

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

Present: Mayor Carpenter; Chair; Mr. Minichiello, Vice-Chair; Superintendent Smith, Secretary; Mr. Robinson, Mrs. Joyce, Mrs. Sullivan, Mr. Jordan, Mr. Henningson

Absent: Ms. Clark

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

Mayor Carpenter called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m., followed by a salute to the flag.

### **Hearing of Visitors**

Mayor Carpenter explained that during this portion of the meeting visitors who have signed up to speak can address the School Committee, comments will be taken under advisement but the School Committee is not required to respond. He asked speakers to limit their comments to under three minutes. Helen Virga, Elijah Romulus, Darline Justinvil, Myrria Lyncee, Matthew Cunningham, Kelsie Drown and Jesse Deveau, and Shoshannah Wilson all shared their concerns about the school department budget shortfall, specifically, the layoff of teachers. Mayor Carpenter commented that the very articulate students were a testament to the good teachers in the Brockton schools.

### **Consent Agenda**

Mayor Carpenter explained the purpose of the Consent Agenda, and asked if School Committee members wished to remove any items from it. Mrs. Sullivan requested that Item F, April 9 CSAB Minutes, be removed for discussion.

**Mr. Robinson then moved the Superintendent's recommendation to approve the following items on the Consent Agenda.**

- *May 6, 2014 Regular School Committee Meeting Minutes*
- *April 29, 2014 Policy Subcommittee Meeting Report*
- *April 29, 2014 Finance Subcommittee Meeting Report*
- *May 8, 2014 Finance Subcommittee Meeting Report*
- *May 13, 2014 Finance Subcommittee Meeting Report*
- *Brookfield School Gr. 5 to Canobie Lake Park in Salem, NH*
- *George School Gr. 5 to Canobie Lake Park in Salem, NH*
- *West Middle School Gr. 8 to Canobie Lake Park in Salem, NH*
- *Hancock School gr. 5 to Canobie Lake Park in Salem, NH*
- *BHS JROTC Cadet Leadership Camp June 23 – 27, 2014, Ft. Devens, MA*
- *BHS JROTC June 14 – 20, 2014 @ Stonehill College, Easton, MA*
- *Goddard School Field Trip to Boston Common Swan Boats*
- *Authorization to Submit: QRIS 2014 Program Quality Improvement Grant*
- *April, 2014 Chief Supervisor Of Attendance Report*
- *Notification of Personnel Appointments: Certified and/or Non-Certified*
- *Notification of Personnel Actions: Leaves of Absence, Resignations, Retirements*

Voted: to adopt the recommendation, unanimous.

With respect to Item F, Mrs. Sullivan wanted to announce Community Schools' summer programs RaiseUp Basketball, Kiddie Fun Camp, and Brockton After Dark; all are currently open for registration.

**Mr. Minichiello moved to approve the April 9, 2014 CSAB minutes.**

Voted: to approve the motion, unanimous.

## **Superintendent's Report**

### **Student Report**

Jessica Freeborn congratulated the cast members and tech staff of Guys and Dolls, announced that yearbooks have been distributed and thanked Mrs. Madore the Faculty Advisor, Science MCAS Boot Camp has begun, Senior Prom is next Wednesday, May 28, and the final music concert of the year is next Thursday, May 29<sup>th</sup>.

### **School Choice**

Mayor Carpenter announced that the Public Hearing for School Choice was held this evening at 6:30 p.m. He called on Mr. Minichiello for a report of the meeting.

Mr. Minichiello reported the following: the Public Hearing convened at 6:35 p.m., this is the public's opportunity to share their concerns on the matter of School Choice. There were no visitors signed up to speak. After a brief discussion, the Committee recommended that Brockton continue to participate in School Choice with the current criteria.

**Mr. Minichiello moved to accept the report of the Public Hearing on School Choice.**

Voted: to approve the motion, unanimous.

**Mr. Minichiello moved that the Brockton Public Schools continue to participate in School Choice for the 2014-2015 school year with the same criteria currently in place.**

Voted: to approve the motion, unanimous.

### **Ratification of Memorandum of Agreement - IBAATEA**

Mayor Carpenter stated the School Committee and the Independent Brockton Administrative Assistants and Technical Employees Association had come to an agreement and asked the School Committee for a motion to ratify.

**Mrs. Joyce moved to ratify the Memorandum of Agreement between the Brockton School Committee and the Independent Brockton Administrative Assistants and Technical Employees Association for a three-year period, from July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2016.**

Voted: to approve the motion, unanimous.

### **Ratification of Memorandum of Agreement - Paraprofessionals**

Mayor Carpenter stated the School Committee and the Brockton Education Paraprofessional Association had come to an agreement and asked the School Committee for a motion to ratify.

**Mrs. Joyce moved to ratify the Memorandum of Agreement between the Brockton School Committee and the Brockton Education Paraprofessional Association for a one-year period, from September 1, 2013, to August 31, 2014.**

Voted: to approve the motion, unanimous.

The Superintendent congratulated both groups and thanked them for their service in the Brockton Public Schools. Mrs. Joyce announced that the paraprofessional association agreement was only for one year, negotiations for a multi-year contract are currently in process. She thanked Committee members and bargaining team members for all of their hard work.

### **FY 2015 Budget Update**

The Superintendent began by acknowledging the full house in attendance at this evening's meeting to hear the budget discussion, she thanked everyone for their interest. She stated that the School Department has submitted a *level services budget* of \$166.4 million, the Mayor returned a budget figure of \$160.6 million, leaving a \$5.8 million shortfall. She explained that there are many factors that contribute to the shortfall, including a \$2.5 million drop from last year in Chapter 70 reimbursement, a decrease in Title 1 funding, and the end of the Race To The Top federal funding. She reported that a Legislative Luncheon, hosted by School Committee and School Department administrators, was held on May 5<sup>th</sup> and she had the opportunity to address state and local legislators and share with them the financial challenges that the district faces.

The Superintendent then discussed the current status of the school department budget, She indicated that at the point she first received the budget figure from the Mayor, it was a *starting budget*. She outlined the steps the district has taken thus far to address the shortfall:

- 199 RIF notices were issued to meet the May 15 deadline in the teacher's contract; the Superintendent cautioned the public on that number. She pointed out that in her 37 years with the district, she received six pink slips, and stated that there will not be 199 teachers laid off. The Superintendent emphasized that the School Committee, Mayor, and she understand the importance of academics, stating that teachers are the first priority.
- She is working with district administrators to examine all areas of the budget to find places that cuts can be made.
- Daily budget meetings with executive team.
- A hiring freeze, as well as looking at attrition through retirement and different incentives.
- Asking for "efficiencies" from staff.
- The Facility Master Plan has been taken off the table.

The Superintendent concluded her report by stating that she, along with the Mayor and School Committee, intend to *come up with a way we can live with the budget as we go forward*.

Mayor Carpenter then spoke, stating that as a first year Mayor who also served on the School Committee for four years, he understands very clearly the potential ramifications of a budget shortfall, his first year on the School Committee had a deficit larger than this. He said that he wanted to be clear so there were no misconceptions about the \$160.6 million budget figure:

- The Mayor's Net School Spending recommendation comes from the State's Chapter 70 funding being passed on to schools, via the City
- \$160.6 million is almost \$3.7 million over last year's budget of \$156.9 million
- The School Department's level services budget this year is almost \$10 million more than last year's budget

The Mayor stated that there is clearly a shortfall and we do have a budget crisis, but he wanted to be clear that the City did not cut local funding to the schools.

He then explained some of the major factors that have converged on the budget, including:

- Title 1 funding decreased by \$2 million.
- The loss of \$1.5 million with the end of *Race To The Top* funding.
- Increasing labor costs in the school department, which includes step increases of approximately \$1 million.
- Health insurance is up about 1 million for school employees.
- Chapter 70 funding formulas are fundamentally unfair to gateway cities. Brockton is one of the fastest growing school districts in the state, with an increase of about 450 students per year for the past three years. Where most communities have level or declining enrollments, gateway cities are increasing and Brockton is at the top of that list.
- Brockton carries a large number of homeless students, transportation obligations are mandated and under-funded.
- The State's "pothole" fund, used to assist communities such as Brockton, is no longer available.

Mayor Carpenter reported that the school department *non-net budget*, money that is not used for classroom purposes such as transportation, crossing guards, community schools, was initially cut by approximately \$500,000. He said that at the time he presented the figure, he advised the School Committee that the City was continuing to work on the budget to try to restore some of this funding.

The Mayor then stated that he was pleased to announce that he was able make cuts in other parts of the city budget and restore the \$500,000 to the non-net budget, this will level fund the non-net budget back to \$7.3 million. He said that it would be the responsibility of the School Committee to find additional funding, if necessary. The Mayor stressed that both sides are doing what they can to minimize these cuts.

The Superintendent said that, with this new information, she will provide a report for the School Committee with respect to buses and walk zones. She stated that as

Superintendent she will continue to advocate for the students, but emphasized that she will not pit teachers against other service providers in the city. She said she will continue to update information on the website as it becomes available. The Superintendent talked about the need for change in Chapter 70 funding formulas, stating that it may be time to bring gateway cities together to address the inequities when funding districts like Brockton.

Mr. Minichiello said that the School Committee will continue to advocate for the schools, stating that this is a difficult process that each member accepts the responsibility for, willingly. He said that many of the issues in our school system and the city are due to issues at the federal level that are not being addressed; the School Committee intends to reach out to the federal delegation, as well.

Finally, Mr. Minichiello advised that budget decisions are made based on current data, and adjustments will continue to be made as numbers change, saying that this is *not a stagnant situation*. He reiterated that the School Committee is fully supportive of the teachers, and stated that *we want our schools to succeed; they have always been a shining light in the city*.

**Items to Refer to Subcommittee**

Mr. Minichiello asked whether a Transportation Subcommittee meeting would be needed in light of the budget information received tonight; Mr. Thomas responded that it will take a few days to gather information and he will give a report at the Finance Subcommittee meeting on Tuesday (May 27) and go from there.

**New Business**

The Superintendent congratulated the Davis School for a successful presentation of *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*.

The Superintendent also congratulated Principal Andrade-Serpa and the Angelo School staff on receiving NAEYC Accreditation.

**May 20, 2014 Finance Subcommittee Meeting Report**

Mayor Carpenter invited Mr. Minichiello to give the report of Finance Subcommittee meeting held at 6:00 p.m. this evening.

Mr. Minichiello reported that Chartwells presented a very positive report with respect to operations, he said they are hitting all of the benchmarks financially, even with the dietary requirements that forced them to serve healthier, but less popular items they are still meeting the benchmarks that they set for themselves. The Subcommittee voted to favorably recommend that the contract with Chartwells be renewed for another year.

**Mr. Minichiello moved to accept the report of the Finance Subcommittee meeting, along with the recommendation to extend the contract with Chartwells for another year.**

Voted: to approve the motion, unanimous.

Mr. Robinson reported that he had the opportunity to attend the *Trauma Sensitive Learning Environments* training at the Barrett Russell School, which involved staff from

all areas of the school. Mr. Robinson stated that this is a very important issue to him and he was happy to see the amount of support from staff.

Mr. Robinson encouraged the public to contact their School Committee representatives by phone, email, letters, attending meetings, with any issues they have.

Mrs. Joyce added to that, stating the date, time and location of the next Finance Subcommittee meeting and saying that it is at the subcommittee meetings that the majority of the “real work” is done.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen A. Smith  
Secretary/Superintendent