

Millbury School Committee

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MILLBURY, MASS.

Date: November 28, 2018

Meeting
REGULAR SESSION
Minutes

Present: Mrs. Nietupski, Chairperson, Mr. Wilbur, Vice Chairperson, Mrs. Vigneau, Mrs. Teixeira, Nicholas Lazzaro, Student Advisory Committee, Mrs. Bellville, Curriculum Coordinator, Ms. Ryan, Director of Pupil Services, Mr. Bedard, Business Manager, and Mr. Myers, Superintendent of Schools

Absent: Mrs. Lagerholm

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

Time: 7:00 pm

PUBLIC FORUM – ACTIVITY USER FEES

Mrs. Nietupski opened the Public Forum to discuss Activity User Fees. Mrs. Nietupski stated that last year during budget discussions the Chairperson of the Finance Committee asked the School Committee why families were not being charged user fees for activities in which their children participated. Mrs. Nietupski stated that the School Committee agreed to take the issue of activity fees under advisement. Mrs. Nietupski stated that the School Committee does not support charging activity fees, however they would like to get feedback from the community regarding this issue. Mrs. Nietupski stated that this was the first of two public forums regarding activity fees. Mrs. Nietupski stated that they would bring section c. Activity User Fees under the Report of the Administration.

Mr. Myers stated Shrewsbury Public Schools charge \$290 per child per sport with a family cap of \$870.00. They charge \$125 per student per activity and \$250 per student for bus fees. He stated that Shrewsbury is on the higher end of our neighbors that charge fees. Mr. Myers stated that depending on the zip code the higher the fees. Mrs. Nietupski stated that the state law does not allow towns to charge bus fees for students in K-6. Mr. Myers stated that Grafton does not charge for athletics or activities. They do charge \$200 per student to ride the bus. Mr. Myers stated that Auburn does not charge for athletics or activities but do charge \$100 per student to ride the bus. Mr. Myers stated that Sutton charges \$300 per sport per student with an individual student cap of \$750 and a family cap of \$1005. Sutton charges \$180 per student to ride the bus and \$75 to park. Mr. Myers stated that he was surprised to see how many schools did not charge fees including our nearest neighbors.

Pam Cristo asked how many students would be impacted by charging fees and what would be the net gain to the budget? She stated that as the President of the Millbury Parent's Club, her concern is fundraising and how they struggle to make \$40,000 to help offset costs of field trips and enrichment activity for the students. Mrs. Cristo stated that if activity fees are charged to families the Parent's Club will see a decline in their fundraising.

Ron Bourdeau stated that he agreed that charging activity user fees would impact fundraising done by the Millbury Music and Performing Arts. He also asked if user activity fees are implemented what and where the money would be used. He stated that athletic coaches make much more money than drama advisors.

Matt Friedman stated that Mr. Bourdeau numbers are incorrect. Mr. Friedman stated that there are no coaches that make \$8,000 in the district; he stated that \$8,000 could be for coaching multiple sports and seasons. Mr. Friedman also stated that the Athletic Director does not make that much for the year. He also stated that the athletic program should not be pitted against the drama and arts department. Mr. Friedman stated that the towns Millbury competes against do not charge fees. He also stated that after calculating the number of athletes that would be charged fees minus the free and reduced lunch students there would be a nominal financial gain which does not merit the issues that come with charging athletic user fees such as playing time per athlete.

Bob Ayotte, President of Millbury Youth Basketball stated that he hears from many families that they cannot pay the \$50.00 basketball fee. He stated that he is dead set against activity user fees.

Claudia Mimo stated that she has three children and asked if the activity user fees would include clubs such as game club, math club etc. Mrs. Nietupski stated that all clubs have adult leaders that receive a stipend the same as a coach.

Mary Taubert stated that sports and music in the Millbury Public Schools have been wonderful. She also stated that she hopes the School Committee does not vote for activity user fees.

John Piselli stated that he does not support activity user fees for students.

Bob Bachand stated that he does not support activity user fees for students.

Mr. Bedard stated that all employees are Town of Millbury employees so that the salary relating to a teacher or coach is for everything they do that they get paid for from the Town of Millbury. He stated that we have a coach that also substitute teaches that salary is a combination of both coaching and substitute teaching. Mr. Myers stated that all stipends have been negotiated with the Millbury Teacher's Association. Mrs. Nietupski stated that the stipends are aligned with teacher salaries so that the stipends stay current.

Kerry Luby stated that she does not support activity user fees for students.

Mrs. Nietupski stated that all though the implementation of Activity User Fees is a small amount of the budget in a few months the School Committee could be asked to eliminate \$150,000 from the budget which represents three teachers. She also stated that sometimes a decision must be made regarding if it's nice to have or it's a must to have. Mrs. Nietupski stated she believes that athletic, drama, and activity costs are the best money spent in the budget. She also stated that the Committee is not looking to support fees but looking to see if they have support in not implementing fees. It was asked if the School Committee would consider hiring a grant writer to pursue other ways of raising money to off-set the budget. Mr. Myers stated that he could look into a possibility of sharing a grant writer with another district.

Mr. Despres asked if there were any clubs that charged a fee. It was determined that a fee of \$125 was charged by the Ski Club for the students to ski at Mount Wachusett. Mr. Despres asked why it is okay to charge a fee for one club but not others. Mr. Bedard stated that the ski club does not use a regular school bus and part of the fee pays for a coach bus.

Mr. Mara stated that other districts have felt the angst of fees; lack of participation, unable to field teams, collection of fees, tracking fees, etc. He also stated that the athletic success is attributed to the fact that we appreciate our athletes and they do not have to pay fees.

Mrs. Nietupski closed the Open Forum.

1. Review and Approval of the Regular Session Minutes of November 14, 2018.

Mrs. Nietupski asked for any changes, additions or deletions, to the Regular Session Minutes of November 14, 2018. Mr. Wilbur stated that under Budget 4A change monthly to annually. Mr. Wilbur a motion to approve the minutes from the November 14, 2018 meeting with the correction, seconded by Mrs. Vigneau. All approved (4-0).

2. Review and Approval of the Executive Session Minutes of November 14, 2018.

Mrs. Nietupski stated that any changes, additions or deletions, to the Executive Session Minutes of November 14, 2018 must be made in Executive Session. Mr. Wilbur made a motion to approve the Executive Session minutes from the November 14, 2018 meeting, seconded by Mrs. Teixeira. All approved (4-0).

3. Report of the Administration

a. Student Council Report

Junior's Jena Taubert and Kamiren Warren updated the Committee on recent and upcoming events at the high school. The National Honor Society is fundraising on behalf of toys for tots by putting a little snowman on a stick and placing it in someone's yard. If you find a snowman on a stick in your yard; please make a donation to the National Honor Society for Toys for Tots. If anyone is interested in receiving a little snowman on a stick in their yard could contact Mrs. Pine at the Millbury Jr. /Sr. High School.

b. Southern Worcester County Educational Collaborative Quarterly Report

Mr. Myers reported that Southern Worcester County Education quarterly report can be accessed through the link in the packet. He stated that the report addresses the Collaborative accomplishments, success stories, and the status of the budget. Mr. Myers stated that being a member of a collaborative we can access professional development and specialized instruction for students at a vastly discounted rate.

c. Activity User Fees

Mr. Myers stated that user fees were discussed during the Open Forum. Mr. Myers stated that as a District one of Millbury's CORE values is *committed to an equity of access to all school programs and services for all students regardless of ability, age, gender or orientation*, therefore, if economic status should become a barrier for any student's access to a public school service we would have to revisit our CORE standards.

4. Budget

a. FY20 Budget Development Update

Mr. Bedard stated that the budget is being prepared by the Leadership Team. The Leadership Team have submitted their budgets and will meet individually with the Administrative Team. Mr. Bedard stated that the timeline for the budget is on target. Mr. Bedard stated that at the next meeting he would like to present an increase to the Pre-school tuition for the FY20 school year along with School Lunch costs.

Mr. Myers stated that they have been in communication with Mr. Marciello, Town Manager and Mr. Vanni, Finance Director for the town. He stated that the town side does not have hard number and are still in the estimation period.

Mr. Bedard confirmed that Mr. Wilbur is correct when he states that the budget process entails; building the budget from the bottom up and looking at the budget from the top on down to get to the percentage. Mr. Bedard stated that there are in-depth conversations with the Leadership Team. He also stated that supplies, materials and contractual services begin with a budget of \$0. Mr. Wilbur stated that because the Special Education budget will increase drastically during the discussions with the leadership team has there been conversations relating to the possibility of cutting positions to accommodate the Special Education increase. Mr. Bedard stated that the Leadership Team are exploring all possibilities including cutting positions.

Mr. Myers stated that Special Education increasing costs are a bill that must be paid and it is already included in the FY20 budget. He stated that the rest of the budget is level funding with the possibilities of cutting materials and supplies and eliminating positions.

Mr. Bedard stated that the District receives reimbursements from Circuit Breakers on last year's special education budget. He also stated if the special education cost has exceeded 25% of your last year's budget you can apply for extraordinary relief, which Ms. Ryan is in the process of applying.

5. Old Business

a. Shaw Building Project Update

Mr. Myers stated that the Public Forum has been rescheduled to December 4, 2018 at 6:30pm at the Shaw Elementary School's cafeteria. He stated that this would be a great opportunity for the public to express their views on the various options being consider for the Shaw Elementary School.

b. Master Plan Project Update

Mrs. Vigneau stated that the Committee has not had a meeting since her last report.

6. New Business

7. Executive Session

8. Adjourn

Mr. Wilbur made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mrs. Vigneau. All approved (4-0).

Next Meeting:

December 19, 2018 – Millbury Jr. /Sr. High School Media Center

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Freitas

Donna Freitas

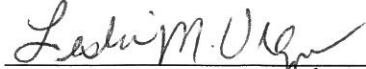
Executive Assistant to the Superintendent

Approved:

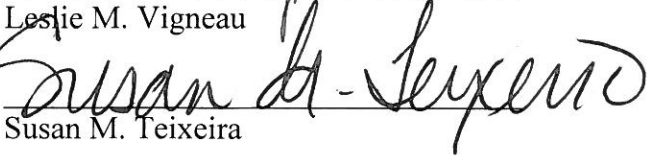
Jennifer B. Nietupski, Chairperson



Christopher J. Wilbur, Vice Chairperson



Leslie M. Vigneau



Susan M. Teixeira

Julia Lagerholm

Items in Packet:

Agenda

Regular Minutes 11/14/2018

Executive Minutes 11/14/2018