice Darias, Assistant Superintendent
Mr. Anthony DiCologero, Director of Finance, Business and Operations
Ms. Mary Pederson, Director of Human Resources

Mary Pederson, Director of Human Resources welcomed everyone to the recognition ceremony honoring staff members who are retiring this year.

School Committee members read resolutions for the following retirees:

- Carolyn Bell – Wellington Grade 1 Teacher
- Laurie Carlson – Wellington Grade 2 Teacher
- Laura Colby – Butler Reading Specialist
- Brian Dunn – Belmont High School Latin Teacher
- Steven Gebhardt – Burbank Head Custodian
- Tina John – Belmont High School Physics Teacher
- Robert Johnson – Butler Head Custodian
- Beth Losk – Wellington Special Education Teacher
- Lianne McAnn – Chenery Speech Pathologist
- Patsy MacKinnon – Belmont High School Nurse
- Jacqueline McTighe – Integrated Preschool Professional Aide
- Patricia Partridge – Belmont High School Science Teacher
- Mary Jane Weinstein – Assistant Director of Student Services

1. OPENING BUSINESS

1.1 Call to order

Susan Burgess-Cox called the meeting to order at 7:19 p.m.

1.2 Pledge of Allegiance

Susan Burgess-Cox led the Pledge of Allegiance.

1.3 Citizen's Concerns

There were no citizen's concerns.

1.4 Adjustments to the Agenda

There were no adjustments to the agenda.

1.5 Chair's Report

Susan Burgess-Cox noted the wonderful reception the School Committee just had for retirees being recognized for their years of service in Belmont.

1.6 Student Representative Report

There was no report from the Student Representative.

1.7 Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Phelan thanked Belmont High School Principal Tom Brow and the high school administrators, administrative support, custodians and police for their efforts in making the June 2nd Belmont High School graduation a wonderful event. He also noted undergrad students are still taking part in sports and provided information on some upcoming sporting events.

2. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

3. MAJOR BUSINESS

3.1 Social Studies Curriculum Update – Exhibit B

Deb McDevitt, Director of Social studies explained there were some changes at the state level to the Social Studied curriculum. The first change was An Act to Promote and Enhance Civic Engagement was signed into law and the second was the Social Studies Frameworks have been updated. Ms. McDevitt then introduced the following teachers who teachers presented information on the new Social Studies curriculum:

- Jaynene Delitt-Young
- Eric Berkman
- Jamie Shea
- Natalie Blake-Weber

An Act to promote and enhance civic engagement requires the state to set up a non-partisan high school voter challenge program and creates a Civics Project Trust Fund. Students study the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights, Declaration of Independence and other aspects of the government. They also learn skills to analyze and evaluate written and digital media around history and civics.

Students in grade 10 took part in a pilot civics project that studied to what extent there are free and fair elections in America today. Students in grade 8 worked on writing their own bill based on an issue they felt strongly about. Students also learned about evaluating sources for their research.

3.2 Vote on High School English Capstone Project – Exhibit C

The School Committee watched a presentation on the High School English Capstone Project at their May 21st meeting. The Committee is required to vote on the adopting this curriculum change.

On a motion offered by Tara Donner and seconded by Amy Checkoway, it was **VOTED** unanimously to approve the Belmont High School English Capstone Project – Exhibit C.

3.3 Superintendent's Evaluation – Exhibit D

Superintendent Phelan presented his evaluation to the School Committee at their May 21st meeting. The School Committee took time to review the presentation and provide remarks to Chair Susan Burgess-Cox who then compiled the remarks and read a compilation of them to the School Committee.

3.4 Discussion and Vote on Rink

Tom Caputo, Chair of the Selectboard and Jon Marshall, Assistant Town Administrator joined the School Committee for a discussion of the possibility of moving forward with an RFP for a new skating rink. The Committee discussed options for the location of the rink along Concord Avenue and also discussed what they would like to see included in the RFP. They will vote on the size and location of the rink at their June 18th meeting.

On a motion offered by Tara Donner and seconded by Andrea Prestwich, it was **VOTED** unanimously to approve moving ahead with the RFP process to explore a public private partnership to build a new ice rink.

3.5 Minuteman Update

Superintendent Phelan presented an update on potential plans for providing vocational education to Belmont students. Belmont Town Meeting voted to withdraw from Minuteman in 2016 due to the cost for member districts compared to non-member districts. As of June 30, 2020, Belmont will officially be a non-member. Belmont formed a Minuteman Task Force to study options for alternate vocational education programs for Belmont students. After researching other programs, it was determined that Minuteman was the best option for Belmont.

Since the time of the decision to withdraw from Minuteman, the tuition gap between member and non-member towns has decreased and non-members are now required to pay a capital fee along with member towns. The Town of Belmont has asked to revisit the Minuteman agreement to see if there is a pathway to re-entry as a member town that would make sense for Belmont. Town Meeting may be asked to take a position on re-entry to Minuteman in the fall of 2019.

3.6 Vote on EDCO Articles of Agreement – Exhibit E

Every year or so amendments are made to the EDCO Articles of Agreement. There were minimal changes this year such as adding some language about non-discrimination and some date changes. The School Committee had some discussion about the governance section and Susan Burgess-Cox asked for a motion to accept the changes to the EDCO Articles of Agreement.

On a motion offered by Tara Donner and seconded by Michael Crowley, it was **VOTED** unanimously to approve the EDCO Articles of Agreement – Exhibit E

4. SUBCOMMITTEE/LIAISON UPDATES (as needed)

4.1 Finance Subcommittee

There was no report from the Finance Subcommittee.

4.2 Policy and Procedure Subcommittee

The Policy and Procedure Subcommittee will meet tomorrow at 6:00 p.m.

4.3 Curriculum and Instruction Subcommittee

There was no report from the Curriculum and Instruction Subcommittee.

4.4 Capital Budget Committee

There was no report from the Capital Budget Committee.

4.5 Warrant Committee

The Warrant Committee met to discuss whether or not they should weigh in on the issue of a sewer easement at Belmont Hill School and they decided against weighing in.

4.6 Belmont Middle and High School Building Committee

The Belmont High School Building Committee is meeting tomorrow morning at 7:30 a.m. They have been working to obtain final drawings on the new high school. The design team has been meeting with the curriculum directors to discuss space for art, music, science, media and technology. Some mild construction will begin on June 10th with placing a fence around the field and full construction will begin on June 18th.

Superintendent Phelan thanked Jim Davis and the folks who have been working on collecting salvage items around the pool and field house to be saved during the construction. He also thanked BHS Principal Tom Brow, Chenery Principal Michael McAllister and all the members of the town departments who have been working together to prepare for the start of construction.

4.7 Community Path

Susan Burgess-Cox announced School Committee Liaison Leslie Lee is stepping down from her role on the Community Path Committee. There was discussion on whether someone from the School Committee might want to be the new liaison or if the Committee should look for someone outside. It was decided it would be helpful to have more information regarding the time and work commitment it would take during the coming year.

4.8 Financial Task Force II

The next two meetings of the Financial Task Force II will take place on June 13th and June 27th. At the last meeting, the group received updates from Steve Cirillo who had worked with BPS Director of Finance Tony DiCologero and Town Budget Analyst Glen Castro to firm up numbers on budget projections. These updates will enable a conversation to begin regarding strategies related to potential shortfalls in the future and how to remedy them.

4.9 High School Traffic Working Group

The High School Traffic Working Group will view a draft presentation from the BSC group about the traffic calming measures and improvements on School Street, Orchard Street and Goden Street. They are presenting a draft of those elements like speed humps and improved sidewalks on June 13th at 7:00 p.m.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

5.1 Consent Agenda

The School Committee received three trip proposals for their review at their last meeting. The Committee is required to vote to approve these out of state trips.

- Vote on Spain Trip – Exhibit F
- Vote on Peru Trip – Exhibit G
- Vote on China Trip – Exhibit H

On a motion offered by Michael Crowley and seconded by Tara Donner, it was **VOTED** unanimously to approve the following trips: 2019-20 Trip to Spain – Exhibit F, 2019-20 Trip to Peru – Exhibit G, 2019-20 Trip to China – Exhibit H.

5.2 Personnel Items
None

5.3 Business Items
None

5.4 Approval of Minutes
May 21, 2019

On a motion offered by Tara Donner and seconded by Amy Checkoway, it was **VOTED** unanimously to approve the minutes of May 21, 2019 as amended.

6. FUTURE BUSINESS

Upcoming Meetings:

June 5, 2019
Policy Subcommittee Meeting
BHS Room 103 – 6:00 p.m.

June 11, 2019
Finance Subcommittee Meeting
SAB Conference Room – 8:00 p.m.

June 18, 2019
School Committee Meeting
CMS Community Room – 7:00 p.m.

7. **ENCLOSURES**
Strategic Plan
School Committee Goals

8. **ADJOURN**

At 9:40 p.m. on a motion offered by Tara Donner and seconded by Andrea Prestwich, it was **VOTED** unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted by



Susan Burgess-Cox, Chair