

**Millbury School Committee Meeting  
REGULAR SESSION  
Minutes**

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MILLBURY, MASS.

**Date:** April 13, 2016

**Present:** Mrs. Nietupski, Chairperson, Mr. Plante, Vice Chairperson  
Mrs. Vigneau, Mrs. Teixeira, Mr. Wilbur  
Ms. Gianna Okuliczki, Student Advisory Council  
Mr. Myers, Superintendent of Schools  
Mr. Bedard, Business Manager  
Mrs. Bellville, Director of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment  
Ms. Ryan, Director of Pupil Services

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

**Location:** Millbury Junior/Senior High School Media Center

Mrs. Nietupski called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**1. Review and Approval of the Regular Session Minutes of March 23, 2016 and the Executive Session Minutes of March 23, 2016**

Mrs. Nietupski asked for any changes, additions or deletions to the Regular Session Minutes of March 23, 2016. Mr. Wilbur made the motion to approve, seconded by Mrs. Vigneau. All in favor (4-0) (*Mr. Plante abstained from the vote.*)

Mrs. Nietupski noted any changes, additions or deletions to the Executive Session Minutes of March 23, 2016 will have to be made in Executive Session. Mrs. Teixeira made the motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Wilbur. All in favor (4-0) (*Mr. Plante abstained from the vote.*)

**2. Report of the Administration**

**a. Mentor Recognition**

Mr. Myers noted that the District was commended by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for our mentor program, making special note of the program's high quality content, thorough and supportive process, and exceptional mentors and mentor coordinators. Mrs. Bellville, who oversees the Mentor Program, introduced the mentors as there were presented with a gift from Mr. Myers and Mrs. Nietupski.

The District Mentors are:

**Elmwood Street School:**

Jen Kephart, Lead Mentor

Audra Brunell, Joan Bellerose, Melissa Finnegan, Carol Cooney, Patricia Cox, Cheri Heino

**Raymond E. Shaw School:**

Karla Belliveau, Lead Mentor

Brenda Platts, Pat Siimes, Coleen Thomas-Debari, Mike Tarka, Cathy Vangos, Joe Yaskis

**Millbury Jr./Sr. High School**

Mark Sutphen and Stephanie Delucia, Lead Mentors

Marisa Cote, Michelle Cranska, Melissa Dabney, Chris Degon, Ann Kach, Besian Kodra, Lauren May, Courtney Moran, Sherrie Morin, Sal Palano, Christine Slater, Sue Tarallo

**b. State Budget Update with Senator Moore**

Senator Moore shared budget information released from the House Ways and Means Committee for fiscal year 2017 as compared to the Governor's budget released in January. The House Ways and Means budget provides \$4.6 billion in Chapter 70 aid, representing an increase by \$95.8 million dollars over the FY2016 budget.

He informed the Committee of the recent bill passed by the Senate to enhance the Charter School reform act, which will require approval from school committees on all proposed charter schools. The main provision of the Senate bill ties the charter school cap lift to fully funding the state's foundation budget for all public schools, both charters and traditional schools. That's estimated to be an extra \$1.4 billion over a period of seven years. If the referendum passes, implementation will begin in 2019 and would be the first year of seven that would gradually implement the funding that was recommended by the Foundation Budget Review Commission.

Senator Moore announced the HWM budget provides an increase in Chapter 70 funding to \$55 per student from the Governor's budget of \$20 per student (an increase of \$35 per student).

The budget also provides an increase in total Circuit Breaker funding to \$276.6 million, an increase of five million dollars over the Governor's budget.

The budget will provide \$60 million in regional transportation aide and \$18.6 million for Kindergarten Expansion Grants.

An increase of \$83.5 million dollars for vocational equipment is also included in the budget to improve and expand technical education programs. Senator Moore requested will investigate if an amendment to the language will allow using this funding to expand the traditional K-12 program.

Senator Moore informed the Committee of an outside section of the budget that directs DESE and the Executive Office of Health and Human Services to work together to improve the direct certification process of enrolling students for the national school meals program. The study will evaluate current and alternative methods to determine current "free and reduced" eligible students and define them as "economically disadvantaged" students. This change will affect current Title I percentages.

The Senate's budget is expected to be released during the third week of May.

Senator Moore encouraged the Committee to vote in opposition to the ballot referendum of lifting the cap on charter schools, but to support the RISE Act. He noted that the ballot referendum does not address the RISE Act. The RISE Act will deem the Charter Schools with the same responsibilities as the traditional public schools in terms of "at risk" students and allow state funding to follow the student should they return to the public school setting.

**c. Initial Approval of Costa Rica Trip – April 2017 – Vote Required**

Mr. Kodra, Social Studies teacher at Millbury High School, addressed the Committee to request approval for a school-sponsored trip during April vacation in 2017 to Costa Rica. He explained the trip stemmed from interest in a trip other than Europe that is economical,



incorporating outdoor activities with exposure to the Sciences and Spanish language. There are currently 40 students enrolled for the trip, with the maximum at 45-46 students and 6-7 chaperones. The trip will be arranged through Educational First, which has been used widely in the area with much success. Tentative plans are to depart the Friday before April vacation and return on the Thursday of vacation week.

Mrs. Nietupski requested a motion to provide initial approval for the Costa Rica trip in April 2017. Mr. Plante made the motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Wilbur. All in favor (5-0). Final details will be made available to the Committee prior to the trip.

**d. The Shine Initiative**

Mr. Myers informed the Committee of the District winning a competitive grant in the amount of \$4,395 from the SHINE Initiative, which was created by directors and employees of Fidelity Bank based in Leominster to support mental wellness issues and support efforts to educate young people and shine the light on mental health education. He introduced the District's school psychologists Lauren May (Jr./Sr. High School), Tonia Alger (Shaw School) and Sarah Conlon (Elmwood Street School), who along with School Social Worker, Kerri Vokes, developed and submitted the grant.

The three school psychologists spoke about materials purchased from the grant including the Signs of Suicide (SOS) program for middle and high school students, coping toolboxes, stress thermometers and emWave technology devices being used throughout the District.

**e. Blackstone Valley Tech applications and acceptances for 2016-2017**

Mr. Myers provided information to the committee on applications and acceptances to Blackstone Valley Technical School. Fifty-five Millbury students applied to BVT this spring, of which 25 were accepted. Historical data was also provided which reflects an increase in acceptances over the past 3-4 years.

**3. Budget**

**a. Disposal of Surplus Equipment – Vote Required**

Mr. Bedard requested the Committee consider declaring three old GEM utility carts purchased in 2002 as surplus equipment since they have been taken out of service and have been used for spare and replacement parts for the two functioning GEM utility carts.

Mrs. Nietupski requested a motion to approve. Mrs. Vigneau made the motion, seconded by Mr. Wilbur. All in favor (5-0).

**b. FY2016 Expenditure Report**

Mr. Bedard provided a quarterly update on the FY2016 expenditures and spoke to any outstanding encumbrances or overages.

**4. Old Business**

**a. Policy Subcommittee Update**

Mrs. Teixeira updated the Committee on the March 24<sup>th</sup> meeting, which reviewed Section J Students, specifically student publications, bullying and fund raising. The next proposed meeting is set for May 12, 2016.

**b. Athletic Field Renovation Subcommittee Update**

Mr. Wilbur updated the Committee on field renovations. The Subcommittee has decided not to move the renovations forward into this year's budget process as there was not enough time to

fully educate the community. A smaller group has been working with Gale Associates to develop the Phase 2 plans and prepare next steps.

**c. Approval of FY2017 School Calendar – Vote Required**

Mr. Myers requested the Committee consider the proposed calendar provided in February, which reflects an August 24<sup>th</sup> start date and last day on June 9<sup>th</sup> (pending no snow dates). He recommended that the Committee consider adopting the calendar pending the ratification of the MTA contract.

Mrs. Nietupski requested a motion to approve the 2016-2017 school calendar pending ratification of the MTA contract. Mr. Plante made the motion to approve, seconded by Mrs. Teixeira. All in favor (5-0).

**5. New Business**

**a. School Attorney Review**

Mr. Myers noted that in keeping with policy BGD, the Committee may retain the attorney of its choice in order to address the legal needs of the District. Mr. Myers and Mr. Bedard noted it is good practice to review and make sure the firms are financially competitive and that we are receiving the best legal advice possible. Four proposals were received from Dupere Law Offices, Fletcher Tilton, Long & DiPietro, and Murphy, Hesse, Toomey & Lehane. After discussion, the Committee agreed to use the services of Fletcher Tilton and review on an annual basis for all non-Special Education legal services. Murphy, Hesse, Toomey & Lehane will continue to be used for all Special Education legal matters.

Mrs. Nietupski requested a motion to vote on approval of each firm separately.

Mr. Wilbur made the motion to approve the use of Fletcher Tilton for all of the District's non-Special Education legal services, seconded by Mr. Plante. All in favor (3-0). *Mrs. Vigneau and Mrs. Teixeira abstained from the vote.*

Mr. Wilbur made the motion to approve the use of Murphy, Hesse, Toomey & Lehane to continue with all of the District's Special Education legal services, seconded by Mr. Plante. All in favor (5-0).

**b. Consideration of Resolution against Lifting the Cap on Commonwealth Charter Schools**

Mrs. Nietupski requested the Committee's consideration of the Resolution against Lifting the Cap on Commonwealth Charter Schools. This is supported by the Massachusetts Association of School Committees. Senator Moore stated that the resolution has nothing to do with the RISE Act (Reform, Innovation, and Success in Education). It was agreed that an amendment to the resolution to support the RISE Act should preface the resolution and should it not be feasible, leave the cap where it is.

Mrs. Nietupski requested a motion to vote on support of the RISE Act (Reform, Innovation, and Success in Education). Mr. Plante made the motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Teixeira. All in favor (5-0).

Mrs. Nietupski requested a motion to send an amended resolution against lifting the cap on Commonwealth Charter Schools, but to preface it with support of the RISE Act.

Mr. Wilbur made the motion, seconded by Mr. Plante. All in favor (4-0). (*Mrs. Teixeira abstained from the vote.*)

A copy of the amended resolution will be sent to the Governor, Representative Frost, Senator Moore and the Chair of the House Ways and Means Committee.

**c. Change of SC Meeting Date of May 11, 2016**

Mr. Myers asked the Committee to consider changing the scheduled May 11<sup>th</sup> meeting date to avoid a conflict with an orientation as a new member of the Board of Trustees for the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. Mr. Myers will send a Doodle invitation to the members.

Mrs. Nietupski received an email from Tish Hayes of the Town Manager's office requesting the appointment of one School Committee member to serve on the Town Manager's search committee. Mrs. Nietupski recommended Mr. Myers be appointed as he will be working closely with the new manager. Mrs. Teixeira made the motion to approve Mr. Myers to the Town Manager's Search Committee, seconded by Mrs. Vigneau. All in favor (5-0).

**6. Executive Session (if needed)**

**7. Future Topics/Events**

- a. Acceptance of Donation from Aquarion Water Company (*anticipated 4/28/2016*)
- b. Promising Practices Breakfast Award Recipients (*anticipated 5/25/2016*)
- c. Annette Ellis, Lions Club Youth Speech Finalist (TBA)
- d. Webster Tuition Agreement – Annual Review (*anticipated 5/25/2016*)
- e. School Choice Vote (*anticipated 5/25/2016*)

**8. Next Meeting: April 13, 2016 – 7:00 p.m. Millbury Junior/Senior High School Media Center**

**9. Adjourn 8:30**

At 8:30 p.m., Mrs. Nietupski requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Wilbur made the motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Plante. All in favor (5-0).

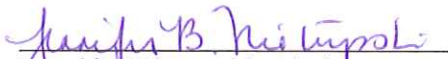
Respectfully submitted,

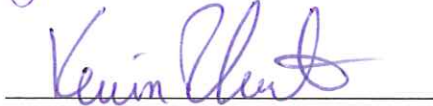
*Sandra Femino*

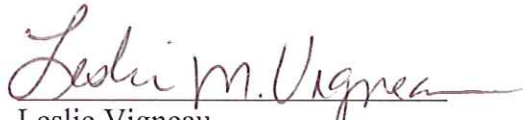
Sandra Femino

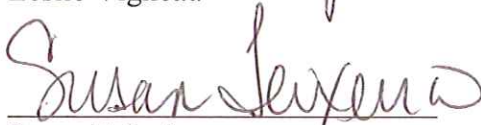
Executive Assistant to the Superintendent

Approved:

  
Jennifer Nietupski, Chairperson

  
Kevin Plante, Vice Chairperson

  
Leslie Vigneau

  
Susan Teixeira

  
Christopher Wilbur

Items in Packet:

Draft of March 23, 2016 Regular Session Meeting Minutes  
Draft of March 23, 2016 Executive Session Meeting Minutes  
MHS International Tour Proposal Information for Costa Rica Trip  
Memo from R Bedard dated 3/28/2016 Re: Disposal of Surplus Equipment  
FY2016 Expenditure Report (4/1/2016-4/30/2016)  
Draft of FY2017 School Calendar  
School Attorney Review Information  
Resolution against Lifting the Cap on Commonwealth Charter Schools  
Letter dated 4/6/2016 Re: Webster Tuition Agreement  
Letter dated 4/6/2016 Re: Thank you to J.Early, DA