

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

March 6, 2023

MEMBERS PRESENT:

ASHLAND

Ed Burman

William Gainé (Arrived 7:35pm)

FRAMINGHAM

Michele Burns

Linda Fobes (Remote)

Rick Gallagher

Sara Hamerla

Maria Martinez

AJ Mulvey (Remote, arrived 7:45pm)

Bill Phillips

Brandon Ward

HOLLISTON

Sarah Commerford (Remote)

Barry Sims

HOPKINTON

Ruth Knowles

Jaime Shepard

NATICK

Ruth Mori

Elizabeth Smith-Freedman

ALSO PRESENT:

Jonathan Evans, Superintendent

Dolores Sharek, Director of Finance & Business Operations

Karen Ward, Recording Secretary

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

Per Governor Baker's order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A sec. 20, we will be conducting this School Committee meeting in person with one or more members of the South Middlesex Regional Vocational Technical School Committee participating remotely in accordance with the Attorney General's Regulations and Procedures.

All votes this evening will be taken as a roll call vote.

Chairman Burman introduced Mr. Bill Phillips as our newest Committee member representing the City of Framingham. Chairman Burman explained that Mr. Phillips has a wealth of experience and knowledge of Keefe Tech and the Region. The Committee joined Chairman Burman in welcoming Mr. Phillips.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF FEBRUARY 6, 2023

Chairman Burman asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of February 6, 2023. MR. GALLAGHER MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MRS. BURNS, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF FEBRUARY 6, 2023. MRS. BURNS, MRS. COMMERFORD, DR. HAMERLA, MRS. FOBES, MR. GALLAGHER, MRS. MORI, MRS. SHEPARD, MR. SIMS, MR. WARD, AND MR. BURMAN VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION; MRS. KNOWLES, MRS. MARTINEZ, MR. PHILLIPS, AND MS. SMITH-FREEDMAN ABSTAINED. THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.

GUESTS AND VISITORS

We were joined by Mr. Tony Roselli, Roselli, Clark & Associates (Auditor)

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

- FY22 Audit Report

Mr. Roselli presented the FY22 School District Audit Report. Mr. Roselli reported that Mrs. Sharek and her team did a great job, with no audit material weaknesses. He 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-DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- Out of State Field Trip – Metals Program-Cumberland, RI (Appendix 2023-16)

Committee members were presented with a request from the Metals program to bring students on an out of state field trip to Cumberland, RI, to visit the Tiffany & Co. Manufacturing Facility. The field trip is to take place on March 10, 2023. Superintendent Evans reported this is a great opportunity for our

students to see craftsmanship and industry standards at a high level. MR. BURMAN MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY MRS. MARTINEZ TO APPROVE THE OUT OF STATE FIELD TRIP FOR THE METALS PROGRAM ON MARCH 10, 2023. MRS. BURNS, MRS. COMMERFORD, DR. HAMERLA, MRS. FOBES, MR. GALLAGHER, MRS. KNOWLES, MRS. MARTINEZ, MRS. MORI, MR. PHILLIPS, MRS. SHEPARD, MR. SIMS, MS. SMITH-FREEDMAN AND MR. BURMAN VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION. THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.

- Facility Update

Superintendent Evans updated the Committee on the status of the modular construction. Superintendent Evans reported that we finally got resolution of the issue with the sprinkler system to the satisfaction of our attorney and we have gotten the go ahead for the project. The area has been roped off and two of the buildings have been delivered and are in the process of being installed and assembled. Superintendent Evans said he expects this to happen in a timely fashion and we will have some useable space very soon. He said depending on when they are ready, we will make a decision if we should make use of the modular classrooms as soon as possible, or if it makes more sense to move people at the start of the new school year. Superintendent Evans said that when the modular are ready he will offer a tour to the Committee as he did with the HVAC program.

- Municipal Meeting Update

Superintendent Evans reported that he presented our request for a Capital Stabilization Account to the Finance Committee of the Framingham City Council, and they referred it to the full City Council. The City Council did have their meeting and approved our request. We still are in the process of scheduling with our other four towns. At this point in time, we have a meeting scheduled on March 22nd with the Natick Education and Learning Sub-Committee and a meeting with the full Finance Committee in Natick on March 30th. We are expecting to hear from Ashland, Holliston and Hopkinton with dates to present. As soon as we have the information, we will send it along to the appropriate Committee members. We also expect that we will receive a date to present to the Framingham Finance Committee in regards to the FY24 Budget. Superintendent Evans reported that we continue to get respect and accolades regarding our process of line by line review of our budget. He reported that as always, he thanks our sending communities for a great relationship and the willingness to send students to visit us at Keefe Tech.

- Update on Program License

Superintendent Evans reported that our efforts regarding the hoisting credentialing has been a long and frustrating process. Superintendent Evans said we continue to be compliant but continue our efforts to get students credentialed. Superintendent Evans reported that we have completed 18 DOT physicals. He reported that we have funded this process by doing the physicals here at Keefe Tech. He said the next step is for students to test their knowledge on regulations and laws in the state. Superintendent Evans reported that the instructors has gone through this process so they can help to prepare students. Superintendent Evans said that unfortunately, some of our sister schools are now being shut down as well. He said this is bad for students, and this whole process does not make a lot of sense. Superintendent Evans said that there are three hoisting bills going before the state. He said he has reached out to Representative Jack Lewis who has co-sponsored all three bills. He reported that he hopes there might be a path forward with the new Secretary of Labor and Workforce Development. Superintendent Evans said we are all about offering authentic experiences for students and teaching them safely under 18 years old before they leave us. He said that any one of us could go out and rent hoisting equipment without any training and this doesn't make sense considering our instructors are licensed in this area and can oversee students safely so they are prepared when they leave Keefe Tech.

- Personnel Activity (Appendix 2023-17)

Superintendent Evans provided an advisory board application for the Health Careers program for review of the Committee.

MRS. FOBES MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY MRS. BURNS TO APPROVE THE ADVISORY BOARD APPLICANT FOR THE HEALTH CAREERS PROGRAM. MRS. BURNS, MRS. COMMERFORD, DR. HAMERLA, MRS. FOBES, MR. GALLAGHER, MRS. KNOWLES, MRS. MARTINEZ, MRS. MORI, MR. PHILLIPS, MRS. SHEPARD, MR. SIMS, MS. SMITH-FREEDMAN, MR. WARD, AND MR. BURMAN VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION; THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.

- School Choice Decision (Appendix 2023-18)

Members received a memorandum regarding Superintendent Evans' recommendation not to participate in the School Choice Program for the 2023-2024 school year. Superintendent Evans explained that school choice would be a very unpopular decision with our member municipalities that are paying substantially more, considering we have a waitlist for in district students. There will be a public hearing on School Choice at the April meeting.

PUBLIC HEARING ON THE BUDGET

Chairman Burman requested a motion to open the public hearing and discussion of the FY24 Budget.

MR. GALLAGHER MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY MRS. SHEPARD TO BEGIN THE PUBLIC HEARING ON THE FY24 BUDGET. MRS. BURNS, MRS. COMMERFORD, DR. HAMERLA, MRS. FOBES, MR. GALLAGHER, MRS. KNOWLES, MRS. MARTINEZ, MRS. MORI, MR. PHILLIPS, MRS. SHEPARD, MR. SIMS, MS. SMITH-FREEDMAN, MR. WARD AND MR. BURMAN VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION. THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.

There were no members of the public wishing to address the Committee.

MR. GALLAGHER MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MR. WARD TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING. MRS. BURNS, MRS. COMMERFORD, DR. HAMERLA, MRS. FOBES, MR. GALLAGHER, MRS. KNOWLES, MRS. MARTINEZ, MRS. MORI, MR. PHILLIPS, MRS. SHEPARD, MR. SIMS, MS. SMITH-FREEDMAN, MR. WARD AND MR. BURMAN VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION. THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.

- Vote FY24 Budget (Appendix 2023-19)

Superintendent Evans asked for a motion to approve the FY24 Budget for Keefe Regional Technical School in the amount of \$24,159,019 or a 3.81% increase over FY23.

MR. SIMS MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY MS. SMITH-FREEDMAN TO APPROVE THE FY24 BUDGET OF \$24,159,019, AN INCREASE OF 3.81% OVER FY23. MRS. BURNS, MRS. COMMERFORD, DR. HAMERLA, MRS. FOBES, MR. GAINES, MR. GALLAGHER, MRS. KNOWLES, MRS. MARTINEZ, MRS. MORI, MR. MULVEY, MR. PHILLIPS, MRS. SHEPARD, MR. SIMS, MS. SMITH-FREEDMAN, MR. WARD, AND MR. BURMAN VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION; THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.

- Vote Determination of District Assessment FY24 (Appendix 2023-20)

Members received the Summary of Assessments for the five member municipalities for a total of \$14,272,175. Superintendent Evans reviewed the specific changes in enrollment and assessments between FY23 and FY24. Superintendent Evans provided a list of the actual assessments for each of our member municipalities for the approval of the Committee. Superintendent Evans reported that he was very pleased that the significant increase in State Aid, will lead to a smaller overall assessment increase than expected.

MR. GALLAGHER MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY MS. SMITH-FREEDMAN TO APPROVE THE DETERMINATION OF DISTRICT ASSESSMENTS FOR FY24 TOTTALLING \$14,272,175. MRS. BURNS, MRS. COMMERFORD, DR. HAMERLA, MRS. FOBES, MR. GAINE, MR. GALLAGHER, MRS. KNOWLES, MRS. MARTINEZ, MRS. MORI, MR. MULVEY, MR. PHILLIPS, MRS. SHEPARD, MR. SIMS, MS. SMITH-FREEDMAN, MR. WARD, AND MR. BURMAN VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION; THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.

- Superintendent Evans reported that with all the same numbers and information, we need to take another vote to include the utilization of our Certified Excess and Deficiency (E&D) of \$250,000 to offset assessments. MR. GALLAGHER MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY MR. BURMAN TO APPROVE THE UTILIZATION OF CERTIFIED EXCESS AND DEFICIENCY (E&D) OF \$250,000 TO OFFSET ASSESSMENTS. MRS. BURNS, MRS. COMMERFORD, DR. HAMERLA, MRS. FOBES, MR. GAINE, MR. GALLAGHER, MRS. KNOWLES, MRS. MARTINEZ, MRS. MORI, MR. MULVEY, MR. PHILLIPS, MRS. SHEPARD, MR. SIMS, MS. SMITH-FREEDMAN, MR. WARD, AND MR. BURMAN VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION; THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

- Non-Salary Financial Expenditure Report (Appendix 2023-21)

Members received the Non-Salary Expenditure Report along with some highlights. Mrs. Sharek reported that we have spent 53.6% of the FY23 Budget. Mrs. Sharek said she will likely have a budget transfer request at the April meeting.

COMMUNICATION

- Superintendent Evans announced that this weekend the boys' basketball team finished their season in Northfield on Friday evening. He said they lost their game but fought valiantly and did a great job. He said this is a young team and it will be exciting to see what's to come next year.

- Out of State Field Trip – Anaheim, California, BPA National Leadership Conference

Superintendent Evans reported that he just found out today that we had 18 students win gold medals at the Business Professionals of America State Conference. He said this a very big achievement. He said it has also been our policy to send student's winning gold medals to the national conference, which is in Anaheim, CA. In order for the students to attend the conference, we need a vote of the Committee. DR. HAMERLA MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY MRS. SHEPARD TO APPROVE THE OUT OF STATE

FIELD TRIP TO ANAHEIM, CA FOR THE BPA NATIONAL CONFERENCE. MRS. BURNS, MRS. COMMERFORD, DR. HAMERLA, MRS. FOBES, MR. GAINE, MR. GALLAGHER, MRS. KNOWLES, MRS. MARTINEZ, MRS. MORI, MR. MULVEY, MR. PHILLIPS, MRS. SHEPARD, MR. SIMS, MS. SMITH-FREEDMAN, MR. WARD, AND MR. BURMAN VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION; THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business

NEW BUSINESS

Superintendent Evans reported that he and Chairman Burman attended a Tri-County Legislative Meeting in Newton. Superintendent Evans reported that over thirty superintendents and school committee chairs were invited to discuss an increase of 14% of cost of all Special Education placements. Superintendent Evans reported this does not impact us directly, however, it does impact our sending districts. This was an unanticipated cost and districts are reeling from the costs. He reported that there have also been some hiring practices where large bonuses are being offered by these programs.

In response to a Committee members question, Superintendent Evans reviewed the district's response to the recent false alarm at Framingham High School, and our recent violent intruder practice drills.

The Committee will consider strategies to better inform our parent community about their meetings, agendas and activities.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Chair asked for a motion that the Committee go into Executive session pursuant to G.L. c. 30A, Section 21(a)(3) to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the Committee This requires a majority vote of the entire committee by a roll call vote. The School Committee will adjourn at the conclusion of the executive session. This requires a majority vote of the entire committee by a roll call vote. The School Committee will adjourn at the conclusion of the executive session. MR. GAINE MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY MRS. BURNS TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION AND TO ADJOURN AT THE END OF EXECUTIVE SESSION AND NOT RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION. MRS. BURNS, MRS. COMMERFORD,

DR. HAMERLA, MRS. FOBES, MR. GAINES, MR. GALLAGHER, MRS. KNOWLES, MRS. MARTINEZ, MRS. MORI, MR. MULVEY, MR. PHILLIPS, MRS. SHEPARD, MR. SIMS, MS. SMITH-FREEDMAN, MR. WARD, AND MR. BURMAN VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION; THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.

The next meeting is April 3, 2023
The meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

SOUTH MIDDLESEX REGIONAL VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

School Committee Meeting – March 6, 2023

ACTION SHEET

- MR. GALLAGHER MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MRS. BURNS, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF FEBRUARY 6, 2023. MRS. BURNS, MRS. COMMERFORD, DR. HAMERLA, MRS. FOBES, MR. GALLAGHER, MRS. MORI, MRS. SHEPARD, MR. SIMS, MR. WARD, AND MR. BURMAN VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION; MRS. KNOWLES, MRS. MARTINEZ, MR. PHILLIPS, AND MS. SMITH-FREEDMAN ABSTAINED. THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.
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