

**Millbury School Committee Meeting
REGULAR SESSION
Minutes**

Date: March 11, 2015

Present: Mrs. Nietupski, Chairperson,
Mrs. Vigneau, Mrs. Teixeira, Mrs. Harris-Keddy
Ms. Gianna Okuliczki, Student Advisory Council
Mr. Myers, Superintendent of Schools
Mr. Bedard, Business Manager
Mrs. Ryan, Director of Pupil Services
Mrs. Vasil, Principal, MHS

Absent: Mr. Plante, Vice Chairperson

Time: 7:00 p.m.

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

Mrs. Nietupski called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. Review and Approval of the February 25, 2015 Regular Session Meeting Minutes

Mrs. Nietupski asked for any changes, additions or deletions to the Regular Session Minutes of February 25, 2015. Mrs. Harris-Keddy made the motion to approve, seconded by Mrs. Teixeira. All in favor (4-0).

2. Report of the Administration

a. Recognition of Jenny Quan – 2014/2015 WCSA Annual Scholar Award

Mr. Myers introduced Millbury senior Jenny Quan as the recipient of the Superintendents' Scholars Award. Jenny represented Millbury at the Worcester County Superintendents Association Scholars' Luncheon held at the College of the Holy Cross in January. She has served as the President of the Class of 2015 throughout high school, is currently ranked first in her class with a GPA of 4.3, and is a College Board Advanced Placement Scholar. Jenny is the captain of the Millbury volleyball team and track and field team. In addition, Jenny is a member of the Superintendent's Advisory Council and was instrumental in developing and delivering professional development for teachers on how to use Twitter to enhance teaching and learning in the classroom. Jenny will attend Northeastern University next year as a business manager.

Senator Michael Moore presented Jenny with a State citation and Mr. Myers presented her with a certificate from the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents.

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b. Senator Michael Moore – Update on Budget

Mr. Myers invited Senator Moore to the podium to share recent developments on the state budget. Senator Moore noted two items of interest: the legislature has reduced funding in the state from \$25.00 to \$20.00 per student and the full day kindergarten program which the legislature implemented three or four years ago has been eliminated from the budget, which is a reduction of \$51,000 for the Town of Millbury. He noted that the Governor's budget includes a Chapter 70 increase of \$105 million, which will bring the Town of Millbury \$35,140 more in state aid this year. Senator Moore noted the House 1 Budget, which is the Governor's budget, lists the Circuit Breaker is funded at 253.4 million dollars and with the expected rising in costs for services under Circuit Breaker, he expects it will be level funded by the legislature. The McKinney Vento funding for homeless student transportation has been increased by 1 million dollars to \$8,350,000. A better indication including any increases made by the legislature should be made available by Memorial Day once the Senate and the House have completed their budget meetings.

Tax collection revenue over the next few months will be critical in determining where the budget stands.

Senator Moore questioned Mr. Myer's budget preference on either restoration of the kindergarten grant or an increase to \$25 per pupil. Mr. Myers expressed his preference is to retain both, but noted disappointment with the Governor's budget not supporting early education and that the increase in Chapter 70 funding and decrease in per pupil spending ends up in almost a wash. Mr. Bedard concurred that the loss of the \$51,000 in kindergarten funding is more of a loss to the district. Mrs. Nietupski stated that the recent mandates from the state regarding kindergarten assessments created a need for an increase of kindergarten aides in the local school budget. As the Chairman of the Committee on Higher Education, Senator Moore agreed that this creates a setback, as the consensus of the Committee is that a foundation of education is necessary by grade three.

Senator Moore spoke of an initiative in the State to review the formula for establishing foundation enrollment funding. The criticism is that the formula has not been reviewed for 15-20 years. The Commission is traveling the state holding public hearings in different school districts to look at factors determining the funding, in the hopes of creating a new formula or making necessary adjustments to the existing formula. He noted that Education Secretary Peyser is looking at holding public forums to discuss the possible implementation of the PARCC assessment. Also, recent legislation has been filed, of which Senator Moore is a cosponsor, dealing with unfunded mandates and creating a commission to see if too many mandates are being put on our cities and towns. Letters of support from the district are encouraged once the commission is formed.

c. Foundation Budget Review Commission Public Hearing

Mr. Myers stated the formula to determine the Foundation Budget has not been reviewed for some time. A focus group has been established and has been holding public hearings throughout the state to revise the Chapter 70 formula. Mr. Bedard testified at a recent hearing on two major deficiencies in the formula regarding health insurance costs for employees and retirees. He noted that Millbury payments for health insurance are currently 2 ½ times the amount allocated in the Foundation formula. The formula used for calculating net school spending does not include health insurance for retirees in every community. Millbury does include retirees' health insurance, and our Net School Spending calculation would be 6% less without these costs.

Mr. Bedard stated another deficiency in the formula was addressed at the hearing regarding Special Education enrollment. The current formula assumes that each district has 1% of their enrollment at out of district placements and 3.75% of in-district special education population. He noted that Millbury had 1.2% of students in out of district placements last year and 17.5% special education students were in-district. Findings from the Commission are due by the end of this year and will be in place by next year. Circuit breaker reimbursements have helped with the Special Education costs, but MASS is looking into the two categories to establish a figure based on actual enrollment and not on an assumption.

d. Gale Associates Presentation

Mr. Myers noted that the Committee was informed about one year ago that our athletic department was partnering with Gale Associates for a review of the adequacies and conditions of our outdoor athletic playing fields. Our Athletic Director Pat Mara along with Gale Associates Engineer, Peter Spanos, will provide an overview of their findings along with recommendations on how we might address those needs to be sure our students have adequate, safe, and competition ready field surfaces.

Mr. Mara started the presentation on behalf of Millbury Junior/Senior High School Athletic Department. He noted this proposal as a first step leading into a larger conversation as they move forward. Mr. Peter Spanos presented a PowerPoint presentation outlining student and community use of the fields over the past year. Room for growth includes an increase in middle school offerings and current interest to include lacrosse and tennis. The aerial shot of the high school field represents an atypical track in the shape of a "D" with the baseball field situated in the middle. Mr. Spanos noted that most modern high schools have an oval track measuring 400 meters with 6 lanes in the oval part and 8 lanes in the straightaway track. Millbury has 6 lanes in the straightaway and 5 lanes in the oval track, which restricts the ability to host meetings. Also, Millbury track and baseball season overlap creating scheduling difficulty. The football field is graded poorly and there are ponding issues.

Reasons cited why the athletic improvements are needed include:

- Baseball field is located within the track posing scheduling conflicts

- Track is only 5 lanes and restricts ability to run regional track events in a timely manner
- Non-symmetrical, non-uniform track layout has very tight radii and not likely/not suitable for hosting league/state meets
- Field is currently poorly drained, especially in the outfield/football field area
- Existing spectator seating is in extremely poor condition, not ADA compliant and may pose safety concerns to users.

Mr. Spanos noted other problems included the dug outs within the track are showing deterioration and that the storage area is also being used as the concession stand. The catch basin grates in the playing field are not safe and the current wood poles with flood lights are outdated.

The proposed improvements to the Athletic Facilities at the High School include:

- New track and synthetic, multi-purpose rectangular field located within the same footprint as the current facility
- New spectator seating to hold 1200 with pressbox
- New concessions/amenities building
- New athletic lighting system
- New softball field to the south
- New parking to the south

Mrs. Harris-Keddy publically stated that she was on the planning committee for the athletic field at the high school fifteen years ago, and they were required to follow state regulations pertaining to improvements. There was no funding for new lighting and any improvements had to be on the school campus and not extended to Windle Field.

The proposed improvements to Windle Field include:

- New baseball field with a full size rectangular field within the outfield using natural grass with irrigation and underdrain system
- New spectator seating
- New concessions/amenities building with press box on second level
- New athletic lighting system
- Parking improvements

There were about ten people in attendance from the Athletic Booster's Club.

Questions from those attending the meeting included:

Will the football team be allowed to use the baseball outfield for practice in the fall?

Mr. Mara said that the field will be used mostly for JV soccer and practice in the fall.

Will there be sufficient parking for the proposed 1200 seating?

Mr. Mara noted that the use of Orchard Street will still be used for parking along with the new front parking lot, and shuttle service from/to Windle Field is another option being considered.

What will the improvements cost?

Mr. Spanos stated that all proposed improvements will cost around 3 million, but big ticket items can be phased in over the years. Mr. Mara announced a school wide booster club for fundraising campaigns meet the first Tuesday of every month at 7:00 p.m. in the MHS media center and that anyone is welcome to attend.

What is the ongoing cost of maintenance of the athletic fields?

Mr. Spanos noted some of the proposed improvements are needed regardless of the proposal, including resurfacing the track. New grandstands are needed due to potential safety hazards and the artificial turf and energy efficient lighting will actually help cut maintenance and utility costs.

Mrs. Harris-Keddy questioned the continued use of the fields by the physical education department during the school day. Mr. Mara stated they currently use the fields and will continue to do so.

Will public sponsorships be allowed for funding any improvements?

Mrs. Nietupski stated the Policy Subcommittee is currently reviewing the policy to expand on what is currently allowed.

What is the list of priorities?

Mr. Mara stated that athletic playing surface for students is #1 and amenities is #2.

Has discussion taken place with anyone from the Millbury Lions' Club, who utilize Windle Field for their annual carnival?

Mr. Mara noted that they are in the process of opening up communication as they move forward.

Can funding from MSBA be used for the athletic field improvements?

Mr. Bedard noted that in order to get funding, a school building project has to be included.

Is there a committee formed for planning new school buildings?

Mrs. Nietupski stated the school and town have a joint finance committee to look at capital improvements for both sides of the budget at that a new R.E. Shaw School is on the list for 2019.

Mr. Myers thanked both Mr. Mara and Mr. Spanos for their collaboration and work on the proposal.

Mr. Myers expressed congratulations to the Millbury Girls' Basketball Team and to Coach Steven Reno for finishing their season 18-2. They went on to defeat Lunenburg in the Massachusetts district tournament, but lost to Tyngsboro in the semifinals.

Millbury Drama Club is presenting the play "South Pacific" with a show on Friday, March 6, and two shows on Saturday, March 7.

Mr. Myers extended special thanks to Sergeants Lewos and McFaul of the Millbury Police Department who partnered with Grafton's Sergeant Minardi and Sutton's School Resource Officer Green to provide ALICE practicum training at the Elmwood Street School for school faculty and staff. The same training has occurred at the Millbury Junior/Senior High School and will be done at the Shaw School this month. This will complete the first phase of the ALICE practicum training and there will be a second phase at the beginning of next school year. Mr. Myers noted the ALICE training has taken Millbury from having no plan to a leader in the area for disaster preparedness due largely to the generosity of the Millbury Police Department and their efforts.

Mr. Myers congratulated all five Millbury Destination Imagination teams for their participation in the regional tournament. All five teams made the top 3 in their categories. Three of our teams placed 1st and will be advancing to the state tournament. Mrs. Harris-Keddy noted there are 10 regions in Massachusetts with approximately 700 teams participating. First and second place winners of the state tournament go on to Knoxville, Tennessee, to participate in the global tournament, which is represented by 47 states and 27 countries.

3. Budget

4. Old Business

5. New Business

a. District Wellness Policy ADF – First Reading

Mrs. Nietupski stated there is a need for the District Wellness Policy to be approved prior to implementation. Mrs. Vigneau questioned if the following portion of the policy would prevent teachers from withholding recess from students as punishment.

- *Recess will be conducted at the principal's discretion. It is recommended that every effort should be made to assure that all elementary school students have at least 20 minutes of directed recess, preferably outdoors, where moderate to robust physical activity is supported.*
- *School personnel will not use physical activity (e.g. sit ups, push ups, running laps) or deny opportunities for physical education as punishment.*

Mr. Myers will discuss this section further with the principals and Policy Subcommittee and bring back to the Committee for a second reading.

6. Executive Session, if needed

7. Future Topics/Events

- a. **Articulation Agreements with Quinsigamond Community College**
- b. **Review and Acceptance of Section A of School Committee Policies**
- c. **Marching Band Presentation**
- d. **Humanities Scholars Program Presentation**

8. Next Meeting: March 25, 2015 – 7:00 p.m. – MHS Media Center

9. Adjourn

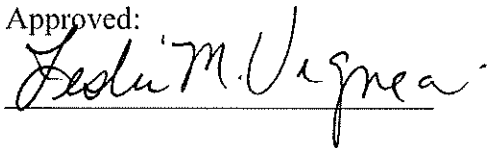
Mrs. Nietupski requested a motion to adjourn at 8:35p.m. Mrs. Harris-Keddy made the motion to adjourn, seconded by Mrs. Teixeira. All in favor (5-0).

Respectfully submitted,

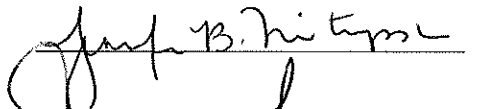
Sandra Femino

Executive Assistant to the Superintendent

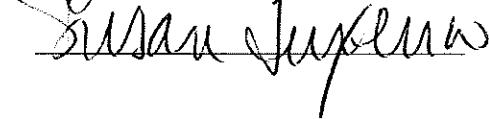
Approved:



Leslie M. Vignea



Joseph B. Nietupski



Susan Suprenant

Items in Packet:

Draft of Regular Session Minutes of 2/25/2015

Memo from R. Bedard dated 3/2/2015 re Mass. Foundation Budget Review Commission Public Hearing

Gale Associates PowerPoint presentation

Draft of Wellness Policy ADF