



SCHOOL COMMITTEE

OPEN SESSION MINUTES JULY 11, 2017

Meeting:	School Committee
Date:	July 11, 2017
Location:	MERMHS Library
Attendees:	Pamela Beaudoin, Superintendent of Schools; Avi Urbas, Director of Finance; Ann Cameron, Chairman; Caroline Weld, Shannon Erdmann, Sarah Wolf, Julie Riordan, Ken Warnock, and Rachel Fitzgibbon.
Recorded by:	Adele Ardolino, Secretary

A. Call to Order

The Committee had just ended an Executive Session. Ms. Cameron called the School Committee Business Meeting Open Session to order at 5:07 p.m.

B. Business Meeting Open Session

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

- Acceptance of Warrants: FY17 Vouchers 1062, 1063, 1064, 1065, FY18: 10001, and 1002.
- Minutes 6/20/17.

Mr. Urbas addressed the following questions:

Cleaning Services: Outsourced evening custodial in the newly built Middle School/High School buildings, resulting in no reduction of existing custodial staff. Two years later a financial adjustment in the budget was made and outsourced evening custodial at the elementary schools, resulting in layoffs that funded a new maintenance position, because other districts of MERSD size all had this position and our custodial staff was not getting things done in a timely fashion, and this maintenance position has been a great success, in addition to a lot of savings. We will continue with a state contract and will be using the same custodial firm, because they have been terrific. I am in the process of finalizing the details of the contracts with my procurement person within the next couple of days. The rates are presently below market, but there will be a slight increase. Cost: Approximately \$300,000/year, but still resulting in a significant savings. FTE is based on square-footage.

Grounds Maintenance: Most of the staff are MERSD employees. However, in Manchester Jeffrey's Creek and in Essex Steve Grimes & Associates does all the plowing of parking lots in the wintertime. They have been contracted by us for several years, due to their quick response times, enabling us to open school on time for all these years.

Steve Grimes & Associates: Total Cost: \$5,000 for spring grounds work clean-up for all three (3) school locations, and the high/middle school grounds clean-up prior to high school graduation. The cost for the pre-graduation work should be approximately \$1,500, but it was \$2,500 this year. There is a contract issue that I will address. Our goal is not to spend more than \$1,500 for outsourced springtime grounds work.

Essex Regional Retirement: MERSD pays an annual employer match, and this year it was \$530,000—we receive a 20% discount if we pay the total amount up front. The pension organizations have to have a 30-year plan to achieve full funding. The schedule the MERSD is on has 7% increases for the short term, followed by 4% inflationary increases for the remainder of the 30-year period. The determination of whether the increase is at 7% versus 4% is reviewed and based on the asset returns annually. This is mostly static and within a percentage point.

HAR/Asbestos: The high/middle school has no asbestos, because it is no longer used as a building material and hasn't been for some time. The presence of asbestos is not a problem, but damaged asbestos that is not sufficiently monitored is a problem. The HAR paperwork process is to have an outside contractor come in, identify all the places where asbestos is, examine its conditions and report the results. Memorial and Essex Elementary schools have just received their reports that 99% of the locations containing asbestos is in good condition. The two areas identified that need to be maintained. One is in the crawl space at Memorial School. The other one is a

wrapped pipe in the store room in back of the Essex Elementary School kitchen, which needs to be covered up and monitored, and a contractor will be coming in to take care of that. HARE requires that all reports be posted in the schools. Cost: \$19,000 for inspection, paperwork, documentation, and recommendations. Going forward, inspection will not be required, so the cost will be significantly less, because all the locations have been written and identified, so we will just need to monitor these locations.

Ms. Erdmann made a motion to approve the consent agenda, and Ms., Wolf seconded the motion. Vote: Unanimous by Ms. Beaudoin, Mr. Urbas, Ms. Cameron, Ms. Erdmann, Ms. Wolf, Ms. Riordan, Mr. Warnock, and Ms. Fitzgibbon (Ms. Weld had to leave the meeting early).

4) Continued Business

Technology Review: Ms. Beaudoin explained that Julie DeRoche, the Director of Curriculum Instructional Technology, had worked with Mr. Red Kelley when she worked in Georgetown and called him in to help us navigate our WiFi problems earlier in the year. We decided that Mr. Kelley would be a good fit to come in and help us with our technology review. We narrowed it to 6-12, because that is where we have some problems to solve and where we have some initiatives we would like to execute. We will be taking on Memorial School on its own in very short order. Mr. Kelley is looking at this through the lens by talking with us about our vision for technology usage at each of the levels.

Mr. Urbas explained that from an organization and MERSD administration standpoint, Ms. DeRoche's job is to oversee how technology integrates with our educational program. Ms. Beaudoin has stressed that technology is only here to help us to educate the kids. Regarding the budget, we have been trying to think of replacement cycles for assets with annual money to continue to take care of what happens, and we have done that through leasing, which allows us to have recurring money in the budget. We are in a stable financial environment and hope to fund any increases we need.

Ms. Beaudoin explained that we are looking at the whole endeavor in three (3) stages: K-5—give kids exposure to a lot of different types of technology, so they develop adaptability, know multiple platforms, match the tool to the activity. Middle School—Google classroom (not Chromebook) using technology as a teaching platform and learn how to access their education in an online environment with the coaching of the teachers and setting them up to get into high school and choose their own devices. Combine the elementary and middle school experiences of having adaptability to a lot of different tools, experience in an online format, and choose which tool will be right for them as a student. We have asked Mr. Kelley to make sure that we have a system that can match our goals.

Mr. Robert "Red" Kelley, founder and CEO of Boston Systems & Solutions, LLC, Andover, MA introduced himself and explained that his contract with MERSD is to consult, but not to sell IT equipment. Mr. Kelley gave his presentation on MERSD IT Preparedness Review outlined as follows:

School Committee Summary: IT Assessment and: IT analysis on Middle/High School readiness for 1:1. Key Findings: Ready, but not prepared. Four (4) single points of failure. Technology is a tool, not a job.

Ready – But Not Prepared: Ready: The hardware and staff is very good, and the facility well-equipped. Prepared: SOP (Standards of Operation Procedures) not prepared for 1:1 in relation to operational norms. Contingency not in place for failure or departure from standards. Tools to monitor and respond to conditional awareness not in place.

Single Point of Failure: Communication: Operational goals for administration & IT. Educational preferences/concerns to IT. Infrastructure status to staff/faculty. ISP: One vendor internet server provider. Hardware: Roduxio and VDI. Staff: IT staff, tech staff support, and Genius Bench.

Technology is a Tool: Technology should not be the end goal, but a tool in the tool box for better academic results: You do not need to stay with the same technology purchased in the past. Onsite storage vs. Cloud solution. Cool technology does not guarantee a functional and cost effective tool. Some colleges are moving away from BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) in classrooms. Allow the time to use the resources—do not thrust change (tech) at a problem. Let problem define solution, not technology define the issue.

Summary: Ms. Cameron summarized the points Mr. Kelley made that need to be addressed: (1) Develop Standards of Operation Procedure ("SOP"). (2) Cross-train for backup for Ms. Vollink. (3) Based on the SOP, determine what the redundancy solution will be.

Mr. Urbas stated that we need to do some goal setting and strategy work. This is will allow us to look at operational/tactical and strengthen the infrastructure to do the educational objectives in the short term, and look at the strategy for options in the medium to longer term.

Sub-Committees:

Policy & Communications: Ken Warnock and Rachel Fitzgibbon.

Negotiations: Ms. Wolf and Ms. Riordan.

Finance: Ms. Cameron and Ms. Erdmann.

Building Facilities: Ms. Cameron and Ms. Weld.

Ms. Riordan made a motion to approve the Sub-Committees, and Mr. Warnock seconded the motion. Vote: Unanimous by Ms. Beaudoin, Mr. Urbas, Ms. Cameron, Ms. Erdmann, Ms. Wolf, Ms. Riordan, Mr. Warnock, and Ms. Fitzgibbon.

Reappointment of MERSD Treasurer: Mr. Urbas asked the School Committee to reappoint Mr. Charles Lane as the MERSD Treasurer for FY2018.

Ms. Beaudoin made a motion to reappointment Mr. Charles Lane as the MERSD Treasurer. Ms. Erdmann seconded the motion. Vote: Unanimous by Ms. Beaudoin, Mr. Urbas, Ms. Cameron, Ms. Erdmann, Ms. Wolf, Ms. Riordan, Mr. Warnock, and Ms. Fitzgibbon.

Reappointment of Auditors: Mr. Urbas made a recommendation that the MERSD School Committee continue with Powers & Sullivan, LLC as the MERSD Auditors for FY2018. Ms. Erdmann made a motion to reappoint Powers & Sullivan, LLC as the MERSD Auditors. Mr. Warnock seconded the motion. Vote: Unanimous by Ms. Beaudoin, Mr. Urbas, Ms. Cameron, Ms. Erdmann, Ms. Wolf, Ms. Riordan, Mr. Warnock, and Ms. Fitzgibbon.

Second Read of Food Service Collections Policy: The Committee reviewed this policy and Ms. Erdmann suggested to delete the word "numerous" in II, third paragraph and III #4. Mr. Urbas mentioned the language in III, #3, and suggested that in II. SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY replace "numerous" with "the prescribed".

Ms. Erdmann made a motion to accept the Food Service Collections Policy, as revised. Ms. Fitzgibbon seconded the motion. Vote: Unanimous by Ms. Beaudoin, Mr. Urbas, Ms. Cameron, Ms. Erdmann, Ms. Wolf, Ms. Riordan, Mr. Warnock, and Ms. Fitzgibbon.

Superintendent's Report: Ms. Beaudoin reported that there was a response to the survey from 45-50 people regarding the YMCA-sponsored after school programming, and the YMCA would like to try it. Mr. Urbas and I have to have conversations regarding the structuring, but it looks like it may be up and running by the beginning of the school year.

Adjourn

Ms. Erdmann made a motion to adjourn, and Ms. Wolf seconded the motion.

Vote: Unanimous by Ms. Beaudoin, Mr. Urbas, Ms. Cameron, Ms. Erdmann, Ms. Wolf, Ms. Riordan, Mr. Warnock, and Ms. Fitzgibbon. The meeting was adjourned at 6:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Adele Ardolino
Secretary to the MERSD School Committee