



SCHOOL COMMITTEE

OPEN SESSION MINUTES NOVEMBER 21, 2017

Meeting:	School Committee
Date:	November 21, 2017
Location:	MERMHS Library
Attendees:	Pamela Beaudoin, Superintendent of Schools, Avi Urbas, Director of Finance , Ann Cameron, Chairman, Julie Riordan, Co-Chairman, Sarah Wolf, and Rachel Fitzgibbon.
Absent:	Shannon Erdmann, Caroline Weld, and Ken Warnock.
Recorded by:	Adele Ardolino, Secretary

A. Call to Order

Ms. Cameron called the School Committee Business Meeting Open Session to order at 6:08 p.m., and thanked the technician from the Cape Ann Channel for filming this meeting.

B. Business Meeting Open Session

- 1) **Public Comment:** None.
- 2) **Student Report:** None.
- 3) **Chairman's Report:** None.
- 4) **Consent Agenda**

- Acceptance of Warrants: Vouchers 1025, 1026, 1027, 1028.

- Minutes from November 7, 2017 meeting.

Ms. Riordan made a motion to approve the Warrants. Ms. Wolf seconded the motion. Vote: Unanimous by Ms. Cameron, Ms. Riordan, Ms. Wolf, and Ms. Fitzgibbon.

5) Sub-Committee Reports

- Elementary Facilities (Caroline Weld/Ann Cameron)
Ms. Cameron explained that the Memorial School Building Committee met last week and the Committee reviewed and approved the final elements of the PDP, which included how to site the new building so modulars would not be needed or the number of modular could be reduced, and approved it. The Committee discussed the next steps, which is the PSR and the upcoming Community Meeting in January 2018.
- Finance Committee (Ann Cameron/Shannon Erdmann)
Ms. Cameron explained that the Finance Committee met with the Manchester Finance Committee, and we provided data to clarify the apportionment. The Collaborative Meeting (Financial Committee, Board of Selectmen) was Monday morning (11/20), and we discussed the November 29th Operational Meeting, determined an agenda for the All Board Meeting, and the status of the Memorial School building.
- Policy Committee (Rachel Fitzgibbon/Ken Warnock): No meeting.
- Negotiation Team (Sarah Wolf/Julie Riordan):
Ms. Riordan explained that there have been e-mail communications from the Union Rep and offering IBB training regarding bid bargaining in December. We will begin negotiations after the training session.

6) Superintendent's Report

Ms. Beaudoin reported that Renee, the MERSD Payroll Data Specialist, has officially given notice that she will not be returning from maternity leave, and Matthew, who has been filling in for Renee, now has an end date. We are looking to combine this role to combine it with some of the recommendations regarding Accounting that came out of the Audit Report. We would like to propose a role that would have more responsibility and oversight in analysis and decision-making, with a salary within the \$75,000-\$85,000 bracket, as opposed to the \$55,000-\$65,000 bracket. This position will be funded by a retiring teacher, who will be replaced by a fellow.

Mr. Urbas explained that he has been performing basic accounting tasks, even during tax events. From an internal control standpoint, we are barely meeting auditors' standards. The proposed position will allow us to tighten up our internal

controls and more formalization of office procedures, which will allow me more time for planning decisions regarding the Memorial School Building Project. The timeline for filling this position is immediate.

Ms. Riordan made a motion to approve the restructuring of the open Business Office position to include not only payroll and HR data, but the full spectrum of accounting procedures. Ms. Wolf seconded the motion. Vote: Unanimous by Ms. Cameron, Ms. Riordan, Ms. Wolf, and Ms. Fitzgibbon.

Ms. Beaudoin stated that the first quarter is wrapped up successfully and on track, and RULER is going extremely well, the Charter has been written, and there have been many discussions resulting in realizing that we need this program.

6) Continued Business

The Bridge: Mr. Urbas reported that he has requested that the specifications be expedited, so that they can put the bridge project out to bid

Solar Panels: Mr. Urbas reported that he has to review the details of the contract. Once the contract is approved, the project will be done by the end of March 2018.

Relocation of Memorial Elementary School Students During Building Project:

Ms. Beaudoin explained that one of the things that has to be built into the budget is an allocation for housing the students during the project. The housing options are constructing modular buildings at Essex Elementary School or renting space elsewhere. Cost details have not yet been determined. Ms. Beaudoin reported that they had a meeting in Beverly regarding potentially renting the 95-year-old Briscoe School for the elementary school students during the Memorial School building project, and these topics were discussed at the School Building Committee Meeting.

Ms. Beaudoin explained that aside from the costs involved, the quality of life for two years for our youngest kids, and asked for the Committee members' thoughts on this. Ms. Riordan suggested that the project be done as a variation to the Middle-High School—build the new school, demolish the old school, and have the kids remain at Memorial School during the project. Ms. Cameron stated that if the Memorial School's site is cleared, there will be more design options. Ms. Wolf suggested that there would be good for the overall community if the students are moved to Essex Elementary during the project. Ms. Beaudoin suggested that would be too disruptive to Essex Elementary. The Committee decided they would not be opposed to the students having to move to a site out of town during the project—either Beverly, Gloucester, etc.

MSBA PDP (Preliminary Design Program): Ms. Beaudoin displayed the PDP document on the screen and explained that this is a progress report of issues we have looked at and discussed up to this point, which is what has to fit into the

framework of what MSBA expects us to look at and discuss, to prove that we are truly vetting all of the options where cost-effectiveness can be applied.

Mr. Urbas explained that with the **Renovation Only** option, there will not be a lot of changes to the existing building—mostly bringing the building up to code. The **Addition/Renovation** option involves something new being added and some of the older things being removed. The **New Construction** option has variations, but involves building a new building. Mr. Urbas further explained the costs that are associated with the different options and variations, and stated that these are only projections at this phase of the project.

Ms. Cameron reviewed the elements of the PDP. (1) Existing Condition Reports, which include the condition of the building and the site and soil conditions. (2) Educational Plan. (3) Site Review. (4) Scenarios. (5) Documentation, including the School Building Committee minutes. Ms. Beaudoin explained that we are proving that we are following the process—a public process that we are adhering to the guidelines, making sufficient progress for their established deadlines, and the Project Manager is doing his best to watch out for our best interests.

The Committee reviewed and discussed the PDP document and drawings of the proposed building options. Ms. Cameron stated that they would like to submit this PDP document tomorrow morning (11/22/17). Ms. Weld and Mr. Warnock were present at the last Building Committee Meeting and Ms. Erdmann was present at the meeting before that. They have not expressed concerns regarding this PDP. Ms. Cameron requested a motion and a vote. Ms. Wolf made a motion to approve the Preliminary Design Program document. Ms. Fitzgibbon seconded the motion. Vote: Unanimous by Ms. Cameron, Ms. Riordan, Ms. Wolf, and Ms. Fitzgibbon.

Goals Check-In (SC, SC Budget, Superintendent): Ms. Wolf read the goals as follows:

1. Target resources to support the social/emotional needs of students and support the implementation of programs that promote respect and appreciation for individual and cultural differences: Ms. Beaudoin stated that RULER is going well, and we are promoting awareness on all levels and in the district community.
2. Developing a fiscally sensible budget that maintains educational quality, supports _____ budget commitment to work within the confines of _____: Ms. Beaudoin stated that we will be tested on the budget this year because of the impact of health care, and we are going to have to make some difficult decisions.
3. Complete the feasibility study with MSBA for the memorial building project and develop a capital plan to extend the useful life of Essex Elementary and preserve the Middle High School: Ms. Cameron stated that we have to have discussions

about Essex Elementary and communicate with the public in Essex about what this means for them.

4. Youth collaborative bargaining to successfully negotiate with _____ contract with META that supports our district's mission: Ms. Wolf stated that we should be getting this contract within the next couple of weeks.

5. Work collaboratively to optimize District communications to effectively reach and engage all _____: Ms. Cameron stated that is a continuing challenge.

FY19 Budget Preview: Ms. Weld read the Budget Goals as follows:

1. Position MERSD for continual improvement of educational program improvement achievement.
2. Manage enrollment by striving to meet School Committee class size guidelines and serve our increasingly diverse student educational and emotional needs.
3. Exercise Fiscal Responsibility.
4. Seek internal efficiencies to offset growth needs as possible and meet local, state and federal responsibilities while controlling this growth.

The Committee members discussed the preparation of the FY19 Budget. Ms. Beaudoin explained that the mandate is to have a program and meet a need, but there is a lot of flexibility regarding how you do it. Operating with the bare minimum will cost us more money in the long run. It comes down to what you value and how do you want to build a program to reach as many kids as possible, but do this in a way that it is respectful to the tax payer.

Ms. Beaudoin stated that the FY19 Budget will be discussed at the December 5, 2017 meeting.

Ms. Cameron stated that the spring meetings will be heavy on finance, budget, and the Memorial School building project. Manchester and Essex would like the School Committee and School Building Committee to make sure that we are communicating with the people of the towns, and avail ourselves of any opportunity we have to communicate.

Public Comment: None.

Adjourn

Ms. Wolf made a motion to adjourn, and Ms. Fitzgibbon seconded the motion. Vote: Unanimous by Ms. Cameron, Ms. Riordan, Ms. Wolf, and Ms. Fitzgibbon. The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Adele Ardolino
Secretary to the MERSD School Committee