

The Regular Meeting of the Brockton School Committee was held this evening in the George M. Romm Theatre at Brockton High School.

Present: Mayor Balzotti, Chair; Mr. Minichiello, Vice-Chair; Mr. Donegan, Mrs. Joyce, Mr. Carpenter, Mr. Sullivan, Mr. Healy

Absent: Mr. Robinson

Note: These minutes contain a summary of the meeting and list items that were under discussion.

Mayor Balzotti called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., followed by a salute to the flag.

Consent Agenda

Mayor Balzotti explained the purpose of the Consent Agenda, and asked if School Committee members wished to remove any items from it. Mr. Minichiello asked to remove *Agenda Item L, Enclosure #12*, Acceptance of Donation from Pajama Program and Scholastic Books.

Mr. Minichiello then moved the Superintendent's recommendation to approve the following remaining items on the Consent Agenda:

- Minutes of June 18, 2013 Regular School Committee Meeting
- Minutes of June 4, 2013 Regular School Committee Meeting
- Minutes of Public Hearing on Budget – June 18, 2013
- Minutes of Curriculum Subcommittee Meeting of June 4, 2013
- Minutes of June 17, 2013 Finance Subcommittee Meeting
- Minutes of June 17, 2013 Policy Subcommittee Meeting
- Minutes of Safety/Security/Transportation Subcommittee Meeting of June 17, 2013
- CSAB Minutes of May 18, 2013 Retreat and Monthly Meeting
- Notification of Personnel Appointments: Non-Certified
- Notification of Personnel Action: Leave of Absence, Resignations, Retirements
- Out-of-State Trip to Canobie Lake Park, Salem, NH – MS Summer Camp

Voted: to adopt recommendation, unanimous.

Mr. Minichiello acknowledged the generous donation from the Pajama Program and thanked Ms. Colleen Millett for the selecting the Brockton Schools as a recipient of this donation.

Mr. Minichiello then moved the Superintendent's recommendation to accept the donation of 5,000 books from the Pajama Program and Scholastics Books.

Voted: to adopt the recommendation; unanimous.

Superintendent's Report

Plouffe School Presentation

Mr. Jerome briefly reviewed, for the Committee, the process leading up to the Plouffe School trip to Washington D.C. in June of this year. He then asked Principal Nessralla to come forward. Ms. Nessralla introduced Mikayla McPharland, Alisha Darling, and Kelly Walsh, as instrumental in bringing the trip to fruition. As a thank you to the School Committee, Ms. Nessralla showed a slide show of the trip, and then presented the School Committee with a cake.

Ms. Nessralla said that she was pleased with the tour company and would use them again. Committee members gave positive feedback, with suggestions that fundraising opportunities need to be made available earlier in the school year, with more options to the students, so that more students will be able to take advantage of the opportunity.

Mrs. Joyce stated that as the School Committee, it is critical that they do their due diligence to ensure the safety of the students when considering a trip like this.

Update on Barrett Russell School Renovations

Mr. Jerome asked Mr. Michael Thomas, Executive Director of Operations, to speak to the School Committee about the progress of the renovations in preparation for opening the school in September.

Mr. Thomas extended an invitation to the Committee to visit the site at any time. He said the project is on schedule, almost all of the work has been completed in-house, with the exception of some of the plumbing work. He thanked the Board of Health, Fire, Police, Building Department, for “walking him through” what needed to be done to be sure the building will meet all codes.

- The finished cost is estimated at \$500,000; this cost will be split between two fiscal years
- Renovations/upgrades include carpeting, tile, walls, doors, bathrooms, air conditioning, heating, bells, alarms, smartboards, exterior brick work, parking lot expansion and repaving, removal of old playground equipment (with the consent of the Parks Department), fencing
- The new doors, exterior and interior, include the *new lock down safety features*. As an additional safety measure, a barrier has been built between the entry hallway and all classrooms, restricting all visitor access to classrooms, except through the office
- Furniture is expected to be delivered August 20th; staff should be able to enter the building probably the 3rd or 4th week in August

Mr. Jerome gave the following answers with regard to enrollment:

- A minimum of 10 classrooms will be filled, with the possibility of 12 if necessary; enrollment will be capped at 23 students per classroom in kindergarten, across the system. Three existing classrooms are moving to the site, which has helped to lower grade 1 numbers as well.
- With regard to a “year two” plan, it will be critical to develop a master plan with the new superintendent, he expects the enrollment in grades 2 and 3 to go up and this will need to be addressed.
- He would like to hold off on filling any additional classrooms; there is a possibility of creating preschool classes for which Brockton could receive state reimbursement.
- There are plans to provide an open house to give parents the opportunity to see the school, once the renovations are complete.

Mr. Minichiello stated that opening the building as a kindergarten/pre school center addresses one of the School Committee’s goals, lowering class size in the younger grades. He thanked Mr. Jerome and the staff for addressing this mandate.

Mrs. Joyce said that opening preschool classrooms would address another of the School Committee’s goals, to provide additional options for parents of early childhood, kindergarten-age children.

Mr. Carpenter commented that the opening of the Barrett Russell School is good for the neighborhood, good for the city, and the best option for the school system for the current year; he would still like to see kindergarten-age students going to their neighborhood schools in the future.

Items to Refer to Subcommittee

Mr. Minichiello said that a Finance Subcommittee meeting is necessary to discuss non-union personnel, and suggested August 13, 2013, at 6:00 p.m.; all were in agreement.

Mr. Minichiello asked the Committee to consider a date (or dates) for a *School Committee Retreat*. The third week in August was suggested. This will be discussed in the near future.

Unfinished Business

AMERESCO Presentation

Mr. Jerome invited Mr. Hal Meyer, and Attorney Jack Yunits, representing AMERESCO, to come forward to address the School Committee.

Mr. Meyer passed out an Energy Savings Performance Contract to each School Committee member. Atty. Yunits addressed the status of the contract, stating that the real issue is how to get the project funded. He said this is a 25A contract, not a Chapter 149 contract, which is what the school system has had trouble with at the high school. Atty. Yunits said that a waiver would be required from the DESE and he felt confident that Ameresco would be able to secure this waiver. He suggested that members could visit ongoing and completed projects that Ameresco has done for the Brockton Housing Authority. Atty. Yunits said that Ameresco is looking for approval from the School Committee to go forward with the contract.

Mayor Balzotti suggested that this matter be referred to a Facilities Subcommittee meeting before any action is taken. She said that the financial “climate” in the city has changed since Ameresco’s audit one year ago, the City has taken on the Green School Repairs project and there is still considerable debt, which must be taken into consideration. She felt it would be unfair for any vote to be taken by the School Committee without input from Mr. Condon, CFO for the City, as to financial considerations.

The Committee was in agreement that the project needs further discussion. Mr. Sullivan stated that he fully supports Ameresco, having seen the BHA project and the cost savings realized. Mr. Donegan asked to see project data from other areas in the state, possibly situations that have run into asbestos problems, in order to compare the actual costs. Atty. Yunits responded that they have no problem providing data, they want everyone to feel comfortable with the project.

Mr. Healy asked how much the audit would cost; Mr. Meyer responded approximately \$150,000 if Brockton chooses not to go ahead with the project. Mr. Meyer said that there would not be an additional cost to Brockton if they need to “re-audit” the buildings due to work that has been done in the past year.

Mr. Minichiello asked Ameresco to provide an amended proposal, or scope of project, for discussion at the upcoming subcommittee meeting, showing the proposed savings.

Mr. Carpenter asked for closure on the issue of the contract language around asbestos, that is still not quite resolved. He also asked, if we went forward with this project, would the work be completed with union labor? Mr. Meyer responded that they would be required to pay the prevailing wage but there is not a requirement as to who can perform the work.

Mr. Donegan made a motion to refer the matter to a Facilities Subcommittee Meeting, with the understanding that all School Committee members will be notified and will be able to participate.

Voted: to approve the motion, unanimous.

New Business

Approval of Contract with Superintendent Elect

Mr. Minichiello reported that the Superintendent’s Contract Subcommittee met with Superintendent Elect Kathleen Smith twice, on May 29, 2103 and June 27, 2013. At the June 27th

meeting the Subcommittee voted to favorably recommend the Employment Agreement dated June 26, 2013 that was presented at that meeting, to the School Committee for approval.

Mr. Minichiello then moved that the School Committee adopt and ratify the contract, as presented, between the Brockton Public Schools and Kathleen Smith.

Mr. Carpenter asked for clarification that the document up for a vote tonight is the same document that they reviewed at the June 27th meeting; Mr. Minichiello confirmed that it has not changed.

Voted: to adopt and ratify the contract, unanimous.

Appointment of BHS Principal

Mr. Minichiello congratulated and welcomed the newly appointed principal of Brockton High School, Ms. Sharon Wolder. Mr. Donegan said that he is pleased with the choice as well, having had the opportunity work with Ms. Wolder on the accreditation process.

Outgoing Interim Superintendent

Mayor Balzotti thanked Interim Superintendent John Jerome for the work he has done during his tenure. She stated that he has “kept us on the right path until we resolved the issues of hiring a Superintendent.” She expressed that he has done a tremendous job and, as she professed to the public when he was first appointed, under his leadership “the children of the Brockton schools would be well taken care of.”

The meeting adjourned at 8:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John R. Jerome, Secretary

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