

Millbury School Committee

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MILLBURY, MASS.

**Date:** February 28, 2018

**Meeting  
REGULAR SESSION  
Minutes**

**Present:** Mrs. Nietupski, Chairperson, Mr. Plante, Vice Chairperson, Mrs. Teixeira, Mr. Wilbur, Mrs. Vigneau, Nicholas Lazzaro, Student Council Representative, Mrs. Bennett, Millbury Jr./Sr. High School Principal, Mrs. Friedman, Principal Shaw Elementary School, Mr. Hall, Principal Elmwood Street School, Mr. Corey Burke, Assistant Principal Elmwood Street School, Mrs. Bellville, Director of Curriculum, Ms. Ryan, Office of Pupil Services, Mr. Bedard, Business Manager, and Mr. Myers, Superintendent of Schools

**Time:** 7:00 p.m.

**Location:** Millbury Jr. /Sr. High School Media Center

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Mrs. Nietupski opened the meeting at 7:05pm. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**FY2019 School Department Budget Hearing**

Mr. Christopher Naff, 86 Main Street, asked the School Committee how transfers from one line item to another are done. Mr. Naff asked how much the annual amount of transfers are each year. Mr. Bedard stated that the transfers happen at the end of each year when the books are closed which are approved by the School Committee. Mr. Bedard stated that the amount varies each year.

Mr. Ronald Bourdeau, 32 Autumn Gates, thanked the School Committee for the wonderful education they have provided Millbury students over the many years. He also stated how wonderful the Arts and Athletic programs at the high school are for students and hoped that they would continue. He stated that if the School Committee imposes fees on these activities we may lose student participated from average income families.

Mrs. Nietupski stated that a member from the Finance Committee asked if the School Committee has thought about charging fees to families for student participation in athletics. Mrs. Nietupski also stated that the School Committee cannot make this decision just because we are facing a fiscal crisis. Mrs. Nieptuski stated that the School Committee will include fees as one of their goals for next year and will hold public forums to see how the town feels about fees. She also stated that students are entitled to a free education and that means no fees.

Mr. Myers stated that in his original budget he had an additional art teacher and the restoration of a music teacher. The arts are a priority to us, however, we will not be adding any positions this year our focus is to do everything to protect the teaching positions in the District. He also stated that the School Department was looking for an increase of 5.22 and the Town Manager's increase was 1%. Mr. Myers stated that most of the increase included employee contractual increases, special education tuitions and transportation increases in which the School Department has no control over. Mr. Myers stated that the School Department will honor their signed contracts. He stated that in order to be able to honor these contracts will be through employee lay-offs.

Mr. Myers stated that the Town Manager contacted him and offered an increase of 2.51%. He also stated that when the Town Manager presented the increase of 2.51% at the Board of Selectman meeting; the Town Manger implied to the Board of Selectman that Mr. Myers was thrilled and/or enthusiastic with the increase from 1% to 2.51%. Mr. Myers stated that he was not thrilled or enthusiastic about the increase of 2.51%.

Mrs. Nietupski closed the public hearing.

### **1. Review and Approval of the Regular Session Minutes of February 14, 2018.**

Mrs. Nietupski asked for any changes, additions or deletions to the Regular Session Minutes of February 14, 2018. Mrs. Vigneau made a motion to approve the minutes from the February 14, 2018 meeting, seconded by Mrs. Teixeira. All approved (4-0-1).

### **2. Report of the Administration**

#### **a. Student Council Report**

Ethan McDuffie and Jenna Nasuti reported on the activities and upcoming events at the Millbury Jr. Sr. High School.

#### **Additional Item:**

The student drop-out rate in Millbury has dropped and is equal to Westborough Public Schools drop-out rate. The graduation rate is increasing steadily and outpacing our neighbors. Mr. Myers stated that the teachers from PreK-12 should be proud of their accomplishments. Mrs. Nietupski stated that Mr. Myers came to the Millbury Public Schools with a vision and he has communicated that vision to the staff and we are now seeing the results of that vision.

### **3. Budget**

#### **a. Approval of FY2019 Budget**

Mr. Myers stated that the Town Manager has increased our budget to 2.51%. Mr. Myers stated that the gap between 2.51% and 5.22% is very large and he would like to report ways in which the School Department and the Town could close some of the gap.

Mr. Bedard stated that he would like School Committee to consider the following ways to decrease the budget.

1. Eliminating the three new positions which is a savings of \$174,000. Mr. Bedard stated that there will be adjustments and sacrifices
2. Preschool school adjustment of \$10,000
3. Gates receipts will be used to offset the Athletic Budget.
4. Increase the Dorothy Manor budget by \$10,000 to help defray salaries.
5. High School Special Education teacher resigned (was on a long term leave: a long term sub had been hired to cover this position for the school year) this will decrease the budget by \$9,401 because the person that resigned was at higher step than the new person that will be hired to replace that position.
6. Retirement buyouts for \$5,000 will be paid out of this year's budget, therefore reduces FY2019 by \$5,000.
7. Reduce the General Teaching Supplies line from \$60,000 to \$50,000.
8. Propose to eliminate some video security budget for new purchases of security cameras for \$20,000, however some money will be available for repairs to existing cameras and to reduce the network and telecom budget of \$10,000
9. Eliminate Instructional Aides and ABA Technicians staying for four 1/2 day professional days reduction of \$12,662.

Mr. Bedard stated that after all those deductions it would bring us to an Increase of 3.9%.

Mr. Myers stated that the positions of two special education teachers and a preschool position has been eliminated, however one special education teacher possibly two must be filled so that 3.9% includes laying-off two positions.

Mr. Nieptuski stated she is concerned about the reduction to the security cameras. Mr. Bedard stated that he agreed the cameras are getting old but he believes we can get by another year. The revised number to vote on after the reductions is \$22,178,382.

Mr. Wilbur stated that he has a hard time voting 3.9% increase. He stated that it is inconceivable to believe that the Town Manger will agree to that increase after he has increased the budget to 2.51%. Mr. Myers stated that he agrees that the final increase will not be 3.9%. He stated that Chapter 70 Funds are still in influx and the numbers are still not available. He also stated that the School Department is considering other decreases, in which they are exploring. Mr. Bedard stated that the School Department is in the preliminary stage of looking at reducing the buses from 11 to 10. He stated that this has implications such as how many students will be on a bus, how long students are on a bus, and the pick-up times at the schools. He stated that the ridership is down from previous years, however, that could increase next year. A bus reduction would result in a \$70,000 savings. Mr. Bedard stated that a meeting with the teacher's union regarding different start times would have to take place. That reduction would bring the 3.9% down to 3.5%. Mr. Myers stated that if the Town Manager cannot increase the 2.51% he would have to consider laying off 5-6 staff members. A discussion regarding voting on 3.9% took place at this time. Mr. Wilbur made a motion to approve of \$22,068,695 which does not include the Medicaid number, seconded by Mr. Plante with the possibility of lowing this amount. All approved. (5-0).

**b. Medicaid Warrant Article**

Mr. Bedard stated that the Medicaid Warrant Article is for \$109,687. Mrs. Vigneau made a motion to approve the Medicaid Warrant Article, seconded by Mr. Plante. All approved (5-0).

**c. District Multi-Purpose Activity Bus Warrant**

Mr. Bedard stated there are three Warrant Articles. The District Multi-Purpose Activity Bus which would be used for small athletic team events or activities for all three schools. It is white bus and the cost is \$55,000. The savings if we purchase this bus has not been factored into the FY2019 budget. The second Warrant Article is for a pick-up truck for \$45,000 this is a maintenance truck that does plowing and snow removal and the final warrant article is the High School Outdoor Athletic Track Refurbishment for \$80,000.

Mr. Myers stated that the Town Manger had shared with him that he would approve one warrant article and that it should not exceed \$55,000.00. Mr. Myers stated that this would eliminate the track warrant article and that the track is in very bad shape. Mr. Myers stated that the Town Manager suggested we amend our language to state a either a Multi-Purpose Activity Bus or a Pick-up truck. Mr. Bedard stated that the School Department plows all the schools' driveways in the District. Mr. Myers stated that we pick up salt and sand from the Town and have used approximately \$2,000, however, we will be billed \$10,000 in the FY2019 budget. A discussion took place regarding which of the warrant articles to approve. Mr. Despres, explained how free cash is used. He also gave a recommendation on how or what to submit in warrant articles. Mr. Despres also stated that the Town Manager cannot guarantee a 2.51% increase without going against the

Board of Selectman's policy. Mr. Wilbur made a motion to approve two articles. The first article is either a truck or an activity bus and the second article is the track, seconded by Mrs. Teixeira.

Mr. Beard stated that according to Mass General law 30b the School Department can only negotiate a transportation contract for three years. He stated that at town meeting if a one-time vote could be taken which will allow the School Department the power to negotiate contracts for four or five years in order to get better prices and maybe more vendors would want to bid on our transportation contract.

**d. Town and School Capital Request**

Mr. Bedard stated that this was for informational purposes. He stated that he does not know what Mr. Marciello approved for capital requests.

**e. Elmwood Street School Solar Panel Project**

Mr. Bedard stated that the town planner is putting together Request for Proposals for land sites in the town or school that may have a potential areas for solar panels to help defray the cost of the town's utilities. Mr. Bedard stated that the embankment behind the Elmwood Street School may be a potential area for solar panels. Mr. Plante made a motion to approve the investigation of the embankment behind the Elmwood Street School to be used as a potential area for solar panels, seconded by Mr. Wilbur. All approved (5-0).

**f. Staples Grant to Shaw Elementary School**

Mrs. Friedman applied to the Staples Foundation for a \$500 grant in support of education and job skills program. Mr. Plante made a motion to accept \$500 grant from Staples Foundation, seconded by Mrs. Teixeira. All approved (5-0).

**4. Old Business**

**a. Master Plan**

Mrs. Vigneau stated that the Committee members are in the process of voting on the symbol for the surveys.

**b. Shaw Project Update**

Mr. Myers stated the OPM Selection Subcommittee interviewed the top four firms that responded to the Request for Services: Hill International, NV5, CMS (Construction Management Services), and Colliers International in open session. The OPM Subcommittee is scheduled to meet again on February 27 to select a finalist. The full Feasibility Committee will meet on March 7<sup>th</sup> to review the OPM selection process and meet representatives from the finalist's firm. After an OPM is hired, the building committee will move forward with a comprehensive feasibility study, including schematic designs based on the most feasible solution.

**c. School Committee Goals Update**

Mr. Myers stated that on his suggestion the School Committee set an ambitious first goal; The Shaw Building Project. He stated that this goal is behind and that the goal stated an OPM manager would be hired by early winter, however the OPM manager will now be hired in the early spring and hopefully a designer will be hired by the end of the school year and begin looking at the structure over the summer.

The second goal to Use Data Effectively is on schedule and the School Committee has received and been update on data from the District's coaches and Curriculum Coordinator.

The School Committee's Safety Goal to provide a safe environment for all students and adults. Mr. Myers also stated that the 3M tape that was applied to the windows at Elmwood has been applied to the high school windows.

Mr. Myers stated that once again the School Committee has made school choice a goal. At this time Millbury is not a school choice district, however, that does not mean a family in Millbury cannot opt to send their child to another district. A survey is going out to find out why these families are motivated to send their child to another district. The Committee will hear a report on the enrollment of our classes to determine if there is room to accommodate school choice students and what our neighbors are doing regarding school choice. The School Committee will hold a public forum regarding school choice at a future meeting.

**d. Proposed FY2018-2019 School Calendar**

Mrs. Teixeira stated that the commencement should be the Class of 2019. The starting date for students will be August 29, 2018. Mr. Myers stated that February and April breaks are on the calendar. He stated if there is no snow days next year the last day of school will be June 17, 2019. Kindergarten will begin on August 30, 2018 and Pre-school will begin on September 4, 2018. Mr. Wilbur made a motion to accept the FY2018-2019 school calendar, seconded by Mr. Plante. All approved (5-0).

**Additional Item:** Mr. Bourdeau asked if the \$6,000 donated by parents had been used towards the new athletic facility. Mr. Wilbur responded that the money was used to have the land surveyed at the high school, the Elmwood Street School and Windle Field by Gale Associates.

**Additional Item:** Mr. Myers stated that we narrowly avoided a tragedy when a car failed to stop for a stopped bus. If the bus driver was not paying attention and did not hit its horn the car would have hit a mother crossing the street with her child. Mr. Myers stated that the bus driver has been invited to the next meeting to receive our appreciation directly.

**5. New Business**

**6. Executive Session**

Mr. Nietupski asked for a vote to move into Executive Session, in accordance with MGL Chapter 30A Section 21 (A) 3, to investigate charges of criminal misconduct or to consider the filing of criminal charges.

Mrs. Teixeira – YES  
Mr. Plante – YES

Mrs. Vigneau – YES  
Mr. Wilbur - YES

Mrs. Nietupski – YES

**7. Adjourn**

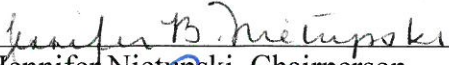
Mrs. Nietupski asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Plante made a motion to adjourn, and it was seconded by Mr. Wilbur. All approved (5-0)

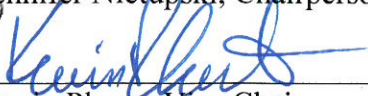
**Next Meeting:**

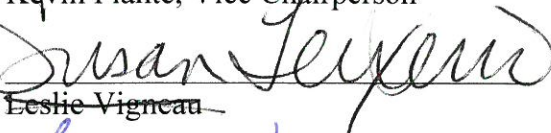
March 14, 2018– Millbury Jr. /Sr. High School Media Center at 7:00pm

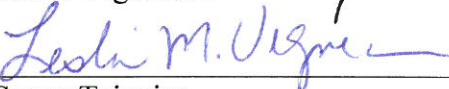
Respectfully submitted,  
*Donna Freitas*  
Donna Freitas  
Executive Assistant to the Superintendent

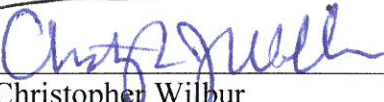
Approved:

  
Jennifer Nietupski, Chairperson

  
Kevin Plante, Vice Chairperson

  
~~Leslie Vigneau~~

  
Susan Teixeira

  
Christopher Wilbur

Items in Packet:

- Agenda
- Regular Minutes 2.14.2018
- Proposed FY2018-2019 School Calendar
- Memo- Student Activity Account Sub Account Listing
- Revolving Account Summary Sheet
- Bus Fees
- Athletic Fees
- RADAR Report
- MA Survey of Fees
- Athletic Fee Inquiry
- Superintendent Goals

Email

Superintendent's Comments