

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
OF THE
DARTMOUTH SCHOOL COMMITTEE

February 13, 2017

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Mr. Christopher Oliver at 7:40 p.m. in the James M. Quinn Elementary School. He noted the meeting was being videotaped by the Dartmouth High school media club for future broadcast over DCTV as well as the Dartmouth High school YouTube channel.

Present were the following members: Mr. Oliver, Mr. Garth, Dr. Karafotis and Mr. Nunes. Student Representative Stacie Hartman was present. Mr. Oliver noted that Dr. Jenkins would not be in attendance at this evening's meeting.

Also present: Dr. Bonny Gifford, Ms. Michelle Roy, Mr. Kiely and Mrs. Genthner.

Visitors present: Mrs. Cabral-Townsend, Mr. Grandfield, Mrs. Brooks, Mrs. Maccini, Mrs. Pavao, Mrs. McHenry and members of the community.

The Committee participated in the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Oliver invited members of the general public to speak relative to items on this evening's Agenda.

Renee Vieira, President of Dartmouth Educators Association, in reference to the FY18 budget, offered comments on the need for additional instructional personnel particularly at the high school in the areas of physical education and science as well as the need for teacher assistants specifically at the elementary level.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Dr. Karafotis, to approve the Regular Session Minutes of December 12, 2016 and January 30, 2017 as written. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Dr. Karafotis, to approve the Executive Session Minutes of December 12, 2016 and January 30, 2017, as written, with the stipulation that they be held until such time as the matter or matters for which the sessions were held have been resolved. The motion carried unanimously.

PRESENTATIONS

Mr. Kiely presented the proposed FY18 school department budget to the committee for its review. Mr. Kiely prefaced his presentation noting central administration had met with school principals and the budget sub-committee.

Mr. Kiely stated that much work has been done analyzing the needs based proposals submitted by school administrators. Mr. Kiely remarked that his presentation includes proposals that were funded and those that were not.

Mr. Kiely stated that his presentation illustrates all the information that guides the administration in the budget decision making process.

Mr. Kiely stated that the FY18 proposed budget is \$41,915,606. He explained the budget by category and percentage of total budget: Instruction (including teachers, teacher assistants, principals, books) which represents 75%; Other services (including transportation) represents 10%; Maintenance and utilities (including maintenance and custodial personnel and related costs) represents 8%; Administration (including district administration, technology district systems and legal costs) represents 3% and Tuitions (includes student out of district placement) represents 3%.

Mr. Kiely noted this year's budget proposal is consistent with last year's. And, although the amount of the budget is greater, the percentages for the budget categories have not changed.

Mr. Kiely listed and explained the budget recommendations which included instructional additions, including adding a pre-school classroom at the Potter school, and reductions.

Mr. Kiely listed and explained the budget requests that the district was not able to fund.

Mr. Kiely stated that the FY18 proposed budget is a 2.6% increase from last year and the unfunded requests would amount to an additional 1.7% increase which, given the Town's current economic circumstances, the district did not feel it could incorporate in to the proposed budget.

Mr. Kiely concluded by stating there is detail and back up information in the budget binders provided to the committee members and that the budget will be posted on the district web site for the public's review.

Mr. Kiely added that more discussion on the budget can be had at the next school committee meeting and the Public Hearing which date should be set tonight.

Mr. Garth made comments on the lack of Town funding which is reflected in what the budget could not address.

Dr. Karafotis asked if the proposed pre-school at Potter will be an integrated pre-school.

Mr. Kiely stated that it would be.

Mr. Nunes stated his appreciation of the district and all the effort that went in to the budget process and expressed his hope that the State will be able to send more money to the Town when its finances are settled.

Mr. Oliver thanked Mr. Kiely for his presentation and noted the diligent effort made by all parties.

Mr. Oliver added to the comments of Mr. Garth and Mr. Nunes stating he hoped in the future more funding would be made available to the school department so that programs like an In-house Behavior program could be implemented.

Mr. Oliver asked Mr. Kiely if he wanted to schedule a Public Hearing.

Mr. Kiely pointed out that there are three meetings scheduled in March. He stated that the public hearing on the proposed FY18 budget would need to be scheduled on one of the earlier dates and that at a subsequent meeting the committee would need to vote on the budget. Mr. Kiely proposed removing the March 13th meeting date.

Mr. Oliver asked whether or not school choice is held on the same night as the budget hearing.

Mr. Kiely stated that school choice is heard on the same night as the budget hearing.

Mr. Oliver asked for information regarding the status of school choice for the current school year prior to any hearing on whether or not to continue school choice in SY17-18.

Mr. Garth asked that the matters not be heard at the same meeting.

Mr. Oliver asked Mr. Garth if he is recommending we keep all three meeting dates in March.

Mr. Garth stated no.

Mr. Nunes asked that the March 27th hearing date be kept in order to vote on the budget and remove one of the earlier meetings.

Dr. Karafotis asked if school choice could be discussed at the March 27th hearing.

Mr. Oliver asked what the deadline is for deciding on school choice.

Dr. Gifford stated that the deadline is in May.

Mr. Oliver stated that the committee will meet on March 6th, the March 13th meeting will be removed from the calendar and the committee will vote on the budget on the March 27th as well as have a discussion on school choice. The vote on school choice will be continued until April. The public hearing on the budget will be March 6th.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Student Representative Stacie Hartman updated the Committee on activities taking place at Dartmouth High School:

- Congratulations to the Junior Varsity Hockey Team who finished their season undefeated and won the championship game this weekend. The Varsity Hockey team beat Apponequet and will be going on to the state tournament.
- Many of the winter sports are ending their regular season and are having their senior nights as they head in to playoff season.
- The annual Pops Concert is on March 2nd which is a fundraiser for the DSMA. Refreshments will be available to add to fundraising efforts.
- Dartmouth High Theater Company will be presenting its performance competition piece entitled of "One Hundred Tenth Street Station" to the school on March 3rd as well as competing in Bourne on March 4th at the Massachusetts Theatre Guild.
- Dartmouth high school has had some controversy over its College Acceptance Board in the lobby. A compromise has been reached between the administration and students and the board will be moved to the guidance office.

NEW BUSINESS

- **2016 Annual Report**

Dr. Gifford submitted the 2016 Annual Report for approval.

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Mr. Garth, to approve the 2016 Annual Report as written. The motion carried unanimously.

- **2017-2018 School Calendar**

Dr. Gifford submitted the 2017-2018 school calendar to the committee for review.

Mr. Oliver asked if there was anything proposed that differed from previous school calendars.

Dr. Gifford stated that there was not.

Mr. Garth asked for consideration to staff and students of the Jewish faith and proposed that Rosh Hashanah, which falls on September 22, 2017, be a day off from school and to make August 28th the start date.

Mr. Oliver asked Dr. Gifford what other area school district's do concerning Good Friday.

Dr. Gifford stated that most schools still have Good Friday off.

Dr. Karafotis voiced her concern about adding days off to the school calendar as it may lead to other requests for days off. Although not suggesting removing Good Friday as a day off, it would be preferable to adding days off.

Mr. Nunes noted the historical precedent when teachers were encouraged not to put tests on religious holidays and would prefer to leave Good Friday on the calendar.

Mr. Oliver cited policy that any absence due to religious obligations would be excused and that teachers should not administer exams on religious holidays.

Ms. Roy noted the policy for opening school is Tuesday and Wednesday for staff and Thursday and Friday for students. It was noted that that would need to be amended in order to implement changes that are being proposed tonight.

Dr. Gifford noted last year's discussion about committee policy and that a memo was found that had different language however we did not come back to address the matter.

Mr. Oliver stated that the policy sub-committee should look in to this matter.

Mr. Oliver agreed with Dr. Karafotis and while not advocating removing Good Friday from the calendar it is preferable to adding additional days off for religious holidays.

Mr. Oliver concluded that he was not in favor of changing the tradition of having Good Friday off.

Mr. Oliver asked if a vote on the school calendar was needed.

Dr. Gifford said it was not.

Mr. Oliver suggested that the committee continue its review of the 2017-2018 school calendar and vote on it at the next meeting.

- **Superintendent's Update** – Dr. Gifford reported on the following:

Early release day was last week and we are fortunate that most of the professional development sessions that were offered that day were run by our own staff.

iStem Club was at Quinn last week, students are very receptive to the program.

Kindness Challenge was conducted throughout the district last week.

The maintenance and custodial staff did a great job clearing the snow from the school parking lots and sidewalks.

The pre-kindergarten class being proposed at the Potter school has brought up the issue of space in the school. The Potter administration has been working to find space conducive to a pre-kindergarten classroom.

Mr. Oliver stated he would not want to displace another class to accommodate a new pre-kindergarten class and perhaps there is potential to have the class at another location such as at the Quinn school.

Dr. Gifford noted that this summer with the master facility plan the district will be looking at plans, in the long term, for additions or renovations to schools.

- **Report of the Chair**

No comment was offered.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Mr. Nunes reported that the annual NESBA Home Show will be held on Saturday, February 25th at the high school. He added that March is music-in-our-school month and that the honoree at this year's Pops Concert scheduled for March 2nd will be Joan Boucher.

Mr. Garth thanked those responsible for the presentation given earlier in the evening recognizing the Gidley School.

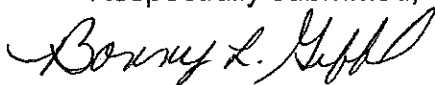
Dr. Karafotis asked if the Gidley school video presentation will be televised on DCTV.

Mr. Oliver stated that the whole presentation will be televised on DCTV as well as on the high school's YouTube channel.

Next Meeting: The next meeting of the School Committee is scheduled for Monday, March 6, 2017 at 6:30 pm, at the Quinn School Community Room.

Mr. Nunes moved, seconded by Mr. Garth to adjourn to Executive Session at 8:40 p.m. for the purpose to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining with union and non-union personnel. The Committee will not be returning to Open Session. On a roll call vote with all members voting in the affirmative, the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Bonny L. Gifford, Ed. D.
Superintendent