

**BELMONT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES  
CHENERY MIDDLE SCHOOL COMMUNITY ROOM  
FEBRUARY 2, 2016**

Present: Ms. Laurie Slap, Chair  
Ms. Susan Burgess-Cox  
Mr. Thomas Caputo  
Ms. Elyse Shuster  
Mr. John Phelan, Superintendent  
Ms. Janice Darias, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction  
Mr. Anthony DiCologero, Director of Finance, Business, and Operations

Absent: Ms. Lisa Fiore, Secretary

1. **OPENING BUSINESS**

1.1 Call to order

Ms. Slap called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. She stated the School Committee would enter Executive Session at the conclusion of Open Session and would not return to Open Session.

1.2 Pledge of Allegiance

Ms. Slap led the Pledge of Allegiance.

1.3 Citizens' Concerns

There were no citizens' concerns.

1.4 Adjustments to the Agenda

Ms. Slap announced Superintendent Phelan would be providing an update on Kindergarten registration under Major Business, 3.4. She also stated the School Committee would vote on Town Meeting Article 3 authorizing the Town Moderator to appoint a building committee for the Belmont High School Building Project.

1.5 Chair's Report

Ms. Slap announced the MSBA had voted to move forward with the Belmont High School building project. She thanked Superintendent Phelan, Principal Richards, Mr. DiCologero and everyone involved in the work to put together the Statement Of Interest. She explained that the School Committee will be attending the Special Town Meeting on February 8<sup>th</sup> where there will be a vote to authorize the Town Moderator to appoint a building committee for the project.

Ms. Slap announced the last Social Emotional Learning (SEL) parent evening will take place on February 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Chenery Middle School. She thanked the Foundation for Belmont Education (FBE) for sponsoring the event. Ms. Slap reminded everyone that the FBE Gala will take place on March 19<sup>th</sup> at Belmont Hill School.

Ms. Slap announced Jennifer Page and Sara Oaklander who have coordinated that Meet Belmont Night for several years are looking for people to take over the project. She stated anyone who may be interested can email [meetbelmont@gmail.com](mailto:meetbelmont@gmail.com).

1.6 Student Representative Report

There was no Student Representative in attendance.

1.7 Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Phelan announced 33 artists from Belmont High School and Chenery Middle had their artwork selected for honors by the Boston Globe Scholastic Art Competition. Some of the artwork will be on display at the annual Scholastic Art Exhibit at Education First in Cambridge from March 5 – 20.

Superintendent Phelan offered congratulations to Becca Pizzi who completed the World Marathon Challenge. Becca ran a marathon on seven continents in seven days and won each of them. Superintendent Phelan invited everyone to attend the parade honoring Becca on February 4<sup>th</sup>. The parade will begin at Belmont High School and end at Belmont Savings Bank where she will receive an award.

Superintendent Phelan advised parents and the School Committee that the Administration is working closely with Belmont Fire Department and Belmont Police Department regarding the recent bomb threats that have been received at several schools in the area over the last few weeks.

2. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

There was no unfinished business.

3. **MAJOR BUSINESS**

3.1 Vote on BHS 2016-2017 Program of Studies – Exhibit A

Ms. Slap explained the School Committee is required to vote each year to approve the Belmont High School Program of Studies for the next school year. Members of the Leadership Team had presented the School Committee with the 2016-2017 Program of Studies at the last School Committee meeting.

Ms. Shuster asked that the changes in the High School math curriculum, particularly the Algebra 2 levels, be monitored and that the math department report back at some point next year to keep the School Committee apprised of observations and impact of the change.

Community member Kevin Cunningham addressed the School Committee with questions and comments about the changes being implemented to the Physical Education requirements and the phasing out of students' getting academic credit for outside PE activities (interscholastic sports or any other independent PE programs). He questioned whether we would see a fall in participation rates and fees in extracurricular activities if students have to take PE during school hours. The School Committee agreed to monitor this over the next year or two as the change is phase in.

On a motion offered by Ms. Shuster and seconded by Ms. Burgess-Cox, it was

**VOTED** 4-0-1 to approve the 2016-2017 Belmont High School Program of Studies – Exhibit A

### 3.2 FY16 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Update – Exhibit B

Mr. Tony DiCologero, Director of Business, Finance and Operations provided the School Committee with an overview of the FY16 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter budget. He stated the end of the year projection will show the Belmont Public Schools to have a \$58,000 deficit. Mr. DiCologero stated the district will continue to address this projected deficit during the second half of the year with the expectation of balancing the budget by the end of the fiscal year. He went on to update the School Committee on various budget projections such as tutoring costs which he expects will have a positive year end balance; Special Education tuition where he expects a year end deficit due to the increase in the level of services needed for out of district placements. Mr. DiCologero also explained he expects less spending on tutoring costs, and fringe benefits will have a positive year end balance while regular education transportation will have a year end deficit. He explained none of the budgets have been frozen but he has asked administrators to be vigilant when spending.

### 3.3 MSBA Decision/Update

Superintendent Phelan provided a brief timeline of what will take place in the near future regarding the Belmont High School Building Project. Once the Town Moderator appoints a Building Committee there are several other checkpoints that have to take place within 270 days. Town Meeting will vote in May to allocate funds for the next phase of the project.

### 3.4 Kindergarten Registration Update

Superintendent Phelan explained he had met with Technology Director, Steve Mazzola and Compliance Specialist, Christine Trischitta who helped develop an online registration system for Kindergarten. He explained that postcards will be mailed to parents with children entering Kindergarten in the fall of 2016. The postcards will explain the steps needed to register a Kindergarten student using the Belmont Public Schools online registration. Once a parent submits an email address they will get automatic email replies with next step instructions. The residency form and health form will be the only forms required to be submitted as hard copies at the school due to the confidential information they may contain.

3.5 Vote on Article 3 at Town Meeting

Ms. Slap explained the School Committee is asked to vote on Article 3 at the Special Town Meeting on February 8<sup>th</sup>.

On a motion offered by Mr. Caputo and seconded by Mr. Burgess-Cox, it was

**VOTED** 4-0-1 to recommend favorable action on Town Meeting Article 3.

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

4.1 Finance Subcommittee

There was no report from the Finance Subcommittee.

4.2 Policy and Procedure Subcommittee

There was no report from the Policy and Procedure Subcommittee.

4.3 Curriculum and Instruction Subcommittee

There was no report from the Curriculum and Instruction Subcommittee.

4.4 Capital Budget Committee

The Capital Budget Committee will meet on February 4<sup>th</sup> to discuss the high school building project.

4.5 Warrant Committee

The Warrant Committee met last week and will meet again tomorrow to review the Minuteman High School Article.

4.6 Wellington Building Committee

There was no report from the Wellington Building Committee.

4.7 Financial Task Force

There was no report from the Financial Task Force.

4.8 Community Path Update

Ms. Slap stated she spoke to Selectman Mark Paolillo and offered to serve as the School Committee liaison to the Community Path.

5. **OTHER BUSINESS**

5.1 Consent Agenda - none

5.2 Personnel Items - none

5.3 Business Items – None

5.4 Approval of Minutes

- o January 19, 2016

On a motion offered by Ms. Shuster and seconded by Mr. Caputo, it was

**VOTED** 4-0-1 to approve the minutes of January 19, 2016.

6. **FUTURE BUSINESS**

Upcoming Meetings:

February 8, 2016 - Cancelled  
Special Town Meeting  
CMS Auditorium – 7:00 p.m.

February 9, 2016  
Finance Subcommittee Meeting  
SAB Conference Room – 7:30 a.m.

February 12, 2016  
Finance Subcommittee Meeting  
SAB Conference Room – 7:30 a.m.

February 22, 2016  
School Committee Meeting  
CMS Large Community Room – 6:45 p.m.

February 22, 2016  
Special Town Meeting  
CMS Auditorium – 7:00 p.m.

February 23, 2016  
Finance Subcommittee Meeting  
SAB Conference Room – 7:30 a.m.

February 23, 2016  
School Committee Meeting  
CMS Large Community Room – 7:00 p.m.

February 24, 2016  
School Committee and Warrant Committee Joint Meeting  
CMS Large Community Room – 7:30 p.m.

7. **ENCLOSURES**

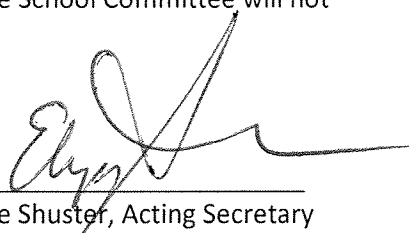
- o Strategic Plan

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

At 8:30 p.m. on a motion offered by Ms. Burgess-Cox and seconded by Ms. Shuster, it was

**VOTED** on a roll call vote 4-0-1 to enter Executive Session for the purpose of discussing strategy with respect to contract negotiations given that a discussion in Open Session may have a detrimental impact on the School Committee's bargaining position. The School Committee will not return to Open Session at the conclusion of Executive Session.

Respectfully submitted by

  
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Elyse Shuster, Acting Secretary