

Millbury School Committee Meeting
REGULAR SESSION
Minutes

Date: December 14, 2011

Present: Mrs. Vigneau, Chairperson, Mr. Corey, Vice Chairperson, Mr. Plante, Mr. Clawson, Mrs. Nietupski, Mrs. Hitchcock, Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Bedard, Business Manager

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Location: Millbury Junior/Senior High School Media Center

Mrs. Vigneau called the Regular Session to order at 7:00 p.m.

1. Approval of the Regular Session Minutes of 11/30/11

Mrs. Vigneau asked for a motion to accept the Regular Session Minutes of November 30, 2011. Mr. Corey made a motion to accept and Mr. Plante seconded the motion. All in favor (5-0).

2. Report of the Administration

a. Student Council/Advisory Report

No members of the student council were present. Therefore, no report was given.

b. Technology Warrant Article Presentation

Mrs. Hitchcock introduced the committee to Robert Bellville, IT Director for Millbury Public Schools. Mr. Bellville addressed the technological needs of the district to include network servers for all three schools (including backups), firewalls and network switches. With the increasing demand on technology to support DESE mandated reports three times per year, emails, internet service and student assessments, the current equipment is being utilized to capacity. Mrs. Hitchcock proposed Phase One of replacing the district's equipment. The technology annual budget of \$30,000 per year is not enough to cover the conservative estimate of \$105,000 to cover Phase One. Mrs. Hitchcock indicated this will have to be addressed as a warrant article under the FY'13 budget. She praised the IT department for their efforts in repairs to the current equipment, but explained the need to update equipment in order to be compliant with the demands of DESE and daily usage requirements. Mrs. Hitchcock indicated that Phase Two is estimated to be in the \$175,000 to \$200,000 range.

Mr. Corey asked about the quality of equipment being purchased and the possibility of upgrades as we go forward under Phase One. Mr. Bellville supports the purchase of quality equipment in hopes of extending the average life beyond the expectant five years. Mrs. Vigneau asked if a vote was required at this time. Mrs. Hitchcock stated a vote will be required once the final budget is presented. Mr. Clawson asked Mr. Bellville about possibly leasing the equipment. Mr. Bellville stated it is something he can research.

c. Update on FY'12 State and Federal Grants

Mrs. Hitchcock provided an updated handout on the comparison of the FY'11 and FY'12 grants. The district withstood a loss of \$458,432 due to the reduction of ARRA funds in FY'12. The three ARRA grants in FY'11 were intended for one time only. The district utilized the funding for an additional preschool teacher, started a Classroom Imagine at Shaw including a teacher and a nurse. She indicated that once the ARRA funding ended, we were still obligated to fund these positions. The Ed Jobs Grant of \$238,478 was spread out over the two years, as recommended by the DESE. This allowed us to hire back two elementary teachers, a custodian and restore the Facilities Manager position to full time. The ARRA stabilization funding was given to Millbury because the district was not at net school spending. All other grants listed were held at the same level as FY'11. The loss of the ARRA federal money will result in some of these positions to be included in the local budget for FY'13.

Mrs. Hitchcock provided information to the committee from Tom Scott, Executive Director of MASS and Dave Tobin, from MASS School Finance on the growing costs of special education and its impact on school budgets. The study shows a state average increase in school budgets from 17.2 percent in 2001 to 20 percent in 2010. Mrs. Hitchcock noted the Special Education population in Millbury to be around 16-17 percent. Mrs. Hitchcock stated the importance of reviewing this information now in order to set the stage for the upcoming budget presentation. Mr. Clawson requested the localized cost of special education. Mrs. Hitchcock will get the information from DESE and noted it may be higher due to some of our out of district placements. Mr. Clawson concurred that it may even be higher than the 20 percent.

3. Budget

a. Requested Increases for FY'13 Lunch Rates and After-Care Tuition – Vote Required

Mr. Bedard informed the committee on the need to increase lunch rates for the next school year. School lunch at Elmwood and Shaw Schools will go from \$2.25 to \$2.35 and school lunch at Millbury Jr./Sr. High School will go from \$2.50 to \$2.60. The school lunch increase for 2011-2012 was 25 cents. This additional 10 cent increase in 2012-2013 is due to the costs of more fruits and vegetables on the menu, the need Under Healthy, Hungry-Free Kids Act of 2010 for school districts to gradually increase their paid lunch prices over time to meet the current Free Reimbursement Rate, which is currently \$2.82 per lunch, the increase in meat purchases due to less meat offerings from USDA commodities subsidy, a la carte items on the menu, increased labor costs, capital purchases needed at Elmwood Street School, and ongoing electricity costs.

Mr. Clawson requested information on how much of the school lunch revolving account is coming from the students themselves vs. federal and state subsidies. Mr. Bedard will provide this figure.

Mrs. Vigneau asked for a motion to increase the school lunch rates by 10 cents in the 2012-2013 school year. Mr. Clawson motioned to approve and Mr. Corey seconded the motion. All in favor (5-0).

Mr. Bedard referred to his memo on increasing the After-Care Tuition Rates effective September 2012 by \$2.00 per week. The rate at Elmwood Street School will go from \$41.00 per week to \$43.00 per week. The rate at Shaw School will go from \$46.00 per week to \$48.00 per week. This increase will help support the plan for additional part-time staff at both schools to check in people at the school entrances. Mrs. Hitchcock noted an increased awareness from the school principals on the lack of security in the buildings during after school hours. Mrs. Vigneau indicated she does not want to see tuition increases in the much needed program, but agrees on the security concerns. Mr. Corey questioned the breakdown costs provided for other districts. Mr. Bedard stated Millbury's proposed rates will still be below the \$63.00 average charged by surrounding districts. Mrs. Hitchcock indicated the need to implement these two positions after the holiday break for security reasons.

Mrs. Vigneau asked for a motion to increase the After-Care Tuition rates in the 2012-2013 school year. Mr. Plante made the motion to approve and Mr. Clawson seconded the motion. All in favor (5-0).

b. HVAC Annual Contract Service Bid Award – Vote Required

Mr. Bedard recently solicited bids for the HVAC services in the three schools to begin in January 2012. Three bids were received. Mr. Bedard recommended the contract be awarded to Renaud HVAC of Sutton, MA, in the amount of \$37,950. Renaud HVAC was the second lowest bid. However, the lowest bid did not meet the proximity requirement.

Mrs. Vigneau asked for a motion to approve the HVAC contract be awarded to Renaud HVAC in Sutton, MA. Mr. Corey motioned to approve and Mr. Plante seconded the motion. All in favor (5-0).

c. Update on Revolving Accounts

Mr. Bedard provided the committee with an update on all of the school revolving accounts. These accounts go from year to year and are designed for a specific purpose. He noted that funds under the Dorothy Manor Revolving Account will be used for paving the parking lot in the spring after soliciting bids. He noted the Athletic Revolving Account hedges up during the year but these funds will be used to cover expenses during the spring season. Mr. Bedard informed the committee that receipts from the Thanksgiving Game this past year totaled \$5,375 and is comparable to the past amount of \$5300. These funds stay local in the athletic account. Mrs. Vigneau questioned the Summer School revolving account and if we are losing money. Mr. Bedard stated receipts typically begin in June for that account and that we are not losing money on the program. Mrs. Hitchcock concurred and reminded the committee that there have been no increases in tuition for the well-attended program. Mr. Bedard also noted this past year

funds from the Summer School Revolving Account were utilized to offset the custodial costs for the program.

d. Vote to Accept a Donation of \$672 from the Millbury Federal Credit Union

Mrs. Hitchcock noted Millbury Federal Credit Union's generosity of \$672 donated from the Chain of Lights to the Millbury Public Schools. She noted these funds are distributed into student activities accounts between all three schools. A thank you letter to the Millbury Federal Credit Union was provided at the meeting for Mrs. Vigneau's signature.

Mrs. Vigneau asked for a motion to accept the \$672 donation from the Millbury Federal Credit Union. Mr. Corey made the motion and Mr. Plante seconded the motion. All in favor (5-0).

4. Old Business

Mrs. Vigneau requested the committee vote to approve the Regular Session Minutes of 12/14/11 and the Executive Session Minutes of 11/9/11 and 11/15/11 at the next Regular Session Meeting scheduled for January 11, 2012.

Mrs. Vigneau distributed an article from The Daily Millbury on the appointment of David Roach, former Superintendent of the Millbury Public Schools, to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education by Governor Deval Patrick. Mrs. Vigneau requested a letter be drafted congratulating Mr. Roach from the Millbury Public Schools on their behalf.

5. New Business

a. Superintendent's Evaluation

Mrs. Vigneau stated the committee is back on schedule for the purpose of evaluation of the Superintendent.

I. School Committee Relationships

Mrs. Nietupski – Excellent

- Mrs. Hitchcock provides timely reports to committee
- She keeps them well informed on district issues
- She is prepared on queries from the committee
- She spends a significant amount of personal time representing the district in town and in the state

Mr. Plante - Excellent

- Mrs. Hitchcock keeps the committee informed on happenings in the district
- She provided help with information requested on contract negotiations in a timely manner

Mr. Clawson - **Excellent**

- Mr. Clawson rated the Superintendent excellent in this category
- Stated the ground rules for five categories of the evaluation: **Marginal, Satisfactory, Fully Satisfactory, Excellent and Outstanding**

Mr. Corey – **Excellent**

- The Superintendent along with the committee has grown into their relationship in the past five years and she is doing a very good job

Mrs. Vigneau – **Excellent**

- The toughest category for her because when things are going smoothly she is a pleasure to work with but when they are not, she had a tendency to become defensive
- Wants to hear about things happening in all three schools and if an incident happens, she wants to hear about it from the Superintendent before hearing it in the grocery store

II. Relationship with Governmental Agencies

Mr. Plante – **Outstanding**

- Mrs. Hitchcock maintains full compliance with all reporting to the DESE
- She developed the Bullying Prevention Plan - which was outstanding
- She also works well with other department heads in the town

Mrs. Nietupski – **Excellent**

- Mrs. Hitchcock has prepared all our government documents on time and accurately
- Many grants have been applied for and received in a timely manner
- She has been very mindful of our fiscal constraints
- She was able to creatively redefine the reading tutor positions to bring in two fully licensed teachers to give us more highly qualified staff

Mr. Clawson – **Excellent**

Mr. Corey – **Excellent**

Mrs. Vigneau – **Excellent**

- The Superintendent has done an excellent job reporting to the different agencies in a very timely manner, and then reported back to the committee
- The Bullying Policy done by the Superintendent and the administrative team was recognized by the state as excellent
- The Superintendent has also worked well with the town manager and selectmen

III. Fiscal Management

Mrs. Nietupski - Outstanding

- Mrs. Hitchcock has continued to apply for all available grants – educational as well as others (*for example, the support of the Green Communities initiative*)
- She has anticipated changes in the Special Ed spending by setting budgets to handle increases in spending
- She has provided and managed clear information on budget development to maintain maximum professional and support staff in running an efficient school system

Mr. Plante – Outstanding

- Mrs. Hitchcock has managed to maintain our curriculum and shown improvements despite budget cutbacks
- By forgoing her own personal raise for past three years has set an example for the rest of the staff

Mr. Clawson - Excellent

- She has done a very good job in keeping expenses down in difficult fiscal times and, hopefully, she can continue that

Mr. Corey – Excellent

- She has done an outstanding job throughout the district with the tough balancing act on issues that continue to come across her desk every day

Mrs. Vigneau – Excellent

- The Superintendent is trying to give the Millbury students the best possible education they can get
- The Superintendent and the administrative team find ways of reaching our educational goals through tough financial times

IV. Personnel Management

Mr. Plante – Outstanding

- She continues to find “diamonds in the rough”
- She has had great hires in recent years including very strong principals and vice principals and an exceptional business manager

Mrs. Nietupski – Outstanding

- Mrs. Hitchcock has brought in two highly skilled administrators: the high school principal and curriculum director this year
- She oversaw the entire school district in implementing the New Employee Handbook, which the district was without
- She aligned the job duties of the clerical staff
- She provided the school committee with insightful suggestions during negotiations leading to two successfully completed contracts this year

Mr. Corey – **Excellent**

- The Superintendent does an excellent job in regard to hiring personnel
- The principals and teachers have a tremendous amount of respect for Mrs. Hitchcock

Mr. Clawson – **Excellent**

- She has done a very good job in handling the personnel management – the whole package of personnel management. In particular, the new hires including the Director of Curriculum, the High School Principal and Assistant Principal of the Junior High School

Mrs. Vigneau – **Excellent**

- Through difficulties with collective bargaining this year, the Superintendent has made great progress in becoming more comfortable in the role that she has been put into

V. Curriculum

Mr. Plante – **Excellent**

- The improved MCAS scores in Elmwood and Shaw Schools and achieving AYP shows the teachers and the Superintendent's hard work is paying off
- The College Board recognizing Millbury as one out of 366 districts nationwide for our AP course offerings and improvements

Mrs. Nietupski – **Outstanding**

- Mrs. Hitchcock, by redesigning the reading tutor positions, has continued to be on track to meet the goals of both Elmwood and Shaw meet expectations in MCAS testing
- She oversaw the pilot program of the Virtual High School at the high school and implemented the use of the system allowing our high school to offer students to take courses that as a small school system we might not otherwise be able to offer
- Award from The College Board due to the expansion and success of our AP program

Mr. Clawson - **Excellent**

- Concern is that now that the Superintendent has made the goal in AYP in the middle and elementary schools, we now have to address the problem at the high school, which, hopefully, will be rectified shortly

Mr. Corey – **Excellent**

- Made AYP at the Elementary and Middle Schools but fell off track at the high school this year attributed to a lot of changes and things that went on throughout the year that we have no control over
- Recognition of our AP courses was truly outstanding

Mrs. Vigneau – **Excellent**

- District Literacy Plan is in place and looking great

- Freshman Academy continues to strive
- Junior High School MCAS scores need to improve
- Great gains at the Elmwood and Shaw Schools
- AP recognition is great

VI. Building Report

Mrs. Nietupski - Outstanding

- Mrs. Hitchcock continued to evaluate and prioritize the maintenance projects of the entire school district providing detailed reports allowing decisions to be made by the school committee
- She successfully implemented a maintenance budget through grant acquisitions, for example, the Green Communities, the Electric contract, and obtaining paint from Ray's True Value

Mr. Plante -- Excellent

- Our cutbacks in recent years have been an ongoing issue again this year in maintenance, but the schools remain in great shape
- Implementation of the ADA doors at Shaw and overseeing and keeping the committee updated on the timeline
- Other building projects are being completed even with cutbacks in staff

Mr. Clawson -- Outstanding

- Superintendent's best area
- Facilities Manager and Business Manager have been able to keep the schools in excellent shape even with the decline in funding - this reflects well on the Superintendent and the district as a whole
- Concerned that we do have declining funding and we lost positions last year and the previous year and we have to work extremely hard to get those positions back because what we have now to work with will not be able to keep up with the demands in the future

Mr. Corey -- Outstanding

- ADA doors
- Continued concern for safety of the students does not go unnoticed
- School grounds look good for the amount of staffing that we have and that's a credit to the Superintendent

Mrs. Vigneau -- Outstanding

- Our buildings and fields look wonderful
- Very excited about the ADA doors and the Green Communities
- Concern on cutting back staff and keeping the excellent facilities that we have at the same time

Mrs. Hitchcock thanked the committee for recognizing the work of her team members. No superintendent does this work alone and feels we have assembled an excellent

leadership team including our assistant principals. The team has spent a great deal of time to be fiscally conservative, creative and making sure that our number one goal is the improved academic achievement of all students.

6. Executive Session

Mrs. Vigneau made a motion in accordance with Chapter 30A, Section 21 (a) (2) of the Massachusetts General Laws, the Millbury School Committee will vote to move into Executive Session for the purpose of conducting negotiations with non-union personnel. Roll Call: Mr. Plante – yes, Mr. Corey – yes, Mrs. Vigneau, yes, Mr. Clawson – yes, Mrs. Nietupski– yes. All in favor (5-0).

The committee moved into Executive Session at 7:58 p.m.

The Regular Session of the School Committee convened at 8:10 p.m. Mrs. Vigneau informed the public they have decided to go into negotiations for the purpose of extending the employment contract for the Superintendent.

Mrs. Hitchcock requested committee members to contact her if there are any questions on her report of 12/05/11.

Mrs. Vigneau noted the next Regular Session Meeting is scheduled for January 11, 2012. The Executive Session for the purpose of negotiations for the Superintendent's contract is scheduled for December 21, 2011 at 5:30 p.m. in the Superintendent's conference room.

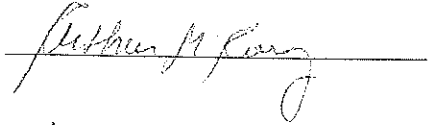
Mrs. Vigneau asked for a motion to adjourn the Regular Session of the School Committee at 8:15 p.m. Mr. Corey made the motion to adjourn and Mr. Plante seconded the motion. All in favor (5-0).

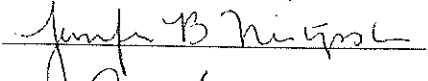
Respectfully submitted,

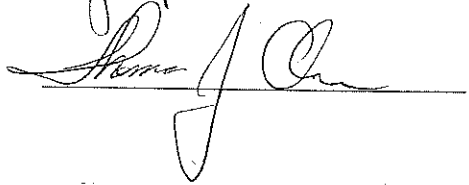
Sandra Femino
Executive Assistant to the Superintendent

Approved:









Items in Packet:

Regular Session Minutes of 11-30-11

FY'11 and FY'12 Grant Information Reported on End of Year Financial Report

Memo from R. Bedard dated 12-06-11 Re: FY'13 School Lunch Price Increase

Memo from R. Bedard dated 12-07-11 Re: After-Care After School Rates

Memo from R. Bedard dated 12-07-11 Re: HVAC Services Bid

Revolving Account Summary dated 11-30-11

Report of the Superintendent dated 12-05-11

Boston Globe Article, "Schools' costs top estimates of state" dated 11-27-11

Vacancy Postings (4)

Handout(s) at Meeting:

Email from T. Scott, MASS, Re: "Special Education Costs have Grown as a Portion of Total School Operating Budgets"