

**BERLIN-BOYLSTON REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE
OPEN MEETING MINUTES**

Wednesday May 3, 2023 6:30 p.m.
Tahanto Regional Middle High School
1001 Main Street, Boylston, MA 01505
Multi-Purpose Room

Drive

Present:

School Committee: Mr. Michael Totman, Chair; Mrs. Meagan Grill, Vice Chair; Mrs. Jessica Degliaberti; Mrs. Julie Lee; Mrs. Lisa Mair

Administration: Ms. Carol Costello, Acting-Superintendent; Mrs. Lisa Courchaine, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent; Mrs. Nancy Konisky, Director of Finance & Operations; Mrs. Mr. Paul Mara, Director of Technology; Ms. Sally Stukuls, Interim Tahanto Principal.

(Open Meeting Minutes taken by Lisa Courchaine, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent)

I. Call to Order

- Mr. Totman called the meeting to order at 6:32pm.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Public Comments

None

IV. Communications

None

V. Consent Agenda

Mrs. Lee made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Mrs. Grill seconded. Vote: 5-0, Motion Passes.

- A. [Payroll and Payable Warrants](#)
- B. [4-4-23 Open Meeting Minutes](#)

C. 12-13-22 Executive Session Minutes

VI. **Reports**

A. Chair's Report - *Mr. Michael Totman*

- Mr. Totman thanked voters for coming out to the town meetings on Monday night. The committee owes special thanks to the presidents of the PTO's for getting parents together to vote.
- Based on the turnout, Mr. Totman thinks people are excited and ready to support the school system.

B. Student Report - *Miss Caroline MacKenzie*

- Not present.

C. Subcommittee Reports

1. Budget, Facilities, and Safety – *Mrs. Meagan Grill*

- None

2. Student Success and Technology – *Mr. Michael Totman*

- None

3. Policy, Personnel, Negotiations, and School Committee Effectiveness – *Mrs. Lori-Anne Hart*

- Mrs. Hart not present, however, the school committee will be taking a look at fundraising and cash donation policies.

D. Acting Superintendent of Schools [Report](#) - *Ms. Carol Costello*

1. Visits to Schools by Daniel Joseph (Portrait of a Graduate work)

- [Request for Parent Focus Group Participation](#) - Ms. Costello is seeking input from the School Committee in forming parent focus groups to meet with our Portrait of a Graduate consultant, Daniel Joseph from CBE Solutions, LLC (www.cbolution.com.) Mr. Joseph will be visiting each of the schools on May 22 and May 23, 2023 to do site visits and collect observational data on our schools for subsequent discussions with administration as part of our summer work. During that time, he will do informal walkthroughs in classrooms, and meet with three separate focus groups - parent, staff, and student.

The request to have parent representatives identified by the School Committee speaks to your relationship with a wide variety, and working knowledge, of the parent community in each school and your ability to identify parent representatives who will speak to the current culture and climate of each school from their perspective. The identification of parent groups is requested by Friday, May 12, 2023.

Ms. Costello is seeking five parent representatives per school to meet with Mr. Joseph for approximately 30-40 minutes as follows:

Monday, May 22nd: (proposed schedule)

8:30am - 11:00am - **Boylston Elementary School**

- 8:30am - 9:00am - Meet with selected parent group (Meet with selected parent group)

12:00pm - 2:30pm - **Berlin Memorial School**

- 12:00pm - 12:30pm - Meet with the selected parent group

Tuesday, May 23rd: TAH (proposed schedule)

- 8:30am - 9:30am - Meet with selected High School parent group
- 12:30pm - 1:00pm - Meet with selected Middle School parent group

2. Update on Summer Retreat Plans

- The School Committee Summer Workshop/Retreat will take place from 8:30am - 3:00pm on Tuesday, July 25, 2023 at the New England (Tower Hill) Botanic Gardens. The Committee will work with Dr. Anthony Bent, retired Superintendent for the Shrewsbury School District, former M.A.S.S. president and active member of the organization. Dr. Bent will be contacting members of the School Committee individually in mid-June to learn more about each member before the session.

3. Nancy Filgate from the Boylston Historical Society called Ms. Costello to share a new publication of Boylston's Civil War Veterans, a book that is well documented and researched by several Tahanto Regional High School Students called the Boylston Veterans of the American Civil War has been published by the Boylston Historical Collaborative.

4. Assabet Valley Collaborative Quarterly Update

- a. [AVC's FY22 Annual Report](#) (Submitted to DESE)
- b. [AVC's FY22 Financial Statement](#) (Submitted to DESE and State Auditor's Office)

E. Director of Finance and Operations-*Ms. Nancy Konisky*

1. **Collaborative Oil Bid**

Berlin-Boylston is one of several area school districts participating in a collaborative procurement for heating oil through the French River Education Center. By participating in this procurement as a group instead of individually, districts can aggregate their volume and secure more advantageous pricing than each district can do on its own.

Mrs. Konisky indicated BBRSD had bid several times, hoping for a better outcome since the market has fluctuated so much this year. A bid was received We finally received the bid that we were looking for, and it was awarded on March 30, 2023, to Dennis K. Burke for \$3.0442 per gallon. This cost increase is well in line with what we estimated and factored into the district's budget for FY24. Last year's price per gallon was \$2.90. The market has been fluctuating, so this is a great price.

Acceptance of this oil bid is required by the school committee.

2. Excess and Deficiency Certification

The MA Department of Revenue's Division of Local Services certified the District's Excess and Deficiency balance as of June 30, 2022, for \$369,571. This amount is a decrease of \$12,722 from the prior year due to misc receivables during the year that were applied to the operating budget. The DOR's official communication and support document is posted on the drive.

Acceptance of this certification is required by the school committee.

3. MIIA Risk Management Grant and MIIA Wellness Grant

MIIA (Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association) is a nonprofit organization serving its membership, consisting of municipalities and regional school districts, in procuring health care benefits and insurance offerings.

Annually, they offer their members to apply for an annual Risk Management Grant and a Wellness Grant.

The Risk Management Grant is intended to reduce the risk of a claim for the insurance carrier. This year will be receiving \$6,000 that will be applied toward the Boylston Elementary School Facility Assessment.

This wellness grant is offered annually and provides an opportunity for its members with resources for creating and maintaining great places to work. Members are encouraged to invest in projects or equipment that promote a good workforce and a healthy work culture. This year we received \$10,000, and we used it for the district offices. We updated the kitchen area with a new refrigerator, coffee maker, and toaster oven. Everyone in the district offices received new ergonomic office chairs. We purchased new visitor chairs for the entryway and in misc—offices, some tables, and new pictures on the walls.

Acceptance of both of these grants is required by the school committee.

4. Donation of Funds by NBP III Boylston LLC for \$35,000

We had a donation for \$35,000 from NBP III Boylston LLC. The donation letter that is in your drive states that the funds are to be used by the Berlin Boylston School District for the Facility Assessment at Boylston Elementary Schools. The donation letter states that it may be expended under the direction of the school's Superintendent, with approval by the Board of Selectmen. The Board of Selectmen accepted the donation of \$35,000 for a facility assessment at BES to be expended under the direction of the Superintendent at their January 17, 2023 meeting.

Acceptance of this donation is required by the school committee.

5. Grant from Nutrition Equipment Assistance Department of Education

We have been awarded a Nutrition Equipment Grant from the Department of Education for \$4,039. These funds were applied towards a heated mobile cabinet for Berlin Memorial School.

Acceptance of this grant is required by the school committee.

6. The FY22 Audited Financial Statements are in your packet for review and need approval by the school committee.

VII. Business Items

A. Berlin Scholarship / Approve Marion Hoffman Award

- Julie move to June's meeting for vote (too early)

B. School Committee Calendar SY23-24 - First Read

- Mr. Totman asked for any questions.
- Discussion around 5:00pm start time.
- Put on for a vote in June

C. Policy Subcommittee items to Review - Mrs. Lori-Anne Hart

1. Policy AC: NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY INCLUDING HARASSMENT AND RETALIATION
 - a. Grievance Process for Title IX Complaints

Mrs. Degliaberti made a motion to approve Policy AC: Non-Discrimination Policy including Harassment and Retaliation Grievance Process for Title IX Complaints. Mrs. Lee seconded. Discussion ensues. Vote: 5-0, Motion Passes.

D. 7th Grade Out of State Field Trip

- Field Trip Application

Sally-Ann Stukuls presented the field trip to Roger Williams Park Zoo on 6/2/23. Students will use their content knowledge of ecology to complete a scavenger hunt consisting of questions on specific exhibits, riddles, and a collection of photos they must take. They will also get free time to visit the animals in their small groups with a chaperone. Roger Williams Park Zoo was

chosen because most students frequent Southwick Zoo. Students will be back at Tahanto at approximately 2:00pm.

Discussion regarding how the trip is funded. Mrs. Nancy Konisky clarified what the student activities funds are used for.

Mrs. Grill made a motion to approve the 7th Grade Out of State Field Trip. Mrs. Lee seconded. Vote: 5-0, Motion Passes.

- E. Appoint Joseph Meichelbeck as BBRSD District Treasurer for 2023-2024 - **Vote Mrs. Lee made a motion to appoint Joseph Meichelbeck as BBRSD's District Treasurer for 2023-2024. Mrs. Grill seconded. Vote: 5-0, Motion Passes.**

Mrs. Grill shared Mr. Meichelbeck's background and how he has been with the district for 10 years.

- F. Request for approval of Excess and Deficiency Certification
Mrs. Grill made a motion to approve the Excess and Deficiency. Mrs. Lee seconded. Vote: 5-0, Motion Passes.

- G. Request for Collaborative Oil Bid
Mrs. Lee made a motion to approve the oil bid at \$3.0442 per gallon from Dennis K. Burke. Mrs. Degliaberti seconded. Vote: 5-0, Motion Passes.

- H. Acceptance of MIAA Wellness Grant for \$10,000
Mrs. Lee made a motion to approve the acceptance of MIAA Wellness Grant for \$10,000. Mrs. Grill seconded. Vote: 5-0, Motion Passes.

Mrs. Grill made a motion to approve the acceptance of MIAA Wellness Grant for \$6,000. Mrs. Lee seconded. Vote: 5-0, Motion Passes.

- I. Acceptance of Nutrition Equipment Assistance Grant for \$4,039
Mrs. Grill made a motion to approve the acceptance of the Nutrition Equipment Assistance Grant. Mrs. Degliaberti seconded. Vote: 5-0, Motion Passes.

Mr. Totman read the Public Gifts to the Schools KCD Policy. Last updated in 2018. Mr. Totman will bring to the Policy Subcommittee for updates and to strengthen language. He recommends getting documentation from donors which indicates how the donation should be spent and/or what it should be used for. He also recommends adding language for fundraisers to make sure the money is raised honestly and make sure the schools know what the fundraiser was for and make sure it is used in the spirit of the specific fundraiser.

Mr. Totman notes that KCDA Policy recognizes the Community Fundraising for Schools. Groups should be seeking approval from the School Committee before they begin a fundraising event in advance. The School Committee should have an official procedure to distribute. Funds received from fundraising should be used for the intended purpose.

- J. Acceptance of Donation from Northbridge CRE for \$35,000 for the BES Facility Assessment

Mrs. Degliaberti made a motion to approve the Donation from Northbridge CRE for \$35,000 for the BES Facility Assessment. Mrs. Lee seconded.

Short discussion about the letter ensued. A copy of the check is in the drive.

All in favor aye. Vote: 5-0, Motion Passes.

- K. Acceptance of [Nature's Classroom Donation](#) Donation in the amount of \$6,391.14

Mrs. Grill made a motion to approve the Nature's Classroom Donation in the amount of \$6,391.14 as presented. Mrs. Degliaberti seconded.

Donation specifically says the money is to remain with the Nature's Classroom Trip and any money left over is to be used by future classes for the same purpose. Committee discusses the cost per student to go on the trip.

All in favor aye. Vote: 5-0, Motion Passes.

- L. Acceptance of [FY22 Audit](#)

Mrs. Grill made a motion to accept the FY22 Audit. Mrs. Lee seconded. Vote: 5-0, Motion passes.

VIII. Future Agenda Item Proposals

- Policies to be updated

- Assign Fuller Foundation to sub committees. Mr. Totman will get the Success Committee to work on this.
- Mrs. Lee suggested inviting a student from each grade to come to a future School Committee meeting to share what they have been doing.
- Conversation with the PTO's on future plans and talk to them about how we can work together.
- Mrs. Mair spoke to mom from BMS who wants to help boost performing arts.

IX. Upcoming Meeting Dates

- June 6, 2023

Mrs. Lee made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mrs. Grill seconded. Vote: 5-0, Motion passes.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30pm.

The listing of items is those reasonably anticipated by the Chair which may be discussed at the meeting. Not all items listed may, in fact, be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.

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