

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

**May 8, 2023**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

**ASHLAND**

Ed Burman  
William Gaine

**FRAMINGHAM**

Michele Burns (Remote)  
Linda Fobes (Remote)  
Rick Gallagher  
Sara Hamerla (Remote)  
Maria Martinez  
AJ Mulvey  
Brandon Ward

**HOLLISTON**

Sarah Commerford

**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  
William Hurley – Treasurer

*Chairman Burman called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM*

*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.*

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF APRIL 3, 2023**

Chairman Burman asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of April 3, 2023.

MS. SMITH-FREEDMAN MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MRS. SHEPARD, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF APRIL 3, 2023. MRS. BURNS, MRS. COMMERFORD, DR. HAMERLA, MRS. FOBES, MR. GALLAGHER, MRS. KNOWLES, MRS. MARTINEZ, MRS. SHEPARD, MS. SMITH-FREEDMAN AND MR. WARD VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION; MR. GAINES, MRS. MORI, MR. MULVEY AND MR. BURMAN ABSTAINED. THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION PASSED WITH A MAJORITY VOTE.

### **GUESTS AND VISITORS**

There were no guests or visitors

### **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

- Update OPEB Sub-Committee

Mr. Mulvey, Chair of the OPEB Sub-Committee reported that the sub-committee met this evening before the full Committee meeting. He said our insurance broker, Bartholomew & Company, provided us with an annual update of our OPEB Fund. He reported although 2022 was a difficult year, that we are in good standing. He reported that we are being responsible with our investing and that the recommendation is to stay the course and continue to contribute a 70/30 investment.

### **SUPERINTENDENT DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Read Restraint Policy (Appendix 2023-30)

Superintendent Evans reported that the state requires us to have a Restraint Policy. Superintendent Evans reported that because of a recent review, it was determined our Restraint Policy is out dated. Superintendent Evans reported that this Policy is more widely put to use in a specialized educational setting. He reported that the policy he is presenting is a model used by the state. Superintendent Evans

reported several members of the staff have restraint training and faculty and staff are aware of whom to contact in case of the need for restraint. Members of the Committee asked if either the people with restraint training names or positions be included into the policy. A Committee member requested the policy include the name of who gave consent to the District to use restraint, and that we insure a medical evaluation following any instance of a student being restrained.

- Out of State Field Trip Request – SkillsUSA Nat'l Leadership Conference (Appendix 2023-31)

Superintendent Evans presented an out of state field trip request for four students and two advisors to attend the SkillsUSA National Leadership and Development Conference in Atlanta, Georgia.

MR. GALLAGHER MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY MR. BURMAN TO APPROVE THE OUT OF STATE FIELD TRIP REQUEST. MRS. BURNS, MRS. COMMERFORD, DR. HAMERLA, MRS. FOBES, MR. GAINES, MR. GALLAGHER, MRS. KNOWLES, MRS. MARTINEZ, MRS. MORI, MR. MULVEY, MRS. SHEPARD, MS. SMITH-FREEDMAN, MR. WARD AND MR. BURMAN VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION. THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.

- Senior Activities/Year End Activities (Appendix 2023-32)

Committee members received a list of Senior Activities/Year End Activities. Superintendent Evans reported the Senior Awards Night on May 24<sup>th</sup> is a very nice evening when our students are celebrated, and he encourages members to attend if they are able to. He also reported that Graduation is on May 31<sup>st</sup> at the Warren Conference Center, with a rain date of June 1<sup>st</sup>. Superintendent Evans said if any members are interested in attending Graduation, to please let Mrs. Ward know so that she reserves a seat for you and a guest.

- Program Advisory Committee Meeting (Appendix 2023-33)

Superintendent Evans reminded Committee members of the Program Advisory Committee Meeting taking place on May 11<sup>th</sup>. He reported this event is more of a celebration and thank you for all of the work taken place in our programs with the help and guidance of advisory board members. He requested that if any members plan to attend to please RSVP.

- Advisory Board Applicants (Appendix 2023-34)

Superintendent Evans presented four Advisory Board Applications for the HVAC-R, Horticulture & Landscape Management, Dental Assisting and Automotive Programs for the review of the Committee.

MRS. COMMERFORD MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MR. GALLAGHER, TO APPROVE THE ADVISORY BOARD APPLICATIONS. MRS. BURNS, MRS. COMMERFORD, DR. HAMERLA, MRS. FOBES, MR. GAINES, MR. GALLAGHER, MRS. KNOWLES, MRS. MARTINEZ, MRS. MORI, MR. MULVEY, MRS. SHEPARD, MS. SMITH-FREEDMAN, MR. WARD AND MR. BURMAN VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION. THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.

- Municipal Meeting Update

Superintendent Evans reported that he and Mrs. Sharek presented our FY24 Budget and request to create a Capital Stabilization Account to our member communities. Ashland, Natick, Hopkinton and Framingham have approved the request for a Capital Stabilization Account with a zero balance for FY24. Superintendent Evans reported Ashland, Natick and Hopkinton have approved the FY24 Budget. Superintendent Evans said he is planning to attend the Holliston Town Meeting on May 15<sup>th</sup>. Superintendent Evans said he also expects to hear from the Framingham City Council at some point in the near future.

- Program License Update

Superintendent Evans reported that we have finally been able to deliver all the documentation necessary, including need for accommodations, to the State. We delivered the documentation in person, because the website was not geared toward students under 18. We are hoping we hear from the State before the end of the year because we would like to get the students tested and obtain the necessary licensure for students to get over this obstacle in order to start using the hoisting equipment for the start of the school year.

## **FINANCIAL MATTERS**

- Transportation Contract (Appendix 2023-35)

Mrs. Sharek reported that we are in the final optional year of a three-year contract with two optional years. Mrs. Sharek reported she has gathered information from several school districts to assess current market trends. Mrs. Sharek reported, based on the districts she reviewed, the majority had a much higher rate and only one had a lower daily rate. Mrs. Sharek said she does not believe that a bid process would result in a lower rate for FY24; therefore, she is recommending that the School Committee exercise the final one-year contract extension with Michael J. Connelly & Sons, Inc. for student transportation services. MR. MULVEY MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY MR. WARD TO APPROVE THE

ONE-YEAR CONTRACT EXTENSION WITH MICHAEL J. CONNELLY & SONS, INC. FOR STUDENT TRANSPORTATION FOR FY24. MRS. BURNS, MRS. COMMERFORD, DR. HAMERLA, MRS. FOBES, MR. GAINE, MR. GALLAGHER, MRS. KNOWLES, MRS. MARTINEZ, MRS. MORI, MR. MULVEY, MRS. SHEPARD, MS. SMITH-FREEDMAN AND MR. WARD VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION; MR. BURMAN ABSTAINED. THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.

- District Medical and Dental Insurance Plans (Appendix 2023-36)

Superintendent Evans requested approval for the FY24 Medical Insurance and Dental Insurance Plans. Superintendent Evans said we had a challenging year in terms of utilization and high medical claim issues. Superintendent Evans reported because of the high utilization our insurance broker started with a 20% increase. In working with our insurance broker, we have been able to get the increase down to a 16.4% increase, which he said is not ideal. Superintendent reported that after looking at all different options and after meeting with members of the Insurance Advisory Committee (IAC) they have unanimously decided that renewing with Harvard Pilgrim for Health Insurance, and changing dental to Altus Dental with a vision option if the employee would like, this is the best option for at least the beginning of FY24. Superintendent Evans reported that after discussions with our broker, we researched the possibility of going into the State GIC; however, you can only enroll two times a year, either July 1<sup>st</sup> or December 1<sup>st</sup>. Superintendent Evans said this was not advantageous now, but we will look into this for FY25, after reviewing with our insurance broker, what our utilization is and if our rates improve. Superintendent Evans reported that after meeting with the IAC, they unanimously voted to approve the FY24 Medical and Dental Insurance Renewal with Harvard Pilgrim, changing dental to Altus with a vision option. MR. MULVEY MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MR. GALLAGHER, TO APPROVE THE FY24 DISTRICT MEDICAL AND DENTAL INSURANCE PLANS AS RECOMMENDED BY THE INSURANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE. MRS. BURNS, MRS. COMMERFORD, DR. HAMERLA, MRS. FOBES, MR. GAINE, MR. GALLAGHER, MRS. KNOWLES, MRS. MARTINEZ, MRS. MORI, MR. MULVEY, MRS. SHEPARD, MS. SMITH-FREEDMAN, MR. WARD AND MR. BURMAN VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION. THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.

- Non-Salary Financial Expenditure Report (Appendix 2023-37)

Members received the Non-Salary Expenditure Report along with some highlights. Mrs. Sharek reported we have spent 70.7% of the budget to date. This is in line with where we should be at this

point in the fiscal year. Mrs. Sharek reported her team is reviewing account balances as we near the end of the fiscal year and will provide Committee members with a transfer request at the June meeting.

- Budget Transfer (Appendix 2023-38)

Mrs. Sharek presented a budget transfer totaling \$415,949 of surplus to be transferred to the Transportation Revolving Account to fund a portion of the transportation budget in FY24. As in previous years, this is an anticipated transfer. MR. BURMAN MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY MRS. SHEPARD TO APPROVE THE BUDGET TRANSFER OF \$415,949 TO THE TRANSPORTATION REVOLVING ACCOUNT. MRS. BURNS, MRS. COMMERFORD, DR. HAMERLA, MRS. FOBES, MR. GAINÉ, MR. GALLAGHER, MRS. KNOWLES, MRS. MARTINEZ, MRS. MORI, MR. MULVEY, MRS. SHEPARD, MS. SMITH-FREEDMAN, MR. WARD AND MR. BURMAN VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION. THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.

### **COMMUNICATION**

Superintendent Evans provided Committee members with articles highlighting Keefe Tech students from the Landscape Management Program participating in Arbor Day.

Superintendent Evans reminded Committee members that our June 12<sup>th</sup> meeting is the organizational meeting. Please give some thought for nominations for the 2023-2024 school year.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business

### **NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

There was no Executive Session

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Burman asked for a motion to adjourn.

MR. GAINÉ MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MRS. COMMERFORD, TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. MRS. BURNS, MRS. COMMERFORD, DR. HAMERLA, MRS. FOBES, MR. GAINÉ, MR. GALLAGHER, MRS. KNOWLES, MRS. MARTINEZ, MRS. MORI, MR. MULVEY, MRS. SHEPARD, MS. SMITH-FREEDMAN, MR.

WARD, AND MR. BURMAN VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION. THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

SOUTH MIDDLESEX REGIONAL VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

School Committee Meeting – May 8, 2023

**ACTION SHEET**

- ❖ MS. SMITH-FREEDMAN MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MRS. SHEPARD, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF APRIL 3, 2023. MRS. BURNS, MRS. COMMERFORD, DR. HAMERLA, MRS. FOBES, MR. GALLAGHER, MRS. KNOWLES, MRS. MARTINEZ, MRS. SHEPARD, MS. SMITH-FREEDMAN AND MR. WARD VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION; MR. GAINES, MRS. MORI, MR. MULVEY AND MR. BURMAN ABSTAINED. THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION PASSED WITH A MAJORITY VOTE.
  
- ❖ MR. GALLAGHER MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY MR. BURMAN TO APPROVE THE OUT OF STATE FIELD TRIP REQUEST. MRS. BURNS, MRS. COMMERFORD, DR. HAMERLA, MRS. FOBES, MR. GAINES, MR. GALLAGHER, MRS. KNOWLES, MRS. MARTINEZ, MRS. MORI, MR. MULVEY, MRS. SHEPARD, MS. SMITH-FREEDMAN, MR. WARD AND MR. BURMAN VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION. THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.
  
- ❖ MRS. COMMERFORD MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MR. GALLAGHER, TO APPROVE THE ADVISORY BOARD APPLICATIONS. MRS. BURNS, MRS. COMMERFORD, DR. HAMERLA, MRS. FOBES, MR. GAINES, MR. GALLAGHER, MRS. KNOWLES, MRS. MARTINEZ, MRS. MORI, MR. MULVEY, MRS. SHEPARD, MS. SMITH-FREEDMAN, MR. WARD AND MR. BURMAN VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION. THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.
  
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