

HOPKINTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Thursday, February 3, 2011

Regular Meeting 7:15 PM

Middle School Library

MINUTES

School Committee Chair Rebecca Robak opened the regular meeting at 7:15 PM with the following present:

Members:

Ms. Rebecca Robak, Chair
Ms. Jean Bertschmann, Vice Chair
Mrs. Nancy Alvarez Burdick, Member (absent)
Mr. Richard de Mont, Member
Mr. Troy Mick, Member

Also Present:

Dr. John Phelan, Superintendent
Dr. Mary Colombo, Assistant Superintendent
Mr. Ralph Dumas, Director of Finance

I. Pledge of Allegiance

II. Executive Session

On a motion made by Mr. Mick, seconded by Mr. de Mont, the School Committee voted to enter into an Executive Session for the purpose of discussing collective bargaining with unit personnel. A roll call vote was taken:

Rebecca Robak, Chair - yes
Jean Bertschmann, Vice Chair - yes
Nancy Burdick, Member - yes
Richard de Mont, Member - yes
Troy Mick, Member - yes

The Committee discussed the nurse's contract negotiations.

On a motion made by Mr. Mick, seconded by Mr. de Mont, the School Committee voted to go out of Executive Session at 7:17 PM. A roll call vote was taken:

Rebecca Robak, Chair - yes
Jean Bertschmann, Vice Chair - yes
Nancy Burdick, Member - yes
Richard de Mont, Member - yes
Troy Mick, Member - yes

II. Recognitions/Presentations:

- The Hopkinton Education Foundation's Winter Gala will be held on Saturday, February 11, 2011, in Foxborough.
- The 2011 Boston Globe Scholastic Art Awards were awarded to 38 Hopkinton students: 9 students won a Gold Key Award; 11 students won Silver Key; and 18 students received Honorable Mention. Students were selected from a field of 11,000 entries in this year's competition. The artwork will be showcased at the Scholastic Art Exhibition in the State Transportation Building in Boston.
- The first anti-bullying presentation will be given on Monday at the High School.

III. Public Comments:

- Concern was expressed about redistricting and the effect it may have on home values.

(Voted to accept 6/23/11)

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- Concern about how missed days of school due to adverse weather conditions will be made up. Dr. Phelan reviewed the state requirements for making up missed days and stated that if days must be made up the school year will be extended in June.
- Concern about redistricting and request for more information on costs, challenges, plan for implementation and rationale for this education model.
- Suggestion to discuss different grade configurations at the proposed new school.
- Concern about redistricting and the socio-economic groups it may form, concern for the reduction in social connections among students, concern for students transitioning to middle school, and concern about the full financial impact to the town.

IV. Reports to the School Committee:

A. School Committee Chair Update

- New Elementary School Building Project – Ms. Robak reported that a meeting was held with the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) to confirm that all the documents and information submitted for the proposed new elementary school were in order. The Board of the MSBA will meet to review the information on February 9, 2011. The MSBA requires that funding approval be completed before the end of March. The Board of Selectmen issued a warrant for a Special Town Meeting to be held on Monday, March 21, 2011 and an election to approve funding will be held on Monday, March 28, 2011.

Ms. Robak reported that in response to the proposal to use Mr. Brian Main as the Owner's Project Manager (OPM) the MSBA requested additional support for Mr. Main be included. Mr. Main is now creating a proposal to use a firm on a consulting basis during the negotiations of the guaranteed maximum price and the prequalification of sub-bidders. Ms. Robak noted that even with the addition of this firm to support Mr. Main, there is still a considerable cost savings in using Mr. Main as the OPM. In addition, he has worked on numerous school and town building projects and brings valuable experience to the project.

- Communication Plan Update – Ms. Robak reported that the community forum which was held at Center School on Monday, January 31, 2011, was well attended. Ms. Bertschmann reported that the next forum will be held at 9:30 AM on February 11, 2011, at the Senior Center. A second community forum will be held at Center School on March 7, 2011. Office Hours will continue on Tuesday mornings at Colella's Supermarket and on Thursday nights prior to School Committee meetings. Ms. Bertschmann noted that the website is updated regularly. Dr. Colombo is compiling a list of resources on the benefits of longer grade spans for students.
- Districting Discussion – Ms. Robak noted that the decision to move to districting was made many years ago. This decision has been supported by succeeding School Committees and in recent months the current School Committee reaffirmed support for districting. Ms. Bertschmann stated that in 2005 approval was given by the town for a feasibility study for a neighborhood school.

Mr. Mick observed that this is an opportunity to share additional information about districting with the community to help voters make an informed choice. Mrs. Burdick stated she supports expending the additional effort that may be needed to ensure voter approval of the project. Mr. de Mont quoted from the document entitled Guidelines for the Public, which is issued with every School Committee agenda, and which says, "The Committee and each of its members must look to the future and to the needs of all people more than the average citizen finds necessary. This requires a comprehensive perspective and long-range planning in addition to attention to immediate problems." He noted that the School Committee must use collective, historical and current data to make decisions, and sometimes those decisions are controversial.

Ms. Robak stated that community feedback is important to the School Committee and cited the updating of the Strategic Plan and the search for a new superintendent as recent examples of community involvement. She stated community input will also be important during the process of districting.

Ms. Robak explained that there is little flexibility in modifying the grade levels at the proposed new school because the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) requires that the grade configuration be defined early in the approval process. She noted that the MSBA has approved the design for the proposed elementary school at Fruit Street to accommodate grades k – 5. Dr. Phelan stated that since the MSBA was restructured, the approval process for school building projects has been shortened considerably. He noted that the MSBA establishes the timeline for the project.

Dr. Phelan noted that the proposed new school provides district-wide solutions for problems at Hopkinton schools. Dr. Phelan stated that the MSBA required that the renovation of Center School be considered and the cost of those renovations be calculated. The MSBA concluded that renovating Center School was not a viable option. Mr. Mick noted that based on this decision by the MSBA, Hopkinton would not receive any reimbursement from the state for renovations to Center School. Dr. Phelan noted that in addition to being the most costly option, the renovation of Center School is constrained by the limitations of the site. There is not enough space on the site to expand the building and both the Hopkinton Police Department and the Hopkinton Fire Department have advised against increasing the size of the school on that site. Ms. Bertschmann noted that the identified cost of renovating Center School does not include the cost of relocating students for the months while renovations are completed. The unanimous consensus of the School Committee continues to be that the renovation of Center School is too costly and there are no solutions to the constraints of the site.

Ms. Robak stated that reimbursement funds from the MSBA are available now. She explained that the MSBA has indicated that if this project is not approved, the school district will be required to begin the whole process over again. There is no guarantee that reimbursement funds will be available or allocated for a new project. She noted that funds have already been invested in this project to get it to this point. Ms. Robak stated that the MSBA reimbursement applies to this project only and cannot be used at the school district's discretion.

B. Superintendent Update

- Snow Load on School Roofs - Dr. Phelan reported that because of the amount of snow recently received all the school roofs were inspected. He stated that Al Rogers, Director of Buildings and Grounds, and the Town Building Inspector concluded that all the school roofs are safe. Dr. Phelan stated that two contracting firms were hired to remove snow from the modular classrooms, and as a proactive measure pushed back the snow from the drains and the roof perimeters as needed.

V. New Business:

A. DG Jones International Invoices

- Invoice #2735A in the amount of \$9,500.00

On a motion made by Mr. Mick, seconded by Mr. de Mont, the School Committee voted to approve invoice #2735A in the amount of \$9,500.00 to DG Jones International.

Vote: Favor: 5 Oppose: 0 Abstain: 0 Absent: 0

- Invoice #2735B in the amount of \$6,000

On a motion made by Mr. Mick, seconded by Mr. de Mont, the School Committee voted to approve invoice #2735B in the amount of \$6,000.00 to DG Jones International.

Vote: Favor: 5 Oppose: 0 Abstain: 0 Absent: 0

- B. School Committee Policy: *JKAA* Physical Restraint of a Student – Dr. Colombo stated that this draft of the policy includes added detail taken from the law and the legal citations. This policy is necessary to comply with state regulations.
- C. School Committee Policy: *JIBC* Student Advisory Committee/Student Council Communication – Dr. Colombo reported that this policy creates a new practice in compliance with the law. The law states that the School Committee must meet at least every other month while school is in session with the High School Student Advisory Committee.
- D. School Committee Policy: Discussion of Decommission of the following policies: *ADA* Philosophy, *JLCCA* HIV/AIDS Attendance Policy, and *FE* Designer Selection Procedures

Dr. Colombo reported that the *ADA* Philosophy policy is no longer being used. By general consensus the School Committee supported posting this policy and the intent to decommission it.

Dr. Colombo stated that *JLCCA* HIV/AIDS Attendance Policy can be decommissioned as another Hopkinton School Committee Policy covers the universal precautions for blood borne pathogens. Dr. Colombo reported that both the district physician and the school nurse were contacted for their feedback and supported decommissioning this policy.

The *FE* Designer Selection Procedures Policy is used when the MSBA is not involved in a building project. The MSBA has its own process for designer selection. By general consensus the School Committee supported requesting the Building Committee review this policy.

On a motion made by Mrs. Burdick, seconded by Mr. de Mont, the School Committee voted to decommission Hopkinton School Committee Policy: *JLCCA* HIV/AIDS Attendance Policy.

Vote: Favor: 5 Oppose: Abstain: 0 Absent: 0

- E. Approval of Memorandum of Understanding, HTA Unit C – Mr. Mick reported that a Memorandum of Understanding was reached with the Hopkinton Teachers’ Association, Unit C. He stated that the agreement reached with the nurses is a one year contract and includes no cost of living increase and freezes STEPS. A one-time payment of \$1,050 is included.

On a motion made by Mr. Mick, seconded by Mr. de Mont, the School Committee voted to ratify the Memorandum of Understanding for the Hopkinton School Committee and the Hopkinton Teachers’ Association, Unit C for the duration of September 1, 2010, to August 31, 2011.

Vote: Favor: 5 Oppose: 0 Abstain: 0 Absent: 0

VI. Old Business:

- A. Superintendent Search – Ms. Bertschmann reported that the Screening Committee will hold their first meeting on Friday, February 4, 2011. Ms. Bertschmann stated that the applications received for the position of superintendent will be reviewed and a list of interview questions will be created in conjunction with New England School Development Council (NESDEC). The Screening Committee intends to make a final recommendation to the School Committee sometime in February. Ms. Bertschmann noted that information on the superintendent search is available on the district website.
- B. School Committee Policy: School Attendance *JEB* Requirements for School Attendance – Dr. Colombo reported that minimal changes were made since the last reading. She stated that Center School Principal Jennifer Parson and Dr. Esposito Balboni, Director of Student Services, have both reviewed the policy.

On a motion made by Ms. Bertschmann, seconded by Mr. Mick, the School Committee voted to adopt Hopkinton School Committee Policy *JEB* Requirements for Kindergarten or First Grade Entrance as amended.

Vote: Favor: 5 Oppose: 0 Abstain: 0 Absent: 0

C. School Committee Policy: *GBEBC* Gifts to Employees and School Committee – Ms. Bertschmann noted that the faculty will be contacted for feedback.

VII. Items by Consensus:

On a motion made by Mr. Mick, seconded by Mr. de Mont, the School Committee voted to approve items VII. B. - E., and VII. A. as amended.

Vote: Favor: 5 Oppose: 0 Abstain: 0 Absent: 0

IX. Adjournment

On a motion made by Mr. Mick, seconded by Mr. de Mont, the School Committee voted to adjourn the meeting.

Vote: Favor: 5 Oppose: 0 Abstain: 0 Absent: 0

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Robak, Chair
Jean Bertschmann, Vice Chair