

**JOINT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
OLD ROCHESTER REGIONAL DISTRICT SCHOOL COMMITTEE
MASSACHUSETTS SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENCY UNION #55**

October 9, 2019 – 6:30 p.m.

Media Room, Jr. High School

Old Rochester Regional School District

133 Marion Road

Mattapoisett, MA 02739

District Members Present: Cary Humphrey, Chairperson, Joe Pires, Michelle Smith, James Muse, Stefan Gabriel, and Heather Burke Paul Goulet and Tina Rood.

District Members Absent: Joe Pires and Suzanne Tseki,

Union Members Present: Carole Clifford, Anne Fernandes, Nichole Daniel, Shannon Finning, Karin Barrows, Sharon Hartley (via phone) April Rios and Robin Rounseville

Union Members Absent: Ronald Gerhart

Other Staff Members Present: Douglas White Jr., Superintendent of Schools, Diana Russo, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent, as well as many members of the administrative team in the audience and members of the press.

Meeting was called to order at 6:33 p.m. by Chairperson Humphrey of the ORR School Committee and Ms. Fernandes of the Massachusetts School Superintendency Union #55.

Superintendent White welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that Chairperson Hartley would be joining the meeting by telephone and that Ms. Fernandes would be leading the meeting on the Mass. Union Supt. #55 side.

OPEN COMMENTS: NONE

Chairperson's Report: NO COMMENTS

Mr. Muse expressed and informed the School Committees of the death of Margaret (MarDee) Xifaras. He went on to explain that MarDee was a great advocate for education, citizen activist, he explained that she played a vital role in state and national democratic party politics, she was the driving force behind the creation of the state's first and only public law school, a former trustee of the UMass Law School, he expressed his condolences to the family and to the community and expressed that for him she had been a mentor.

Ms. Finning also expressed that as an administrator for UMass Dartmouth, that community has also been dealing with her death, she also expressed that her daughters are graduates of ORR and her grandchildren are students in our schools, she sent prayers to all family.

Superintendent's Report:

The superintendent expressed that he did not have a report, but referred to Mr. Nelson so that he could give an overview of the October full day professional development day that is coming up on Friday, October 11th.

Mr. Nelson expressed that everyone is invited to attend, and he went on to give everyone an overview of what the day will look like, he expressed the full day inservice is offered to all teachers

across our district. He mentioned that the keynote speaker will be Trevor Muir, he also explained that the day will focus on building project based learning.

Motion to approve the June 4, 2019 minutes as presented
District, Mr. Muse, (Goulet and Rood abstained)
Union, Ms. Clifford
District, Ms. Smith
Union, Ms. Finning (Rios and Rounseville abstained)
Motion Passed

Motion to approve the August 28, 2019 minutes as presented
District, Mr. Muse,
Union, Ms. Clifford
District, Ms. Smith
Union, Ms. Rios
Motion Passed

V. General

A. Substitute Eligibility Requirements and Compensation

Dr. White explained this document was put in place in 2002 and that administration just wanted to update the information and make it clear how the district is handling long term substitutes as well as substitutes, this is an adopted policy, if the committee would like they could take a vote just to update the new format and rates. Mr. Gabriel asked what's a typical number of hours in a daily rate. Dr. White expressed that it is 6.5 hours.

Motion to approve Substitute Eligibility Requirements and Compensation as presented
District, Mr. Muse
Union, Ms. Clifford
District, Ms. Smith
Union, Ms. Barrows
Motion Passed

B. Superintendent Search Consultant Appointment

Mr. Humphrey explained that the four chairs along with Ms. Clifford, Mr. Goulet and Ms. Fernandes met with 4 consultants last week. Mr. Humphrey explained that Wednesday they met with NESDEC, HYA and Cape Cod Collaborative and then on Friday they met with MASC. Mr. Humphrey expressed that for the most part all presentations were very similar.

Mr. Humphrey expressed that he was very impressed with MASC. Mr. Humphrey expressed that MASC was the number one choice for 3 of the 4 chairs and was 2nd choice for the 4th chair. Mr. Humphrey expressed that the recommendation of the 4 chairs would be to hire MASC to do the superintendent search.

Ms. Hartley expressed that they did reach out to regional districts for reference checks, and heard back from about a third of them, and everyone I spoke to about MASC encouraged us with great vigor to go with MASC, Ms. Hartley also expressed that the cost is also much less than the others, she thought it was important to mention those two factors as well.

Ms. Finning asked anyone checked references, in particular with Silver Lake Regional about their experience with MASC.

Ms. Smith explained that Silver Lake is taking place right now.

Ms. Hartley mentioned that she reached out to regional districts only, and she expressed that she reached out to districts for all 4 consultants, but only heard back from districts who had used MASC. She explained that they gave MASC glowing recommendations. She mentioned that one of the districts in particular started off without a consultant and it didn't work out and then MASC took over and everything ended up going very well.

Ms. Finning expressed that she wanted to be fair to the other three consultants, and asked if we gave school districts enough time to respond. Mr. Humphrey expressed that calls were made about two weeks ago.

Ms. Finning expressed that she was shocked that no other districts heard back and she asked if Ms. Hartley had a list of districts, Ms. Hartley apologized but she did not have a list.

Mr. Muse expressed that he had reservations with MASC, he expressed the organization itself is very well respected. He expressed that they also performed the search 10 years ago. Mr. Muse expressed that he asked MASC representative a question about what he felt was the most important criteria in a superintendent and that he received a roundabout answer, he did explain that he then did answer that most superintendent candidates would have/need experience in curriculum, special education and school business administration. Mr. Muse expressed that he then asked a follow up question around special education and if the candidate was from out of state, and the representative expressed that since the SPED laws were federal laws that should not be a problem. Mr. Muse was perplexed with that answer because he knows that Mass. Sped Laws are quite different. Mr. Muse expressed he was a little disappointed with that response.

Mr. Gabriel asked if the 4 chairs felt that MASC had a more well put together approach.

Ms. Smith expressed that felt that all companies were offering the same product, she explained that she believed that HYA was a little bit more high tech, but that the end result was the same. She expressed that the presentations were done differently. She explained that they expressed that Superintendent's typically stay an average of 3.1 years.

Ms. Burke stated that since MASC is working on the Silver Lake search, she asked if it that would be considered a conflict of interest, especially due to the close proximity. Especially if the pool is shallow.

Ms. Rood expressed that she saw that one of the companies had a portal with all the information. She asked how MASC was planning to reach everyone, and what is their plan?

Mr. Humphrey, expressed that he doesn't believe that the MASC approach is much different from HYA they are just about it in a different manner.

Ms. Rood expressed that she was referring to the manner in which they would reach stakeholders.

Mr. Humphrey expressed that in that manner all consultants had the same approach, they mentioned focus groups and surveys.

Mr. Muse agreed with Ms. Rood on the importance of establishing the criteria.

Ms. Finning explained that she noticed that while MASC is only charging \$9,500 it's important to note that HYA also offers a competitor match. Ms. Smith expressed that the 4 chairs spoke about that as well. Mr. Humphrey explained that the cost did not sway him from the decision.

Ms. Finning expressed that while all companies seem to offer the same type of service HYA offered a more detailed plan when it came to surveys and focus groups, therefore not really comparing apples to apples.

Mr. Muse expressed that he feels very strongly about doing an internal search before a national search is considered. He explained that these districts have a very complex makeup and if there is someone internal that is competent, qualified and/or interested that the school committees would be wise to consider that option first. Mr. Muse mentioned that even with an internal search we would need the support of a consultant to do the community outreach.

Ms. Hartley expressed that 3 out of 4 chairs agreed that MASC was well prepared, professional and impressive.

Mr. Muse expressed that the 4 chairs came away with a clear recommendation for MASC.

Mr. Gabriel expressed that he was shocked that the HYA references did not return Ms. Hartley's call. Mr. Gabriel asked if Silver Lake was hiring on the same time frame. Someone expressed that they believed that Silver Lake was quite a few months ahead of ORR.

Ms. Barrows asked if MASC offers any guarantees. Ms. Hartley explained that if the superintendent does not stay for more than 2 years then they will do the next search at no cost.

Ms. Finning asked Ms. Hartley what school districts she reached out to. Mrs. Hartley did not have that information available.

Ms. Fernandes expressed that she was part of all the interviews and that MASC was also her first choice.

Ms. Clifford expressed that she was only part of the first three, that in her opinion HYA was superior, she expressed that they did a nice job explaining the internal search process and the technology behind the search.

Ms. Smith made a motion on the DISTRICT side to hire MASC as the consultant for the superintendent search.

Seconded, Mr. Goulet
MOTION PASSED

Ms. Rounseville made a motion on the UNION side to hire MASC as the consultant for the superintendent search.

Seconded, Ms. Daniel (Finning & Rios apposed)
MOTION PASSED

C. Next Steps

Ms. Hartley expressed that next steps would be to work out an agreement with MASC and also try to setup a future meeting for MASC to come meet with the committees. She also expressed that next steps would be to set criteria, do focus groups and set a formal search committee and MASC will be advising us throughout the process.

Mr. Muse explained that MASC did explain that the makeup of the search committee had to include members from all stakeholder groups, and explained that school committee representation could not be the majority.

Ms. Clifford asked about the internal posting and if it should be done sooner than national search. Ms. Daniel expressed that the criteria should be created for both internal and national applicants.

Ms. Fernandes expressed she believes that criteria will come from the focus groups and the survey results.

OPEN COMMENTS: NONE

Motion to approve executive session minutes of June 4, 2019

District, Ms. Smith (Goulet and Rood abstained)

Union, Ms. Clifford

Seconded

District, Mr. Goulet

Union, Ms. Barrows, (Rios abstained)

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chairperson Humphrey (DISTRICT) and Ms. Fernandes (UNION) made a motion to go into Executive Session at 7:23 p.m. to discuss strategy with respect to non-union personnel and to come out of executive session only to adjourn.

District Roll Call Vote

Humphrey: YES, Smith: YES, Muse: YES, Gabriel: YES, Burke: YES, Rood: YES, Goulet: YES

Union Roll Call Vote:

Clifford: YES, Fernandes: YES, Daniel: YES, Finning: YES, Barrows: YES, Rounseville: YES, Rios: YES, Clifford: YES, Hartley: YES.

Chairperson Humphrey (DISTRICT) and Ms. Fernandes (UNION) made a motion to come out of Executive Session at 7:53 p.m. only to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 7:53 p.m.