

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: Mayor Carpenter, Chair; Mr. Minichiello, Vice-Chair; Mr. D'Agostino, Mr. Gormley, Ms. Plant, Ms. Sullivan, Mr. Sullivan, Deputy Superintendent Michael Thomas, Student Representative Jaila Smith

Absent: Ms. Asack, Superintendent Smith

Also Present: Executive Team Members

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

Consent Agenda

Mayor Carpenter explained the purpose of the Consent Agenda and asked members for requests to remove items for further discussion, Mayor Carpenter requested Item F, Donald S. Gillis Memorial Scholarship Fund.

Mr. D'Agostino moved the Superintendent's recommendation to approve the following remaining Consent Agenda items, seconded by Ms. Plant.

- Approval of February 5, 2019 Regular School Committee Meeting Minutes
- Approval of Minutes of January 26, 2019 School Committee Retreat
- Approval of 2019-2020 BPS Academic School Calendar
- Approval of Field Trip: BHS Science Club Deep Sea Fishing Excursion
- Approval of Empower Yourself Overnight, Out-of-State Field Trip to Detroit, MI
- Acceptance of Notification of Personnel Appointments: Certified & Non-Certified
- Acceptance of Notification of Personnel Actions: Leaves of Absence, Resignations, Retirements

Voted: to approve the motion, unanimous.

With respect to Item F, Mr. Thomas spoke about Mr. Gillis, who lost his life suddenly in late August of 2018. He taught in the Career and Technology Education department at Brockton High School was beloved by his students and his colleagues. Director of Business, Instructional Technology and Career Education Kevin Daponte said Mr. Gillis was a finished carpenter and a lifelong learner who held a bachelors and two masters degrees and was working on a doctorate degree. He volunteered his time after school to work in the woodshop with students with disabilities, he also spent time helping his carpentry students with their special projects. Mr. Daponte said this scholarship is an honor to Mr. Gillis' dedication to students and his love for education.

Mr. Minichiello moved to approve the Donald S. Gillis Memorial Scholarship Fund; the motion was seconded by Mr. Sullivan.

Voted: to approve the motion, unanimous.

Superintendent's Report

Deputy Superintendent Thomas announced that the Superintendent is attending a conference. He began by having Jaila Smith give the student report.

Student Report (Jaila Smith)

Jaila reported MCAS ELA and Math retests are taking place this week. Junior prom tickets go on sale March 11th thru 13th. The Spring Choral Concert is Wednesday, March 20th at 7:00 p.m. in the auditorium at Brockton High School. The boys track team will compete in nationals this weekend in New York; they have put together a Go Fund Me account to help pay for expenses, more information can be found on their Facebook page.

Curriculum Update

Chief Academic Officer Ms. June Saba-Maguire updated the committee on the turnaround plans. There are currently seven schools working with the state, five of these schools are in the process of developing turning around plans. On Thursday, March 14, 2019 from 3:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. there is a planning session for the schools and their teams. She said there is a great commitment from the staff on the teams, teachers and principals and that everyone is truly committed to getting this work up and going in a way that will make a dramatic difference for our students.

Mayor Carpenter asked if each of the five schools are developing their own individualized turnaround plan or would it be similar components that we would see in all of them; Ms. Saba-Maguire responded the state has put out a template that all schools will use, however, each school will develop their individualized plan based on their student population and needs.

Advocacy Update

Mr. Thomas said the Superintendent continues to work with superintendents around the state, the Mayor and school committee members are also working hard, to push state legislators to have the House and the Senate add more money to the Chapter 70 formula.

Mayor Carpenter said he participated in a conference call last week with mayors from Springfield, Worcester, Lynn, Lawrence, New Bedford and Malden. We are building a strong coalition and their advocacy will be important, particularly on Beacon Hill during the budget process. If we look at other options down the road that will require financial commitment, then the mayors will have to be part of that also. He said they all share a similar vision, to work as hard as we can with our legislators to try to get more meaningful Chapter 70 reform out of the state budget process. The governor's budget was a step in the right direction but it is not enough. In order to get the votes and to get a consensus in the Legislature we are more likely to see reform that will address increases in the cost of teacher pensions, health insurance and SPED, but will not necessarily focus on the additional costs of English Language Learners and of students growing up in poverty that are critical issues to the gateway cities. We're all focused on advocating during the process and watching closely that this meaningful reform that would benefit specifically gateway cities. It's a positive step in building a coalition with the mayors of the gateway cities.

Chief Financial Officer Aldo Petronio reported that a date will be scheduled to present "A Tale of Many Cities" in Lowell that will include its suburban surrounding towns that are also affected. Superintendent Smith has spoken to West Bridgewater and would like to set up a forum in Brockton for the south shore towns sometime in March. The Chief Financial Officers (CFO) from Worcester, New Bedford and Brockton are gathering data for a PowerPoint presentation at the request of consultants hired by the Massachusetts Association for School Superintendents (M.A.S.S.).

They are looking for data all the way back from 2002 until now (and other data from 1993) to show all the losses that we have taken over the years and how the formula has been eroded, basically bring forward our cause.

The Mayor commented the data piece is important in showing the impact on school budgets and gateway cities.

New Business

Notification of Superintendent's intent to retire at the end of her contract in June 30, 2019

The Mayor announced that Superintendent Smith has notified school committee of her intent to retire on June 30, 2019, she has served six years as Superintendent, a year more than her original five-year contract. The Mayor stated that the school department will need a new leader as of July 1, 2019, tonight the school committee will consider an interim superintendent effective as of that date. The interim would need to work closely with the current Superintendent over the final three months of her contract to ensure a smooth and orderly transfer of leadership. The Mayor opened the floor for discussion from school committee members.

Vice-chair Mr. Minichiello mentioned that the Superintendent is at a conference and will address the public at the next School Committee meeting on March 19, 2019 with regard to her decision, her commitment and love for the Brockton Public Schools. At the Superintendent's Contract subcommittee meeting last week, Superintendent Smith presented a heartfelt letter informing school committee of her decision and of her love for the Brockton Public Schools and her commitment to the district and the city. We all appreciate Superintendent Smith's dedication to the Brockton Public School District. She has worked 42 years in the system and was Superintendent during some of the toughest financial budgets that Brockton Public Schools has ever undergone. She was able to help provide the system with what it needed to give the students a good education and move forward.

Consideration of the appointment of an Interim Superintendent of Schools

Vice-chair Mr. Minichiello said that with respect to a transition in leadership to make sure that the system is moving forward in a professional and orderly and efficient manner, this is not an unprecedented situation or out of the ordinary. He said school committee needs to make sure there is enough time to do a thorough job and that it transitions the system so that the staff, students, public and city have confidence that there is professional and committed leadership at the top, so tonight it appropriate for the school committee to consider this to move into the next transition of the Brockton Public Schools.

Mayor Carpenter said that in terms of a timeline there are concerns for the budget cycle that will begin in March, April, May and June where a tremendous amount of time will be devoted to trying to balance another difficult budget. It would not make sense to conduct a search or recruitment of a new permanent superintendent while also working on the budget at the same time, there is need for continuity during this time and it is in the best interest to put an interim superintendent in place now who will serve as a bridge to the budget this spring and the opening days of school in September.

Vice-chair Minichiello agreed that it this is an appropriate time to have someone in place going forward for July 1st, it is in the best interest of the school system and at this point the committee could discuss nominations if members feel they have confidence in

someone.

Mayor Carpenter said he would now entertain nominations.

Mr. Gormley nominated Mr. Michael Thomas as Interim Superintendent and Mr. Sullivan seconded the nomination. Mayor Carpenter opened the floor for discussion.

Ms. Plant stated her support for the nomination and asked whether we need to place someone in the Deputy position. Mayor Carpenter responded that Mr. Thomas is serving as deputy now, after July 1st this would become a budget issue for the next year, and the interim tag could make it difficult to backfill and a conversation the committee will need to have during the budget session.

Mr. D'Agostino, Ms. Sullivan, and Mr. Minichiello expressed their high regard for Mr. Thomas and their support of this nomination.

Mr. Sullivan asked Mr. Thomas to confirm that he is interested in the position, Mr. Thomas replied that he is interested.

Mayor Carpenter clarified the motion and asked whether there were any other nominations, no other names were placed in for nominations.

Voted: to approve the motion, unanimous, Mayor Carpenter also voted in favor.

Deputy Superintendent Thomas thanked the committee and Mayor Carpenter for their support and for always putting the students and teachers first; he thanked his wife Patricia, the Executive Team and Superintendent Smith who has been a great mentor to him.

Mr. Gormley extended congratulations to the following seniors who have received college letters of intent:

1. Gabreilla Del Pico - attend Harvard University - soccer
2. Javier Donegan - attend UMass Amherst - track
3. Jordan Williams - UMass Lowell - track
4. Amando Walker, Jr. - Franklin Pierce - football
5. Sten Bruno - Franklin Pierce - football
6. Madison Hendrigan - West Virginia Wesleyan - soccer

Javier Donegan and Jordan Williams will be running in the New Balance nationals in New York this week. Thank you to everyone for their donations to the students. Marvin Dure and Ahmik Watterson (both are junior) are going to the event. The track team and coaches will visit the Mayor on Wednesday to officially wish them luck.

Mr. Minichiello thanked the DPW for clearing the streets and sidewalks for our students and the Mayor for incorporating a sidewalk clearing program right into plowing streets.

Mr. Minichiello reiterated what Mr. Gormley spoke about how the committee preserves money for the numerous programs in the Brockton Public School system such as the sports, arts, music and different clubs at no fee for students so that true merit and accomplishment allow a student to earn a scholarship. To give an example of the great

opportunities Brockton students have, Mr. Minichiello invited Mr. Cedric Turner, Advisor of Empower Yourself, to speak about the accomplishments of students in the Empower Yourself program and college opportunities they are receiving.

Mr. Turner thanked the Mayor, Deputy Superintendent and School Committee Members for their continued support. He then talked about the financial, economic and STEM competitions that the Brockton students are successfully competing in, they recently took first place at the Federal Reserve building in Boston, competing against students from New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Rhode Island and Massachusetts, he is expecting representation from more cities across the nation next year. Mr. Turner said he has been discussing bringing programs to elementary schools as well. These competitions have opened doors to our students who are becoming known for academic excellence and are receiving internships and college scholarships. Students are also competing in robotics and engineering competitions. He acknowledged the work ethic of the students in the program, who work very hard.

Mayor Carpenter thanked Mr. Turner and said he would like to see the program expanded if the budget permits. Mr. Turner said he has one last request, that the students receive recognition from the media. He said the students have yet to be recognized by local media, outside of the school district.

Mayor Carpenter said on March 12, 2019 the Art Smart reception is being held at the Brockton Public library 6:00 p.m.

Mr. Thomas announced the following:

- The Parents Academy Kindergarten showcase was rescheduled to next Tuesday night at the Arnone School at 6:00 p.m.
- Congratulations to sixteen BHS and North Middle school students for winning at the 2019 scholastic art award.
- Thank you to Mayor Carpenter, Larry Rowley of the DPW and Storm and Snow Team along with Ken Thompson for the team involvement of the snow removal in the city and alongside the schools. Mayor Carpenter will pass along the message to the DPW.
- We are working with Student Support Services Chief Ms. Wolder, Lt. Vadaro, Mayor's office, members of the police department and Officer Leedberg to schedule a date in April for a parent forum on the dangers of improper social media and internet usage, which is coming into the schools on a daily basis.

Motion to adjourn by Mr. Gormley, seconded by Mr. Sullivan

Seeing no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael P. Thomas
Deputy Superintendent/Secretary

mdc