

The Regular Meeting of the Brockton School Committee was held this evening in the George M. Romm Little Theatre at Brockton High School, at seven o'clock. These minutes contain a summary of the meeting and list items that were under discussion.

Present: Mr. Minichiello, Vice-Chair; Ms. Asack, Mr. D'Agostino, Mr. Gormley, Ms. Plant, Mr. Sullivan, Mrs. Sullivan, Superintendent Smith

Also Present: Executive Team, Laurie Mason

Absent: Mayor Carpenter

Mr. Minichiello called the meeting to order at 7:20 p.m., followed by a salute to the flag.

Hearing of Visitors

Mr. Minichiello explained the procedure followed during the Hearing of Visitors and reported that a number of students from the IB program were in attendance who intended to speak tonight, but upon hearing at the finance meeting that the program was reinstated, have decided not to address the committee. He then called upon the following visitors:

Jennifer Anderson, Arnone teacher, reduction in force/budget cuts;
Faith Tobon, BHS Teacher, reduction in force/budget cuts
Greta Zukauskaite, Plouffe Teacher, International Baccalaureate Program
Sue Galante Price, library closings
Erin McGuire, Arnone Teacher, class size, priority school
Todd Erickson, BHS Teacher/IB Coordinator, re: budget

Consent Agenda

Mr. Minichiello explained the purpose of the Consent Agenda and asked members if there were any requests to remove items for further discussion, there were no requests.

Mr. D'Agostino moved the Superintendent's recommendation to approve the Consent Agenda in its entirety, Mr. Gormley seconded the motion.

Voted: to approve the motion, unanimous.

Superintendent's Report

First, the Superintendent acknowledged the arrangements of flowers and condolences sent to Brockton High School from Cardinal Spellman High School and West Bridgewater Public Schools in response to the tragic loss of one of our high school students in a car accident during school vacation, which also left two other students injured. She thanked the public for the outpouring of support and compassion.

Science Awards – the Superintendent invited BHS Science Department Head Jonathan Shapiro to recognize two BHS science teachers recently chosen to receive prestigious awards: Angela Bergonzi was awarded 2017 Mass Maritime Academy Educator Alumni of the Year, and Joyce Voorhis was awarded the Secretary's Award for Excellence with the BHS Wildlands Trust Envirothon Team.

2017 Administrative Interns – Dr. Kathleen Moran congratulated and introduced the 2017 interns: Melissa Costello, Denise Glennon, Courtney Johnson, Lynsey Kristiansen, Stephen McGunnigal, Maura Mello, Maria Nahme, William Sproules and Maureen Woodson.

Special Education Department Presentation

Director of Special Education Laurie Mason gave a power point presentation on the scope of requirements and responsibilities of the department. Currently 1.2% of Brockton's student population receives specialized instruction and or related services through the department.

Going forward, Ms. Mason said she is looking to build the Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC). She said communication with parents is key and she is preparing a Parent Guide to assist parents to know their rights and be able to navigate the process. She will utilize the BPS website to post this guide and other important information for parents. She was pleased to report that she recently received a grant for job training and will be partnering with Campello Businessmen's Association in this venture. Following her presentation, Ms. Mason answered questions from members.

FY18 Budget

Advocacy Update - Superintendent Smith said advocacy has been non-ending for the past two years, in response to this year's budget crisis she has changed the name from *Brockton Kids Count* to *Save Our Schools-Brockton Kids Count*. She reported she continues to advocate with the House budget, met yesterday with Deputy Commissioner of Education Jeff Wulfson, and Senator Brady has arranged a meeting with Senate Ways and Means Vice-chair Sal DiDomenico. Finally, she said it is time for the community, teachers and parents to come together to advocate for the schools.

Budget Barometer – The Superintendent stated that although it is technically the *Superintendent's Recommended Budget*, this budget is not her recommendation and is an "irresponsible" budget, because we have taken out things that we need. She credited school committee members for the time they have spent looking at every part of the budget while trying to close the \$16 deficit.

Mr. Minichiello spoke to the efforts made thus far to address the \$16 million deficit, including visiting the state, advocating with DESE, continued conversations with our delegation and consulting with our attorneys, and said "we are going to do the best we can with what we have, no one is happy about these numbers." He said we are hopeful there will be some additional funds, however, the committee needed to base its actions tonight on current figures. He expressed his appreciation to committee members for their hard work with this budget, and the difficult vote taken at the finance subcommittee meeting held earlier this evening where the committee authorized the Superintendent to send out 189 RIF notices and 64 involuntary transfer notices to teaching staff in order meet the May 15th contractual requirement. He stated that no one was happy about the vote, but this will allow the district to move forward and begin to creatively fill positions. He implored the citizens of Brockton to get involved and advocate on behalf of the school district.

Mr. D'Agostino also spoke about the budget crisis, acknowledging the hard work put in by the Superintendent and administration to decrease the cuts to teaching staff by \$500,000; he said he has received many calls about this budget. He said this shortfall goes back to the charter school decision by DESE which has cost the district \$5 million, and the governor's decision to change the way low-income students are counted, which has cost the district \$6 million in funding, commenting that because the governor has decided not to count low-income students who are not directly certified doesn't mean they are not here. He said he is horrified and disgusted that this is where we are with these two decisions, if the committee had a \$4 million problem it would be far better off.

Ms. Plant also commented on the budget, stating that the committee must to vote on a budget that no one wants and has done the best it can. She said she regrets that the timing of the RIF vote tonight is at the same time a teacher appreciation week. Finally, she said with respect to the concerns voiced earlier by some Arnone school staff, she said she believes the committee will listen to their concerns and do what the can to keep them on the path to success and she looks forward to being aprt of that process. Finally, Ms. Plant thanked the committee for recognizing the value of the Project Grads program and reinstating it.

Items to Refer to Subcommittee

Superintendent Smith said we are working on policy items and an upcoming date; Mr. Thomas added student handbooks to the policy agenda; with respect to the enrollment and registration policy discussion, the district must wait on the non-net (transportation) figure in order to make any decisions.

NEW BUSINESS

Students Right to Access and Privacy Statements

The Superintendent talked about diversity being part of the "richness" of our district. She said she has worked with Mayor Carpenter and legal counsel with respect to a letter to the community and the Resolve before the committee for approval tonight. She said this does not in any way change what we do in the district, every student deserves an education and an opportunity to succeed. She said she is also working on getting welcome signs in various languages for our schools. She proceeded to read the following letter:

"The Brockton Public School District is committed to creating an atmosphere in which every member of the school community is valued and respected. This commitment is part of Brockton Public Schools' mission to teach students in a safe, supportive environment the knowledge, skills, values and behaviors necessary to become responsible and productive members of a diverse society. We celebrate our individual differences and seek to build upon them in our quest to strengthen not only individual students but also the community at large.

As national current events unfold before us, I would like to affirm the District's commitment to providing a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment where each student may enjoy a free public education, regardless of a student's disability, race, color, ethnicity, national origin, sex, immigration status, gender identity or sexual orientation.

Earlier this year, federal executive orders were signed relating to border security and immigration. These executive orders have created uncertainty and anxiety in our community. Please know that the Brockton Public Schools will continue to fully protect its students and their federally and state-created rights in the school setting. The Massachusetts Attorney General, Maura Healy, has issued an advisory that provides: "*Enrollment practices that single out students based on their actual or perceived citizenship or immigration status violate state and federal law. Furthermore, equal access to public education means not only the right to enroll in school, but also the right to an education free from unlawful discrimination and harassment.*" We support the right of all Brockton residents to enroll in and attend our schools free from harassment and/or discrimination.

The Brockton Public Schools assures parents and students that the District has developed plans to address any attempts by immigration officials to gain access to student record information or to enter school property. Moreover, the District has plans in place to assist students in the event that parents or guardians are detained by immigration authorities. Please contact the Superintendent's office at 508-580-7511 for additional information."

Ms. Plant moved to adopt the Resolve as presented to school committee and approve the Superintendent's letter; Mr. Sullivan seconded the motion.

Voted: to approve the motion, unanimous.

May 2, 2017 Bid Review Meeting

Mr. Sullivan gave the following report: All were present at the Bid Review held earlier this evening at 5:45 p.m. in the Little Theatre at Brockton High School. After discussion, Mr. D'Agostino made a motion to accept the FY2017 Playground Relocation Bid; the motion was seconded by Mr. Sullivan, the vote carried (Ms. Asack abstained). After discussion of the 2nd item, FY2018 Energy Management Controls Service Bid, a motion was made by Ms. Asack to accept the bid as presented; the motion was seconded by Mr. D'Agostino, the vote was unanimous.

The meeting adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

Mr. Sullivan moved to accept the report of the May 2nd Bid Review subcommittee meeting; Mr. D'Agostino seconded the motion, the vote was unanimous.

Mr. Sullivan moved to approve awarding the FY17 Playground Relocation bid in the amount of \$68,450 as recommended, and the FY18 Energy Management Controls Service Bid with a three-year total of \$122,680 as presented; Mr. D'Agostino seconded the motion.

Voted: 5 – 0 - 2 (L. Plant and J. Asack abstained)

May 2, 2017 Finance Meeting

Mr. Minichiello gave the following subcommittee meeting report:

The Finance Subcommittee met at 6 p.m. earlier this evening to discuss the FY 18 budget, all members were present.

The Superintendent provided the committee with an update on advocacy, she also talked about the foundation pothole fund from which Brockton was not a recipient of any funds, economically disadvantaged issues, and with respect to concerns about Title 1 funding, the Superintendent said she believed that funding will be available. Mr. Petronio was also part of this update.

The Superintendent recommended that the International Baccalaureate (IB) and Project Grads programs not be removed.

The Superintendent and Mr. Petronio reviewed the current budget barometer figures. She updated the committee about the Save Our Schools/Brockton Kids Count advocacy campaign. The committee received a presentation by Dr. Terrasi regarding the financial benefits of having a school psychiatrist position, which overwhelmingly outweighs the cost.

Mr. Minichiello said that was the content of the meeting and asked members if they were in agreement he would entertain a motion to approve the report.

Mr. Gormley moved to approve the report of the Finance subcommittee meeting as reported by Mr. Minichiello; Ms. Plant seconded the motion, the vote was unanimous.

Mr. Minichiello said the second item requiring action was *the approval FY18 budget barometer with regard to the recommended 189 RIF notices and 64 involuntary transfers, together with the recommended eliminations on the budget barometer.*

Ms. Plant moved to approve said recommendation, Ms. Sullivan seconded the motion, the vote was unanimous.

Additional Half-Days

The Superintendent asked the committee to approve two additional half-days during the last week of school, June 20 and 21, to allow time for classroom teachers to pack and prepare for moves. She said the district has met the requirements of 180 days and the number of hours. She is recommending that the last week of school be as follows: Monday will be a full day of school, Tuesday and Wednesday, June 20 and 21, half day for students only, and Thursday remains a half day of school for students and staff.

Mr. D'Agostino moved to change the calendar to add two half-days for students on Tuesday and Wednesday, June 20 and 21; Mr. Sullivan seconded the motion.

On the motions: Ms. Plant said she has heard from parents that they find half days a hardship; the Superintendent responded that the professional development days are needed, these additional days are because of the moves and some of the changes that will occur as a result of the vote taken tonight.

Voted: to approve the motion, 5 – 2 (Mr. Gormley and Ms. Plant opposed)

National History Day Update

The Superintendent informed the committee that everything has been put in place with respect to the committee's vote, parents have been contacted and she was contacted by an anonymous donor who paid for one additional parent's expenses.

Announcements

Mr. Minichiello announced that tickets are available for "Sister Act" for the weekend of May 12 – 14, 2017, donations are being accepted and there will be a fundraiser on Saturday, May 6 from 11:30 to 4 p.m. at Texas Roadhouse and 10% of your bill will be donated to the BHS drama club.

Mr. Minichiello said the junior prom was held on Friday April 28th; Mr. Thomas said there were no incidents, the Superintendent and Ms. Joyce said it was a great time.

Mr. Gormley said there will be a fundraiser on Wednesday, May 10th to benefit the BHS track program, they are trying to have a banquet this year, and track has no funding source. They have also opened the snack shack during track meets.

Ms. Joyce said she attended the Brookfield PTO meeting last Monday and she is challenging other PTO's to join Brookfield in having a huge fundraiser; whatever money is brought in will offset the "fun stuff" that is being cut from the budget; members agreed. Ms. Plant suggested that schools can also share information about successful fundraisers they have had.

The meeting adjourned at 9:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen A. Smith, JD
Superintendent/ Secretary

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Handouts: SPED Powerpoint Presentation