

Millbury School Committee Minutes

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MILLBURY, MASS.

Date: May 13, 2009
Present: Ms. Brady-Pojani, Chairperson, Mr. Thomas Clawson, Vice Chairperson, Mr. Corey, Mr. Borowski, Mrs. Vigneau, Mr. Spain, Town Manager, and Mrs. Hitchcock, Superintendent
Time: 7:00 pm
Location: Millbury High School Media Center

Approval of Regular Minutes

Ms. Brady-Pojani asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the April 15, 2009 meeting. Mr. Clawson made a motion and Mrs. Vigneau seconded the motion. All approved (5-0).

Ms. Brady-Pojani asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the April 22, 2009 meeting. Mr. Clawson made a motion and Mrs. Vigneau seconded the motion. All Approved (5-0).

Ms. Brady-Pojani asked for a motion to approve Executive Session minutes of the April 15, 2009 meeting. Mrs. Vigneau made a motion and Mr. Corey seconded the motion. All approved (5-0).

Discussion FY09 Budget

Mr. Spain stated that the fiscal 09 budget is short \$ 214,000.00 He stated that he is able to cover 80% of the \$214,000.00. He was able to do this by not filling empty positions at the Town Hall. He asked the School Committee to discuss this request and to get back to him because he would need to lay-off employees before July 1st. He stated that he is approximately \$54,000.00 short. He also asked the School Department to not prebuy supplies for FY10 and to turn back what ever money is left over to the town to help with the FY09 deficit. Mrs. Hitchcock stated that the School Department funded the pole at Windle Field, cut supply costs in December and denied conferences.

Mr. Spain stated he had appointed a full-time public access coordinator. This position is funded entirely through grants included benefits for several years. He stated that he would put the School Committee meetings on cable T.V, which something the public has been asking for.

He also stated that an internship could be formed for high school students or the Cable Access Club could be another option. He stated that training for students would be available and that other town events could be televised.

Report of the Administration

Mrs. Hitchcock stated that additional unforeseen costs have been added into FY09 budget. The cost includes advertisement fees for two positions Director of Curriculum and an ABA Supervisor, communication equipment, homeless transportation, and vehicle expenses.

School Calendar

Mrs. Hitchcock stated a vote was needed for the final 2009-2010 school calendar. She also stated that as there is no longer the possibility of furlough days those days have been replaced with professional development days. The calendar has teachers working 188 days and instructional days at 183 days. The first day of school for students will be August 31, 2009. Mr. Clawson made a motion to approve the 2009 – 2010 school calendar and Mrs. Vigneau seconded the motion. All approve (5-0). Mrs. Hitchcock stated that the last day of school is June 24, 2009 which includes five snow days. It will be a 1/2 day for students and a full day for teachers.

A discussion regarding School Choice took place. Mrs. Hitchcock recommended to the School Committee not to become a School Choice community. She stated that she had also been advised the same by our attorneys. Mr. Corey voted no because it's a town school and should be for Millbury children only and that there is not enough funding for our kids. Mr. Clawson voted no because of the same reason as Mr. Corey. Mr. Borowski voted no because the risk was not worth benefit. Mrs. Vigneau voted no in support of the Superintendent and because Millbury is too close to Worcester. Ms. Brady-Pojani voted no because she shared the same opinions as Mr. Corey, Mrs. Vigneau, and Mr. Borowski. Final vote was 5-0 to turn down School Choice.

Mrs. Hitchcock stated that Dr. Reese had accepted a position in another district and that he has given a ninety day notice. Mr. Clawson asked if we could do without this position for a year. Mrs. Hitchcock stated that it would be very difficult. She would have to assume writing the grants putting together Professional Development Days and doing analysis for MCAS data. Ms. Brady-Pojani asked if the position of Director of Curriculum and ABA Supervisor be combined. Mrs. Hitchcock stated that the ABA Supervisor writes specific programs and she oversees the aides. Not having a quality ABA Supervisor was one of the reasons some of the district students went into private placement. Mrs. Hitchcock stated that one of the out of district student's mother called and wants to have her child transition back into the school setting and this is due to having a quality ABA Supervisor.

Mrs. Hitchcock stated that a Principal had been selected for the R.E. Shaw School Ms. Jennifer Simanski. She stated that the Principal Search Committee had recommended three candidates. Mrs. Hitchcock stated that Ms. Simanski was extremely energetic. She was formerly a skilled Special Education teacher and is currently a principal. Ms. Simanski has accepted this position. The School Committee would like Mrs. Hitchcock to invite her to a meeting so that they could meet Ms. Simanski

Mrs. Hitchcock stated that the Curriculum Director Search Committee will be chaired by Mrs. Linda Swenson, Junior Senior High School Principal and that she was asking for a School Committee member to serve on this Committee. Mr. Corey volunteered to serve on the Curriculum Director Search Committee.

Mrs. Hitchcock stated that she would like to clarify a conversation that took place at the meeting with the Board of Selectman before the town meeting regarding the \$213,000.00 savings from the health benefit vote. She stated that at a previous meeting with Mr. Spain and Brian Turbitt she had taken handwritten notes and that Mr. Turbitt had given her the number of \$213,000.00. Mrs. Hitchcock specifically asked for this number because the staff needed to realize the savings that a vote to go with one provider would be.

Budget

Mrs. Hitchcock stated that it was necessary to rebid the playground ADA Upgrade Project for the Elmwood Street School and the Shaw School. She recommended to the School Committee to award the bid to Probuilt Construction. This project should be completed during the summer. Mr. Clawson made a motion to award the bid to Probuild Construction and Mr. Borowski seconded the motion. All approved (5-0).

Mrs. Hitchcock recommend to the School Committee to have a future agreement with the Board of Selectman to share the additional funds from the cherry sheet with the town in writing. There is a possibility that state aid to schools will be cut even more and that we may have to dip into the federal stabilization funds.

Ms. Uccello, President of the Parents' Club asked what a cherry sheet was. Mr. Clawson responded that a cherry sheet used to be pink. A list of funds that the state will give to towns with 30 – 40 categories is printed on the cherry sheet. To find more information regarding cherry sheets go to the DOE website revenue.

Ms. Uccello also asked about the students related arts schedule at the Shaw School due to elimination of positions. Mrs. Hitchcock stated that the scheduled had not been completed. She also asked what happened to the option for furlough days or a wage freeze. Mrs. Hitchcock stated that the furlough days or a wage freeze were discussed early on but the town would realize a greater savings the health benefits option. Ms. Uccello asked what the outcome of the conversation regarding activity fees and parking fees was. It was stated that activity fees would not be instituted this year due to the economy and putting another fee on families. Parking fees for students will be instituted for the school year 2009 – 2010.

Old Business

A discussion regarding the ownership and the responsibility of maintenance of Windle Field took place. A general consensus decided to keep the field and maintain the field under the School Department. It was stated that a long term plan must be formed to address the concern of funds needed to replace other poles. It was stated that a committee should be formed to address the long term maintenance required to upkeep Windle Field. It was also stated that at a previous meeting there were many people interested in serving on this committee.

Mrs. Hitchcock stated that a vote was needed to approve Mrs. Vigneau as the designee to sign payroll. Mr. Borowski made a motion and Mr. Clawson seconded the motion. All approved (5-0)

It was stated that the principals will be invited to the June 10th meeting to share their School Improvement Plans. Mrs. Swenson, principal of the Junior Senior high school will also bring a schedule showing low enrollment courses or the review process.

New Business

Mr. Borowski suggested that a discussion regarding the budget process take place. Ms. Brady-Pojani stated that it should go on the agenda as item 3.

Millbury Junior High School students gave their presentation on Wheelabrator Wind Turbine. The students were led by Mr. Sutphen and Mr. Hiller.

The next meeting will be on June 10, 2009 at 7:00 pm.

A meeting will be held June 23rd at 6:15 pm before the second Town Meeting.

The meeting was adjourned 8:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted

Donna Lane
School Committee Clerk

Approved:







