

**BELMONT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES
CHENERY COMMUNITY ROOM
JANUARY 21, 2020**

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

1. OPENING BUSINESS

1.1 Call to order

Susan Burgess-Cox called the meeting to order at 7:04 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

Chair Susan Burgess-Cox commented on the recent MLK Breakfast that took place at Belmont High School. Assistant Superintendent Janice Darias presented to the group. Ragini Shah, Clinical Professor of Law at Suffolk Law School and Founder of Suffolk Immigration Clinic spoke on "Uplifting the Human Personality: Martin Luther King and Immigrant's Rights Today".

1.6 Student Representative Report

Members of the Belmont High School Student Advisory Council updated the School Committee on the student shadowing program where teachers shadow students over the course of a day. This

allows teaches to better learn how to adjust their teaching styles. The students also provided updates on winter sports.

1.7 Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Phelan thanked everyone involved with making the recent Chinese New Year celebration such a great success. He stated the steel has arrived at the high school site and noted people will be seeing visible progress with the building going forward.

Superintendent Phelan announced the Foundation for Belmont Education (FBE) annual fundraiser will take place on March 14th.

2. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

3. MAJOR BUSINESS

3.1 BMHSBC Proprietary Bid List Vote – Exhibit A

Belmont Middle and High School Building Committee (BMHSBC) Chair Bill Lovallo explained the reason for the vote on the proprietary bid list. The School Committee has already voted on items 1-7. Items 8 and 9 are additional items which are outside the bid process. The BMHSBC has requested these the Schlage Extra High Security Exterior Doors, High Security Interior Doors, Key Type (number 8) in order to be consistent with the pre-established keying system in the Town of Belmont. The ExacqVision Video Management System (number 9) is being requested because it is compatible with the existing Belmont Police Department video management system.

On a motion offered by Tara Donner and seconded by Kate Bowen, it was

VOTED unanimously to approve Item #8 and Item #9 on the proprietary bid list.

3.2 BHS Program of Studies Vote – Exhibit B

The School Committee received copies of the 2020-2021 Belmont High School Program of Studies at their last meeting. They were also provided with information regarding new course additions during a presentation by members of the Belmont High School administrative staff. The School Committee is required to vote on accepting the program of studies for the coming year.

On a motion offered by Tara Donner and seconded by Andrea Prestwich, it was **VOTED** unanimously to approve the 2020-2021 Belmont High School Program of Studies.

3.3 Financial Task Force II Update

The Financial Task Force II has been meeting for over a year. School Committee member Kate Bowen and Superintendent John Phelan serve on this committee. The committee is a follow up to the Financial Task Force Committee which began in 2013/14. The members work to form a strategic plan for the Town of Belmont and have reviewed the report from the original Financial Task Force Committee. The Financial Task Force II Committee will continue to support the budget for the Town and Schools and work on developing a five year plan for Belmont.

3.4 FY21 Update

Anthony DiCologero, Director of Finance, Business and Operations updated the School Committee on the development of the FY21 budget which has been in progress for the last several months. Members for the School Committee Finance Subcommittee met with members of the Warrant Committee Education Subcommittee to work on the budget. Two meetings were also held with the Leadership Council to develop a 5 year staffing plan. FY21 will be the first year of that plan. Mr. DiCologero has also been working with the Town Administrator's Office to plan the Town budget of \$62,506,441.

3.5 2019/20 School Year Class Size Report – Exhibits C1, C2

Assistant Superintendent Janice Darias provided the School Committee updated enrollment and class size information. Enrollment has increased from 3900 in October 2011 to 4633 in October 2019 and is projected to increase to 4700 by October 2020. As of October 1, 2019 there are 65 more students enrolled than October 2018. From 2018-19 to the current year elementary enrollment has decreased by 1, middle school enrollment has increased by 58, and high school enrollment has increased by 8. The number of English Learners increased by 35 from October 1, 2018 to December 10, 2019. There are concerns about increasing class sizes due to higher enrollment.

Assistant Superintendent Darias also shared a month to month enrollment comparison which will be available to view on the Belmont Public Schools website.

3.6 Vote on Service Dogs in Schools Policy – Exhibit D

The School Committee was presented with a new policy that will allow service animals in the schools. The Policy Subcommittee spent time over the past year reviewing policies in use by other school districts. They also reviewed the policy suggested by the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC). Those policies were used to create a policy particular to Belmont. The draft policy was sent to district counsel for review who then sent it back with some suggested edits. The policy to be voted on is the final copy. Superintendent Phelan noted there will be a policy number assigned to the document as well as legal citations and cross referencing with other policies.

On a motion offered by Andrea Prestwich and seconded by Amy Checkoway, it was

VOTED unanimously to approve the policy allowing service animals in schools.

3.7 Appointment of School Committee Member to Long Range Capital Planning Committee

The Select Board has formed a new Long Range Capital Planning Committee. This committee will address major capital projects throughout the town. The Select Board has requested a member of the School Committee along with members of other town committees to be a part of this new Long Range Capital Planning Committee. School Committee members discussed how often the meetings might take place.

On a motion offered by Kate Bowen and seconded by Andrea Prestwich, it was

VOTED unanimously to appoint Michael Crowley as a member of the Long Range Capital Planning Committee.

4. SUBCOMMITTEE/LIAISON UPDATES (as needed)

4.1 Finance Subcommittee

The Finance Subcommittee met on January 14th to review preliminary budget materials. They also discussed staffing plans, and positions.

4.2 Policy and Procedure Subcommittee

There was no report from the Policy and Procedure Subcommittee.

4.3 Curriculum and Instruction Subcommittee

The Curriculum and Instruction Subcommittee will meet on January 28th to discuss homework.

4.4 Capital Budget Committee

The Capital Budget Committee will meet on February 6th.

4.5 Warrant Committee

The Warrant Committee reviewed the school department financials for the first quarter at their last meeting. They also reviewed the Town Administrator's proposed recommendations to the Capital Budget Committee. There was discussion on assessments and the Select Board's plan to have the Board of Assessors at a future meeting to discuss the process for community members questioning their evaluations.

4.6 Belmont Middle and High School Building Committee

Superintendent Phelan noted the steel has been delivered to the high school site. The project will become much more noticeable now that the work is not being done just underground.

4.7 Community Path Committee

The Community Path Committee has been taking part in the design element for the underpass. Depending on how the tunnel is built, there may be some interruption to the trains for a few days. There was also discussion about the planning for a future meeting with the public to allow input on the design.

4.8 Financial Task Force II

The Financial Task Force II Committee discussed budget sheets. They will meet again on February 6th.

4.9 High School Traffic Working Group

There was not report from the High School Traffic Working Group.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

5.1 Consent Agenda

5.2 Personnel Items - None

5.3 Business Items – None

5.4 Approval of Minutes

January 21, 2020

On a motion offered by Amy Checkoway and seconded by Michael Crowley, it was **VOTED** unanimously to approve the minutes of December 10, 2020 as amended.

6. FUTURE BUSINESS

7. ENCLOSURES


Strategic Plan

School Committee Goals

Model UN Trip to New York

8. ADJOURN

At 8:29 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 
Andrea Prestwich, Secretary