

**SOUTH MIDDLESEX REGIONAL VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

March 4, 2019

MEMBERS PRESENT:

ASHLAND

Ed Burman
William Gainé

FRAMINGHAM

AJ Mulvey
Mike Rossi
James Comeau
Linda Fobes (Remote)
Michele Burns
Maria Martinez

HOLLISTON

Sarah Commerford

HOPKINTON

Ruth Knowles
Jaime Shepard

NATICK

ALSO PRESENT:

Jonathan Evans, Superintendent-Director
Dolores Sharek, Director of Finance
Jack Keating, Treasurer
Richard DeAngelis, Legal Counsel
Marc Terry, District Special Counsel
Al Hargrave, McCarthy, Hargrave & Co. (Auditor)
Karen Ward, Recording Secretary

Chairman Burman called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM

Chairman Burman stated Mrs. Fobes is participating in this meeting remotely from a different geographical location. Therefore, all votes will be by roll call vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF FEBRUARY 4, 2019

Chairman Burman asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of February 4, 2019.

MRS. KNOWLES MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MR. GAINES, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF FEBRUARY 4, 2019. MR. BURMAN, MRS. COMMERFORD, MRS. FOBES, MR. GAINES, MRS. KNOWLES, MR. MULVEY, MR. ROSSI, MRS. BURNS, MRS. MARTINEZ VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION ; MR. CAMEAU AND MRS. SHEPARD ABSTAINED. THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.

GUESTS AND VISITORS

We were joined by Mr. Al Hargrave, McCarthy, Hargrave & Co. (auditor), and Mr. Marc Terry of Mirick O'Connell, District Special Counsel.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

- Update on District Legal Counsel

Superintendent Evans introduced Marc Terry, District Special Counsel. Superintendent Evans reminded the School Committee that he is authorized to use special counsel if he determines there is a need. Superintendent Evans reported that over the past few years, he has used Mr. Terry as district special counsel in a number of situations. Superintendent Evans reported that he finds Mr. Terry to be a very dependable and skilled attorney. Superintendent Evans asked Mr. Terry to introduce himself to the Committee. Mr. Terry said he would first of all like to thank the Committee for allowing him to work with the district. He reported that he feels like he has established a solid working relationship with the district. He said that Mirick O'Connell has three offices located in Westborough, Worcester and Boston. He said he has been practicing law for approximately 20 years in all corners of the State. He also reported that he represents another regional school district and serves on a number of boards. Mr. Terry said that attorneys in the Mirick O'Connell firm have the ability to represent many specialty areas and are able to give responsive service, with knowledge in many areas, such as tax issues, construction and negotiations. Mr. Terry said the office works as a team and has many resources to offer. Mr. Gaine said that he has met Mr. Terry multiple times over the years and has respect for him and his firm. Mr.

Gaine said they seem to be tremendously responsive and he appreciates it and looks forward to working with him.

SUPERINTENDENT-DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- Vote Revised Regional Agreement (Appendix 2019-21)

Superintendent Evans reported that the updated Regional Agreement now has consensus from all five municipalities. We have found that DESE is requesting some minor changes. These changes will not impact the work that is done with member municipalities. The changes they are requesting are non substantive and language based. After speaking with Attorney Terry, and upon his recommendation, Superintendent Evans reported that he would like a vote of the Committee to give him the authority to review the minor non substantive changes with Chairman Burman, in order to get the approved final Regional Agreement to member municipalities in a timely manner for spring municipal meetings.

Mr. Rossi asked if we thought it would be prudent to review the Regional Agreement every five years in order to insure it remains current and consistent with existing practice. Superintendent Evans said that the Agreement could certainly be reviewed periodically. Attorney Terry suggested that while a review may be appropriate, the major process of a revision is most often precipitated by a significant change in practice or district composition.

MR. GAINES MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY MR. MULVEY TO APPROVE THE REVISED REGIONAL AGREEMENT, GIVING AUTHORITY TO SUPERINTENDENT EVANS AND CHAIRMAN BURMAN TO MAKE NON SUBSTANTIVE CHANGES TO THE REVISED REGIONAL AGREEMENT AS REQUESTED BY DESE. MR. BURMAN, MRS. COMMERFORD, MRS. FOBES, MR. GAINES, MRS. KNOWLES, MR. MULVEY, MR. ROSSI, MRS. BURNS, MRS. MARTINEZ, MRS. SHEPARD AND MR. CAMEAU VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION. THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

- FY18 Audit Report

Mr. Hargrave presented the FY18 School District Audit Report. Mr. Hargrave reported cooperation from the Management and the Business Office staff for completion of the Audit. No findings were identified and the overall financial position of the District remains strong.

- Superintendent Evaluation Sub-Committee Report

Chairperson Sarah Commerford, reported that the Superintendent Evaluation Sub-Committee met prior to the full Committee meeting. Mrs. Commerford reported that the Superintendent Evaluation Binders have been reviewed. Mrs. Commerford said the sub-committee members agreed there was sufficient evidence in all binders and that Superintendent Evans should stop collecting evidence for the standards and at this point concentrate on just the District Improvement Plan. They agreed there was more than enough evidence for a rating of at least proficient. Mrs. Commerford said that if Superintendent Evans has anything significant going forward that he would like for them to review as part of the evaluation, that of course they would be glad to, but felt they would appreciate it if he would put his efforts into the District Improvement Plan.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chairman Burman asked Mrs. Fobes, participating remotely, if she was alone for the purpose of going into Executive Session. Mrs. Fobes replied yes, that she is alone. Chairman Burman made a motion that the Committee go into Executive Session for the purpose(s) described in G.L. c.30A, §21 (a) (3) to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining;

The Chair declares before the executive session that:

1. The Chair declares the purpose(s) of the executive session (as stated in the Agenda for the meeting;) Negotiations Update and
2. The Chair declares that an open meeting would have detrimental effect upon the bargaining position(s) of the School Committee; and
3. The School Committee will reconvene in open session at the conclusion of the executive session. Requires a roll call vote of the majority of the entire committee.

MR. BURMAN MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MR. GAINES, TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF NEGOTIATIONS UPDATE AND TO RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION AT THE CONCLUSION OF EXECUTIVE SESSION. THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS MR. BURMAN, MRS. COMMERFORD, MRS. FOBES, MR. GAINES, MRS. KNOWLES, MR. MULVEY, MR. ROSSI, MRS. BURNS, MRS. MARTINEZ, MRS. SHEPARD AND MR. CAMEAU VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION. THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.

SUPERINTENDENT-DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Information Only

- School Choice Decision (Appendix 2019-19)

Members received a memorandum regarding Superintendent Evans' recommendation not to participate in the School Choice Program for the 2019-2020 school year. Superintendent Evans explained that with only \$5,000 revenue generated for each school choice student, this would be a very unpopular decision for our member municipalities that are paying substantially more. There will be a public hearing on School Choice at the April meeting.

- Advisory Board Recommendations/Update (Appendix 2019-20)

Superintendent Evans thanked Committee members who attended the Advisory Board Dinner on January 31st. He said that Mr. Brochu has provided some recommendations, specifically equipment, and that we will look at this in relation to Perkins money to see what makes the most sense. Superintendent Evans said it was also beneficial for him to attend this meeting. A couple of issues were resolved that evening, such as providing funding for a certification test in Information Technology, and identifying a need to explore authentic experiences for students in Programming and Web Design.

- SkillsUSA

Superintendent Evans reported the District hosted a SkillsUSA event on Wednesday, February 27th for just over 600 students from Keefe Tech and ten of our sister schools. Superintendent Evans thanked Mr. John Brochu, Director of Career and Technical Education and faculty members for a job well done. Keefe Technical School students had a great day, with 36 medal winners and 21 students advancing to the State Conference at Blackstone Valley Tech in April.

- Update of Municipal Meetings

Superintendent Evans reported he is scheduled to present to Natick FinCom on March 12th and Holliston FinCom on Tuesday, March 19th presuming vote of approval of the FY20 Budget this evening. Superintendent Evans reported that he will be in touch with Ashland, Hopkinton, and Framingham and will make Committee members aware of the dates he will be presenting to their town should members wish to attend.

Action Required

- Vote to Appoint Mrs. Sharek as Chief Procurement Officer (Appendix 2019-22)

Superintendent Evans explained the district does not need a Chief Procurement Officer (CPO) for typical bids, which represent the vast majority of our purchasing activity. However, per the Ch. 30B manual, a CPO is required for larger bids, and a Request For Proposals (RFP). Superintendent Evans recommended that the Committee appoint Mrs. Sharek as the District's CPO.

MR. MULVEY MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MR. BURMAN TO APPOINT MRS. SHAREK AS THE DISTRICT'S CPO. MR. BURMAN, MRS. COMMERFORD, MRS. FOBES, MR. GAINÉ, MRS. KNOWLES, MR. MULVEY, MR. ROSSI, MRS. BURNS, MRS. MARTINEZ, MRS. SHEPARD AND MR. CAMEAU VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION. THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.

- Vote District Counsel

Superintendent Evans reported with the resignation of Mr. DeAngelis, it would be his recommendation that Marc Terry of Mirick O'Connell take over as district counsel. He expects there will be a transition period. Superintendent Evans said he and Mr. Terry have discussed that the need may arise for Superintendent Evans to use another firm when they have a situation involving a special education student or student discipline issue. Mr. Terry and the other most commonly used firm are familiar with each other and understand the district needs to use the best resource available. Superintendent Evans said the Committee may decide to vote this evening on a district counsel, or they may decide to wait to look at other options. Mr. Gainé said he felt there was no reason to wait. Mr. Burman agreed and asked for a motion to go forward. Mr. Rossi asked if the district counsel will attend School Committee Meetings. Superintendent Evans said that the district counsel will not attend meetings, but would be more than willing to attend as needed.

MR. GAINÉ MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MR. MULVEY TO USE MARC TERRY, OF MIRICK O'CONNELL AS DISTRICT COUNSEL. MR. BURMAN, MRS. COMMERFORD, MRS. FOBES, MR. GAINÉ, MRS. KNOWLES, MR. MULVEY, MR. ROSSI, MRS. BURNS, MRS. MARTINEZ, MRS. SHEPARD AND MR. CAMEAU VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION. THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.

- Vote Out of State Field Trip – Providence, RI (Appendix 2019-28)

Superintendent Evans asked for a vote to approve a field trip for the Landscape Design Program to attend the New England Regional Turfgrass Conference and Show in Providence, RI.

MR. BURMAN MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MRS. COMMERFORD TO APPROVE THE OUT OF STATE FIELD TRIP TO PROVIDENCE, RI. MR. BURMAN, MRS. COMMERFORD, MRS. FOBES, MR. GAINES, MRS. KNOWLES, MR. MULVEY, MR. ROSSI, MRS. BURNS, MRS. MARTINEZ, MRS. SHEPARD AND MR. CAMEAU VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION. THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.

PUBLIC HEARING ON THE BUDGET

Chairman Burman opened the public hearing and discussion of the FY20 Budget. There were no members of the community wishing to address the Committee.

MR. BURMAN MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MR. CAMEAU TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING. MR. BURMAN, MRS. COMMERFORD, MRS. FOBES, MR. GAINES, MRS. KNOWLES, MR. MULVEY, MR. ROSSI, MRS. BURNS, MRS. MARTINEZ, MRS. SHEPARD AND MR. CAMEAU VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION. THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

Information Only

- Non-Salary Financial Expenditure Report (Appendix 2019-23)

Members received the Non-Salary Expenditure Report along with some highlights.

- Report on Underutilized Line Items (Appendix 2019-24)

Superintendent Evans presented a listing of underutilized line items as requested by Committee members at the February meeting. Mr. Rossi said this type of report is very helpful for Committee members. Superintendent Evans said this type of report is also helpful for administration.

Action Required

- Vote FY20 Budget (Appendix 2019-25)

Superintendent Evans stated in December, the Committee approved a preliminary budget increase of 3.82%. Since then we have realized areas of efficiencies within the budget. Superintendent Evans reported there is a reduction in the Health Insurance-Active & Retiree of \$39,654, and a reduction in Transportation of \$27,104.

The resulting budget request for the School Committee is \$19,778,463 which is a 3.47% increase over FY19 Budget.

SUPERINTENDENT EVANS ASKED FOR A MOTION TO APPROVE THE FY20 BUDGET FOR KEEFE REGIONAL TECHNICAL SCHOOL OF \$19,778,463 OR A 3.47% INCREASE. MR. GAINÉ MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY MR. BURMAN TO APPROVE THE FY20 BUDGET OF \$19,778,463. MR. BURMAN, MRS. COMMERFORD, MRS. FOBES, MR. GAINÉ, MRS. KNOWLES, MR. MULVEY, MR. ROSSI, MRS. BURNS, MRS. MARTINEZ, MRS. SHEPARD AND MR. CAMEAU VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION. THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.

- Vote Determination of District Assessment FY20 (Appendix 2019-26)

Members received the Summary of Assessments for the five member municipalities for a total of \$13,704,052. Superintendent Evans reviewed the specific changes in enrollment and assessments between FY19 and FY20. As a result of efforts to offset assessments through state aid and local revenue offsets, the overall increase in the assessment of our member towns is only 0.57%. Superintendent Evans provided a list of the actual assessments for each of our member towns for the approval of the Committee, and also asked that a motion include the utilization of \$200,000 in Excess and Deficiency funding applied toward member town assessments.

Mr. Rossi asked if this substantial increase in Chapter 70 aid can be explained through a formula. Superintendent Evans explained that the calculation of district assessments are the result of a complex formula that factors in state revenue, local offsets, minimum contributions, and enrollment. The increase in Chapter 70 aid was due to an increase in overall enrollment, and a significant increase in our population of English Language Learners. Mr. Rossi believes we should be sure to explain this so that member municipalities understand this is not a typical change. Superintendent Evans agreed that it made a great deal of sense to explain this point to member communities, so that funding at this level does not become an expectation.

MR. BURMAN MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY MR. MULVEY TO APPROVE THE DETERMINATION OF DISTRICT ASSESSMENTS FOR FY20, WITH APPROVAL TO UTILIZE EXCESS AND DEFICIENCY FUNDING TO OFFSET THE COST TO OUR MEMBER MUNICIPALITIES. MR. BURMAN, MRS. COMMERFORD, MRS. FOBES, MR. GAINÉ, MRS. KNOWLES, MR. MULVEY, MR. ROSSI, MRS. BURNS, MRS. MARTINEZ, MRS. SHEPARD AND MR. CAMEAU VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION. THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.

- Vote Budget Transfer (Appendix 2019-27)

Mrs. Sharek reviewed the details of requested transfer areas, and asked the Committee to approve transfers totaling \$48,000 to cover the cost of custodial contracted services. Superintendent Evans reminded the Committee that we have realized substantial savings in salaries as we have increased contracted services.

MR. CAMEAU MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY MR. MULVEY TO APPROVE THE REQUEST FOR A BUDGET TRANSFER. MR. BURMAN, MRS. COMMERFORD, MRS. FOBES, MR. GAINÉ, MRS. KNOWLES, MR. MULVEY, MR. ROSSI, MRS. BURNS, MRS. MARTINEZ, MRS. SHEPARD AND MR. CAMEAU VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION. THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.

COMMUNICATION

There was no communication

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business

NEW BUSINESS

Superintendent Evans informed the Committee that due to an unanticipated relocation out of Framingham, Mrs. Bushell is no longer able to represent the City of Framingham on the School Committee. Superintendent Evans will be communicating with City leaders regarding this vacancy. Superintendent Evans expressed his gratitude to Mrs. Bushell for her service.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Burman asked for a motion to adjourn.

MR. MULVEY MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MRS. COMMERFORD, TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. MR. BURMAN, MRS. COMMERFORD, MRS. FOBES, MR. GAINÉ, MRS. KNOWLES, MR. MULVEY, MR. ROSSI, MRS. BURNS, MRS. MARTINEZ, MRS. SHEPARD AND MR. CAMEAU VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION. THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.

The next meeting is April 8, 2019
The meeting adjourned at 8:25p.m.

SOUTH MIDDLESEX REGIONAL VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

School Committee Meeting – March 4, 2019

ACTION SHEET

1. MRS. KNOWLES MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MR. GAINES, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF FEBRUARY 4, 2019. MR. BURMAN, MRS. COMMERFORD, MRS. FOBES, MR. GAINES, MRS. KNOWLES, MR. MULVEY, MR. ROSSI, MRS. BURNS, MRS. MARTINEZ VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION ; MR. CAMEAU AND MRS. SHEPARD ABSTAINED. THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.

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