

DEDHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

MINUTES
September 4, 2019
(Approved 9/18/2019)

MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE PRESENT:

Kevin Coughlin, Chair
Lisa Laprade, Vice-Chair
Steve Bilafer
Mayanne Briggs
Joshua Donati
Dr. Melissa Pearrow
Tracey White

MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE ABSENT:

NONE

MEMBERS OF THE ADMINISTRATION PRESENT:

Michael Welch, Superintendent
Ian Kelly, Assistant Superintendent
Samuel Rippin, Assistant Superintendent for Business & Finance

Meeting Location: Avery School

Meeting commenced at 7:00 p.m.

Recognitions

The newly hired Administrative staff introduced themselves to the Committee and audience:

Oakdale School Principal Kim Hermes
Middle School Assistant Principal Brian Duffey
Special Education Elementary Team Leader Meghan Armstrong
Director of Fine Arts Eytan Wurman

Old/New Business

Discussion and Vote on Leasing of the Capen Building

Supt. Welch asked the Committee to approve leasing the Capen Building to the Blue Hills Education Program. Blue Hills Adult Education Director Susan Haberstroh, Blue Hills Adult Education Site Coordinator Tammy MacDonald and Adult ESOL Teacher Mary

Ann Sliwa were in attendance. Supt. Welch explained that Blue Hills Regional Technical High School is being renovated so there is no longer space for the Adult Education programs. The programs provide Adult ESL and HiSET classes. The classes run two days a week in the morning and evening. This would be a free service to Dedham's increasing ESL population. Due to the inactivity in the building since February it has been the subject of vandalism and break-ins. Having residents in the building would deter these actions and be an asset to the community. Supt. Welch held several meetings with Blue Hills Administrators to come up with an appropriate year to year lease that would cover the expenses of having the building open. Supt. Welch noted that abutters received a leaflet informing them of tonight's meeting.

Ms. White asked if Supt. Welch received any questions from the neighbors. He stated the administration had not received any inquiries.

Dr. Pearrow asked if other communities in the Blue Hills Regional School district will still be able access the adult programs. The representatives from Blue Hills stated they would.

Dr. Pearrow asked if the program could expand. Supt. Welch stated that at this time only six classrooms at on the first floor were being utilized. The plan is to start out small and see if any issues arise before there are talks of expanding.

Mr. Bilafer asked who is responsible for custodian duties. Supt. Welch stated the cost of cleaning, snow removal, and general maintenance will be covered by Blue Hills. The School Department will be responsible for mechanical failure. However, if any major damage occurs, the lease can be broken.

Ms. Laprade asked how many people the program will impact in Dedham. Supt. Welch stated about 50 to 60 adults will be enrolled. The representatives from Blues Hills stated there are about 1,000 people who need their GED and another 1,000 who are not proficient in the English language. They also stated they are tremendously grateful to Dedham for this opportunity.

Mr. Coughlin noted the Capen has been leased in the past.

Ms. White thanked Mary Ann Sliwa for all of her work in the community.

Mr. Coughlin asked if there were any comments from the public at this time.

James Maher, 22 Sherman Road, from the Manor Neighborhood Association asked for consideration to hold the association's ten meetings a year at the Capen School.

Ms. Briggs motioned to approve the Capen building lease agreement between the Dedham Public Schools and the Blue Hills Regional Technical School effective September 5, 2019 through August 31, 2023 with the option to end the lease on August 31, 2020, August 31, 2021, and August 31, 2022; Dr. Pearrow second, the committee voted 7-0 in favor.

Superintendent's Update

Yesterday marked the first official work day of the 2019-20 school year for all Unit A and Unit B educators, paraprofessionals and most other employees of the Dedham Public Schools. After the traditional opening assembly, the day was spent in job-alike and departmental groups in order to coordinate and better plan work for the year. Supt. Welch commended Dr. Ian Kelly, the K-12 Directors, and the Secondary Department Heads for their extensive planning in preparation for the day. Over 92% of the 1312 feedback comments rated the offerings at 3 or better on a 5-point scale. Feedback was submitted by over 320 attendees.

On August 27 Supt. Welch welcomed back all of the Leadership Team members. He had a very comprehensive meeting to orient everyone to the work performed over the summer.

On August 28 thirty new teachers were welcomed to the Dedham Public Schools at the New Teacher Orientation. This was a full day of training and work to help new educators to the district. Supt. Welch thanked Assistant Superintendent Dr. Ian Kelly and his K-12 Curriculum Coordinators Dr. Heather Smith and Dr. Linda Kobierski for their work in planning this event.

The District is still working to fill paraprofessional positions and looking for people interested in substitute teaching. Anyone interested can apply via the interactive recruitment link on our Dedham Public Schools Human Resource website.

Supt. Welch reported that he has completed the search for a District Communications and Community Engagement Coordinator. He announced the appointment of Sara Errickson to this important new post. She will begin getting to know the district and mapping out a comprehensive strategy in the days ahead.

The Unit A Negotiations process has proceeded to fact finding through the assignment of a mediator through the state's Department of Labor Relations. Supt. Welch anticipates an initial interaction with the fact finder within the next month, pending scheduling availability. The Administration hopes this will move the process to a speedy resolution.

Reports

School Committee Summer Retreat Review

The Committee held a two day retreat at the MIT Endicott House on August 13 and 14. The Committee discussed, deliberated and developed the following five goals:

Elementary School Facilities Plan

The School Committee will complete a Facilities Master Plan Update, using input gathered from public hearings and elementary school-based forums. The School Committee will work with the School Building Rehabilitation Committee (SBRC) to jointly submit a Statement of Interest (SOI) to the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) by February 2020. This submission will reflect the immediate need to address the renovation/replacement of the Oakdale, Greenlodge, and/or Riverdale elementary schools.

FY 2021 Budget Development

By January 2020 the Budget Subcommittee will conduct a thorough review of the FY2020 Budget and outline a fiscally responsible FY2021 Budget that addresses the increasingly complex programmatic needs of our students and the ongoing upkeep of our facilities. The final approved FY2021 Budget will support the learning of all students, the instructional and professional development of all educators, and the momentum to maintain a first class district.

Communications & Community Engagement

The School Committee will assist the Communications and Community Engagement Coordinator in organizing a series of unique communication outreach opportunities to inform and engage the community. These efforts will focus on increasing proactive and responsive messaging through outreach about the schools via presence at existing district and community events and a consistent media presence. This commitment will serve as an opportunity to solicit feedback about families' experiences in the District and help to inform our improvement efforts in the future.

Educational Equity

The School Committee will receive bi-monthly reports that analyze the equitable allocation of resources to support learning for all students and with a particular eye toward high needs and low incidence groups. These reports will evaluate any disproportionalities with regard to student engagement and success in academic and extracurricular experiences. This data will be used to make budgetary recommendations about future programming to support a more equitable climate for all students.

Avery/DMS/DHS Campus Circulation Safety Plan

The School Committee will evaluate the data and recommendations received from the 2019 VHB Circulation Study presented in spring 2020. Through a series of community input sessions, this information will be used to develop a comprehensive plan aimed at improving student/employee/staff/visitor safety and access throughout the Avery/DMS/DHS campus and surrounding neighborhoods. This plan will suggest a range of improvements that may require significant investment in local infrastructure upgrades and collaboration with additional Town of Dedham boards, departments, and committees.

Discussion and Vote of School Committee Goals

There was no further discussion from the Committee.

Ms. White motioned to accept the five School Committee goals as presented, Ms. Laprade second; the Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

Discussion and Vote of TEC Board Member

Ms. Briggs nominated Dr. Kelly to be the TEC Board member. No further discussion occurred.

Ms. White motioned to approve the nomination of Dr. Ian Kelly as the TEC (The Education Cooperative) board member, Ms. Briggs second; the Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

The Committee had some questions regarding the next meeting with VHB, the company performing the Traffic Study of the Avery, Middle School and High School campus. Mr. Rippin stated he would contact VHB again and get back to the Committee with a date. He is also working on compiling counts of student transportation data (including bus students, walkers, and bicyclists.) Ms. White inquired if there would be four data collections and would some results be available in early spring. Mr. Rippin stated yes to both questions.

Mr. Coughlin expressed his frustration with VHB for not responding sooner to a request for a meeting. Mr. Donati asked when the next community meeting would occur. Mr. Coughlin said this would be discussed at the subcommittee meeting with VHB. Ms White asked if there will still going to be three community meetings. Mr. Coughlin stated there would be.

The conversation turned to the construction of roads in Dedham which is affecting all forms of transportation to and from school. Mr. Rippin stated he will check DPW Director Joe Flanagan on when roads would be closed. Ms. Laprade and Ms. White both requested that information get out to parents when roads are closed around the schools.

Subcommittee Reports & Updates

Budget

Mr. Coughlin announced that September 15 is the last day to submit warrant articles for Fall Town Meeting. He would like to present a place holder to receive FY19 funds, reverted to the Town, back to the schools for retroactive Unit A pay. Mr. Coughlin wants to be ready if there is a contract settlement before the fall meeting.

Mr. Rippin announced the FY19 budget is closed and balanced. He thanked Accountant Lina Sun for all of her hard work to close out the year.

Mr. Rippin also announced that that he would like to put another article in place at Fall Town Meeting to receive the \$30,000 that was withheld from the FY20 budget designated for the technology department. Mr. Coughlin explained that these funds would be included in the article with the other Town reductions.

Equity and Inclusion Task Force

No new updates to report

Negotiations

Nothing further to report

Policy

No new updates to report

SBRC

The next SBRC meeting will be September 16. The final sign off on the ECEC by the Planning Board occurred on August 7. There is still work being done on pavers and planting. Ms. Briggs stated the Planning Board commended the SBRC and School Committee for getting the ECEC project done on time and under budget.

Minutes

Ms. Briggs motioned to approve the minutes from June 19, 2019, Mr. Donati second; the Committee voted 5-0 in favor. Mr. Bilafer and Ms. White abstained as they were not in attendance at the June 19 meeting.

Ms. Bilafer motioned to approve the minutes from June 5, 2019, Dr. Pearrow second; the Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

Ms. Bilafer motioned to approve the retreat minutes from August 14, 2019, Ms. Briggs second; the Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

Ms. Bilafer motioned to approve the retreat minutes from August 13, 2019, Ms. Laprade second; the Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

Additional Public comment

None

Donations

None

Acknowledgements and Announcements

Ms. Briggs announced the School Committee will have a booth at Dedham Day on Sunday, September 29. She thanked Ms. White for completing the application.

Supt. Welch announced that Athletic Director Steve Traister has been working with other districts in the Tri-Valley League on rearranging sporting activities to accommodate those counties who are dealing with a high risk of EEE.

Ms. Laprade announced there will be a community meeting on Monday, September 9 to discuss the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Dr. Pearrow announced that tomorrow is the first day of school.

Mr. Coughlin announced the need to enter Executive Session under Exemption 3, contract negotiations.

Ms. Briggs motioned to enter Executive Session under Exemption 3, contract negotiations; a roll call vote was taken:

Steve Bilafer - Yes

Mayanne Briggs- Yes

Joshua Donati- Yes

Dr. Melissa Pearrow- Yes

Tracey White- Yes

Lisa Laprade, Vice-Chair

Kevin Coughlin, Chair- Yes

Mr. Coughlin announced the Committee would not be returning to open session.

The open meeting ended at 8:15 p.m.