

WEYMOUTH SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Mary J. Livingstone Humanities Center

Weymouth High School

March 27, 2014

7:00 p.m.

MINUTES

The Weymouth School Committee met on March 27, 2014 in the Mary J. Livingstone Humanities Center at Weymouth High School. The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Chairperson Sean Guilfoyle with the following members present: Ms. Belmarsh, Mrs. Curran, Ms. Flemer, Mayor Kay, Mrs. Nardone, and Mrs. Sheehan. Also present were Superintendent Kenneth Salim and Assistant Superintendent Garry Pelletier. Assistant Superintendent Susan Kustka was not present.

The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Mr. Guilfoyle then asked for a moment in silence in memory of Victoria Silberstein's mother. He also included the injured and families of those lost in the recent tragic Boston fire.

Approval of Minutes

On motion of Ms. Flemer, seconded by Mrs. Sheehan, it was unanimously voted to table the minutes of the February 27, 2014 meeting of the Weymouth School Committee.

Student Advisory Committee

Matt Bryer and Sam DiBona came to the table and spoke about communications in school. The dress code has been a major topic during the past two weeks. The Student Advisory held a public hearing today and allowed public comment from the student body on dress code issues. The School Committee thanked Matt and Sam for a very professional presentation. Matt also spoke about WCAT as a new approach of communicating with students. A brief discussion followed. Sam concluded by summarizing the success of the Capstone Program.

Public Comment

Mr. Guilfoyle discussed the comments made recently regarding the dress code and that any comments be expressed thoughtfully. He also asked that each speaker state their name and address and all comments be made to the Chair.

Chris Primiano came to the table and stated that he would like to see tonight's turnout present every year during budget and Southfield discussions. He read a statement he had prepared concerning the budget process and its effect on our schools.

Talia Stokes came to the table and spoke about the flip flop issue. She responded to questions from the School Committee about other districts that have CTE programs and their dress code.

Amanda Flaherty, senior class president, came to the table and stated that the focus should be on education, not flip flops.

Lauren Crombie came to the table and stated that she has never dealt with a flip flop injury during her employment as an athletic trainer at Weymouth High School for the past four years.

Committee Announcements

- Mrs. Nardone commented on the absolutely wonderful Capstone Program this year. She was extremely proud and impressed.
- Ms. Belmarsh reported that the Weymouth High School Theatre was presenting "Cassandra" at Weymouth High School on Wednesday, April 2nd, at 7:00 p.m.
- Mr. Guilfoyle reported that he judged six projects on Tuesday and "truly loved" it! Capstone is here to stay.
- Mrs. Sheehan reported that SEPAC will meet at Adams Library on Tuesday, April 1, 2014 from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. The presentation will be "IEP for my Child" and all are invited. There will be a joint meeting with TWPC on Tuesday, April 8, 2014 in the Humanities Center.
- Ms. Flemer reported that the WEF quiz night is tomorrow, Friday, March 28, 2014.

At 7:45 p.m., on motion of Mrs. Sheehan, seconded by Ms. Flemer, it was unanimously voted to take the Report of the Sub-Committees out of order.

Reports of Sub-Committees

- Budget Sub-Committee

Ms. Belmarsh reported that Town Council voted favorably for the \$450,000 Supplemental Needs request. She thanked Mayor Kay and the Town Council. This will satisfy Net School Spending carry over deficit and provide more funding for immediate needs at all levels for the district. The proposed FY15 budget needs to be approved tonight for submission to the Mayor. The Mayor's deadline to submit a budget to Town Council is April 15, 2014. Ms. Belmarsh then gave an overview of the budget process. The School Department Budget to be submitted to the Mayor is in the amount of \$64,927,218. On motion of Ms. Belmarsh, seconded by Mrs. Curran, it was voted 6-0-1 to approve submitting this budget to the Mayor. Mayor Kay was the abstaining vote. On motion of Mrs. Sheehan, seconded by Ms. Flemer, it was unanimously voted to accept the report of the Budget Sub-Committee.
- Collective Bargaining Sub-Committee

Ms. Flemer reported that the sub-committee met on March 10th, March 18th and March 24th with SEIU Local 888. They are next scheduled to meet on April 1st with Custodians and Food Service. The meetings have been very productive. On motion of Mrs. Sheehan, seconded by Ms. Belmarsh, it was unanimous voted to accept the report of the Collective Bargaining Sub-Committee. Ms. Flemer asked Mr. Guilfoyle if there was an executive session scheduled for this evening and Mr. Guilfoyle reported affirmatively.

- Policy Review Sub-Committee

Mrs. Sheehan distributed documents to the Committee members and discussed the sub-committee's process at a recent meeting regarding the "flip flop" issue. She also detailed the changes and details of the "Standards of Dress" policy and the discussion and votes during the meeting. There being no further discussion, on motion of Ms. Flemer, seconded by Mayor Kay, it was unanimously voted to accept the report of the Policy Review Sub-Committee.

o Discussion of Standards of Dress Policy

Mrs. Sheehan then presented changes to the district portion of the Weymouth Public Schools handbook policy on "Standards of Dress." A discussion followed regarding specific changes to items of clothing relative to the policy. It was noted that there needs to be clarification on "what is a flip flop?" Mrs. Sheehan referred to a packet of information from the Town Dress Policy and asked if a vote could be taken next week after the information has been reviewed.

Mr. Guilfoyle then recognized Dr. Murphy who asked for a power point or information about tonight's presentation. Mrs. Sheehan referred him to Mrs. Mulcahy who had additional handouts.

Michelle Moran came to the table and expressed her concern about the policy being too broad and up for interpretation. She suggested language from another district's handbook that may be more appropriate.

Elizabeth, who is not a Weymouth Public Schools student, expressed her concern that students are not being heard and focus needs to be on MCAS scores.

Michaela recounted a very hot and humid day when the floors of the high school became very slippery and students were falling, not because they were wearing flip flops.

Talia Stokes returned to the table and reported on a survey of 167 in which 80% of students favored flip flops and asked that the student voice be acknowledged.

Amanda Flaherty also returned to the table with the same concerns

Mayor Kay thanked the students for presenting on a subject that overshadowed the budget. She then had to leave the meeting due to another commitment.

Mr. Guilfoyle stated that there will not be another Capstone project presented to the School Committee on this subject. He referred to MGL, Ch. 71, s. 83-86, which dictates what students can and cannot wear to school. He thanked the Student Advisory for their presentation.

Mrs. Sheehan asked Mrs. Moran if she would email the information she reported on from other districts to her.

Report of the Superintendent

- Correspondence

- Dr. Salim reported that MMSI, a nationally recognized organization, will be working with the Weymouth Public Schools providing direct support for teachers and students in mathematics. They have been very successful in assisting other districts. A representative from MMSI will be at the next School Committee meeting to describe the programs.
- Dr. Salim reported that the State House Ways and Means has increased local aid by \$25,000,000. Weymouth will be the recipient of some of those funds.
- Dr. Salim reported that MASC continues to support the increase in Chapter 70 aid to \$100.00 per student from the current \$25.00 per student.

At this point, 8:35 p.m., Mr. Guilfoyle stepped out of the meeting, returning at 8:39 p.m.

- Dr. Salim reported that Ed Gerety was the keynote speaker at Parent University on March 20th and was well received. He thanked Garry Pelletier and Laurie Hansen for all their work.
- Dr. Salim reported that it was a pleasure to be a judge at the Capstone Fair. He said he was very impressed with the caliber and sophistication of the research that went into the projects. He congratulated the seniors, Capstone Advisors and Weymouth High School team.
- Dr. Salim reported that three students from the Chapman Middle School Campus were recognized in the Will McDonough Boston Globe Sports Museum State Wide Writers Contest. Nicole Cook and Stephen Hardy received Honorable Mention and Same Edge received second place in the region out of thousands of entries. He congratulated them and their English teacher Will Dreyfus.

- Southfield Discussion

Dr. Salim reported that the Town Council met earlier in the week and discussed financial projections. Research is also being conducted about the possible use of portable classrooms.

Report on Teaching and Learning

- Professional Learning Communities in WPS

Dr. Salim invited Jean McLean, Principal of Wessagusset Primary School, and Jennifer Curtis Whipple, Principal of Academy Avenue School, to the table. They were joined by teachers Joyce Ellis, Erin Diamond, Colleen Taylor, Erin Young, and Heike Tuplin to speak about District Strategic Levers and Professional Learning Communities (PLC's) in the Weymouth Public Schools. They gave an overview of student learning and student achievement and the collective responsibility when teachers collaborate.

At 8:58 p.m., during this discussion, Mrs. Nardone left the meeting.

They described their approach and Dr. Whipple referred to a book called "Teach Like a Champion" she uses to guide them in their techniques. Both principals believe that PLC's is a practice that needs to continue. It is important that this program be built into the budget. A discussion followed with members of the School Committee and the schools success in making PLC's work. Dr. Salim concluded by reporting that Instructional Rounds were scheduled at Wessagusset Primary School tomorrow and they were being joined by the Superintendent and two other administrators from Abington to observe how it is being done in Weymouth. Mr. Pelletier also commended the staff for their work and the amazing transformation taking place in the schools. A brief discussion followed.

Discussion Items

- Proposed 2014-2015 School Year Calendar
Mr. Pelletier spoke about critical and required topics to be addressed on Professional Development days in the 2014-2015 school year. All Professional Development days are scheduled for Tuesdays throughout the year. A brief discussion followed. On motion of Mrs. Sheehan, seconded by Ms. Flemer, it was unanimously voted to approve the proposed 2014-2015 school year calendar.
- Chapman Facilities
Dr. Salim reported that discussion is continuing with Mayor Kay and her staff regarding a possible feasibility study. Mayor Kay has reached out to the MSBA to get a better understanding of the process.

Action Items

- Bills Paid
On motion of Mrs. Sheehan, seconded by Ms. Flemer, it was unanimously voted to pay the bills on Warrant #40-2014 in the amount of \$773,267.49 with money to pay.
- Approval of FT2015 School Department Budget
This item was voted earlier in the meeting under Report of the Budget Sub-Committee.
- Approval of Job Description for Manager of Data and Assessment Strategy
and
- Approval of Job Description for K-12 Music Director
Mr. Guilfoyle asked if approval of the job descriptions could be postponed until the next meeting. Dr. Salim expressed his concern relative to the timing for posting the position for the Manager of Data and Assessment Strategy. A discussion followed about funding the position and reasons for not replacing the position of Grants Manager. Dr. Salim will provide information regarding the salary range. Discussion continued about the Human Resources position, its funding and the recommendation made by MASBO. On motion of Mrs. Sheehan, seconded by Mrs. Curran, it was unanimously voted to table discussion about both job descriptions until the next meeting of the School Committee.

New Business

- Mrs. Sheehan asked about the number of fifth grade students in instrumental classes. Mr. Pelletier responded that he received the information late this afternoon and will report back on the blog.
- Mrs. Sheehan asked if all schools have lotteries for the all day kindergarten program. Mr. Pelletier explained that only Hamilton and Academy Avenue have lotteries and a brief discussion followed.
- Mrs. Sheehan thanked Dr. Salim for providing her with the list of Capstone Advisors but wanted to know their roles. Mr. Pelletier explained how they worked.
- Mrs. Sheehan asked if agenda material could be provided to the School Committee by the Tuesday before a meeting. Dr. Salim responded that it can be challenging, but will make every attempt to do so.
- Mrs. Sheehan asked when the Superintendent's Evaluation will be done and Mr. Guilfoyle responded that it would be at a workshop in April.
- Ms. Belmarsh reported that the athletic request from a couple of meetings ago was just received and will be made available as soon as possible.
- Mrs. Curran asked how families are contacted if there are kindergarten slots available. Mr. Pelletier responded.
- Mrs. Curran asked if the music staff met on the professional development day. Mr. Pelletier responded that he met with them for 2 hours on Wednesday and that the Vertical Articulation Team is scheduled to meet on May 2, 2014.
- Mrs. Curran also inquired about revolving accounts and Dr. Salim said he would be checking with Mr. McGonagle for his recommendations following the MASBO report.
- Mr. Guilfoyle spoke about the success of Parent University and the great things it offered. He said it was very impressive.

Executive Session

At 9:45 p.m., on motion of Ms. Flemer, seconded by Mrs. Sheehan, it was unanimously voted to go into Executive Session to conduct a strategy session in preparation for negotiations.

Next Meeting of the Weymouth School Committee

The Weymouth School Committee will next meet on April 10, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. in the Mary J. Livingstone Humanities Center at Weymouth High School.

At 10:12 p.m., on motion of Ms. Flemmer, seconded by Mrs. Curran , it was unanimously voted to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,

Diana R. Flemer – Secretary

Weymouth School Committee Meeting
March 27, 2014

Documents Related to Meeting and Retained at School Administration Building

- Agenda
- Minutes of February 27, 2014
- Professional Learning Communities Presentation
- WPS Standards of Dress district policy
- Proposed 2014-2015 School Year Calendar
- Warrant #40-2014
- Job Description for Manager of Data and Assessment Strategy
- Job Description for K-12 Music Director