

OPEN SESSION MINUTES  
MINUTEMAN REGIONAL VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BUDGET HEARING AND REGULAR SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING  
JANUARY 19, 2016 7:00 PM  
PAUL REVERE ROOM, MINUTEMAN HIGH SCHOOL

**Present:**

Jeff Stulin, Chair (Needham)	Jennifer Leone (Lancaster)
Carrie Flood, Vice-Chair (Concord)	Sharon Antia (Lincoln)
David Horton, Secretary (Lexington)	Pam Nourse (Acton)
Alice DeLuca (Stow)	Jack Weis (Belmont)
Ford Spalding (Dover)	Sue Sheffler (Arlington)
Vince Amoroso (Boxborough)	
Judy Taylor (Carlisle)	
David O'Connor (Bolton)	

**Absent:** Dave Manjarrez (Sudbury), Doug Gillespie (Weston) Mary Ellen Castagno (Wayland)

**Also present:** Ed Bouquillon, Kevin Mahoney, Jack Dillon, Elizabeth Rozan, Steve Sharek, Connie Maynard, Diane Dempsey, Sheila Nagle, Eugene DePaolo, Laura Sandor, Carol Yelle, Suzanne Revy

**BUDGET HEARING ON PROPOSED FY 17 BUDGET**

**1. CALL TO ORDER: OPEN SESSION**

**a. Presentation on Proposed FY 17 Budget, *Kevin Mahoney***

Mr. Mahoney gave a presentation on the Proposed FY 17 Budget. In the presentation, he reviewed the guiding values, District goals, school wide goals, budget guidelines, and summarized that the FY 17 Budget being proposed is \$19,728,097, with total assessments to the towns of \$10,941,834. He reviewed the revenue plan, the FY 17 budget considerations, the budget impacts, staffing, enrollment since 2011, and freshman enrollment over 10 years. He also reviewed the programs, the math placement test results, and the Spring, 2015 MCAS results, pointing out improvements in every subgroup in ELA and Math. He reviewed Special Education enrollment 2010-2015, Guidance services, and off-site projects. He reviewed the budget by state function code, and reviewed the estimated revenue plan, as well as capital expenditures. (See Attachment A.)

He extended appreciation to his staff, the Executive Team, and to the Finance Subcommittee for their help in developing this budget.

**b. Public Comment on Proposed FY 17 Budget**

There was no Public Comment on the presentation.

## **2. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business related to the Budget Hearing, the following vote was taken:

### **ACTION 2016 #1**

Moved (O'Connor) and seconded (Leone)  
To adjourn the Budget Hearing at 7:30 PM

**Vote:** Unanimous

## **REGULAR MEETING JANUARY 19, 2016 7:30 PM**

### **1. CALL TO ORDER: OPEN SESSION**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

### **2. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Carlisle parent Carol Yelle raised a concern about item 4e under the Superintendent's Report, Appointment of Special Education Director. She expressed concern about the process and the lack of communication on the status of the former Special Education Director. She referenced the law (Ch. 71B Sec. 3) related to Special Education Parent Advisory Councils (SEPAC), and asked that this be included with the minutes of the meeting (Attachment B). The Superintendent emphasized that the permanent Special Education Director has not yet been named. He expressed appreciation to Ms. Yelle for her interest in involving the SEPAC, and noted that more details would be forthcoming under his report.

### **3. CHAIR'S REPORT, *Jeff Stulin***

#### **a. Comments from the Chair**

In his comments, the Chair emphasized that the Minuteman community will be living with uncertainty for the next 6 months, that dates of meetings and agendas may change as a result of evolving events, that extra meetings might be scheduled on short-notice, and that School Committee members should be prepared for this. He also stressed the importance of remembering the students when voting comes up.

### **4. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT, *Ed Bouquillon***

#### **a. Notification of Election to NOCTI Board of Trustees**

The Superintendent noted that he recently was appointed to a four-year term with the Board of Trustees of NOCTI (National Occupational Competency Testing Institute). He explained that this is a well-respected international organization that does really good work. He noted that this comes at no cost to the District, as they will pay for any travel to meetings.

#### **b. Update on IMA with Lincoln**

The Superintendent gave an update, explaining that at Lincoln's request, they have postponed any meetings and discussions until the end of February.

#### **c. Status of Regional Agreement**

The Superintendent gave an update on the Regional Agreement activities, pointing out that all 16 towns have scheduled Special Town Meetings between January 25 and February 25, and some have also scheduled information sessions within that period as well. He and his staff are assessing the areas where gaps may exist, so they can plan on attending some of these sessions. Additionally, he noted that he has scheduled a breakfast meeting with town officials on Thursday, January 21 at 7:30 AM. He pointed out that an extensive mailing went out to provide as much information as possible to facilitate the Special Town Meeting process, and it was noted that all the materials are on the website.

With regard to one of those documents, the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), he noted that a revision was sent out earlier today, as a result of an email received on Friday from DESE related to towns leaving the District. He noted that DESE's position was that towns leaving are not required to submit a plan on how the educational needs of students will be met. He expressed his concerns about this information, in terms of a career and technical high school not being regarded as an academic high school, discrimination against SPED students, and the lack of guarantees for students to access education options. He also noted that he is looking into how best to respond, but wanted to get the information out today. Whether and how parents should be informed, the problems associated with DESE's position, whether MAVA has taken a position on this matter, how parents might be asked to get involved, the Admissions Policy, and the process for how students approach DESE to gain approval to attend a particular school in another town were discussed.

With regard to the Regional Agreement, the member from Belmont raised a concern about what he saw as conflicting language in Section IV (D) 1 and IV (D) 2 (from his email dated 1.14.16):

“...Specifically, in Section IV(D) 1 – the Apportionment of Capital Costs – the text states that if a member town sends fewer than five students, capital costs shall be allocated as if they had five students. The following paragraph – IV(D) 2 – correctly uses the one-student minimum in the description of the formula, but not making the corresponding change to the initial paragraph means that the agreement has confusing and conflicting language...”

The Superintendent noted that he had forwarded this email to the Attorney for review, and had not heard back yet. Mr. Weis made a motion to take a vote to amend, should the Attorney agree. The member from Boxborough pointed out that the different language relates to “before” and “after”, with IV (D) 1 relating to costs incurred *prior* to July 1, 2016, and in IV (D) 2 relating to costs incurred *on or after* July 1, 2016. All agreed that the language was correct as written, and Mr. Weis withdrew the motion.

Also with regard to the Regional Agreement discussion, the Chair wondered if it would be beneficial for the Superintendent to develop a communication document that describes the potential negative consequences for those communities considering leaving the District. The member from Lincoln suggested talking with families, but did not have a sense of how to do this. The member from Stow pointed out that remaining a member of the District protects the town, and the Superintendent noted that he will be attending a meeting at the Federal Reserve Bank to discuss access and funding issues.

#### **d. Discussion of Bond Authorization Options**

The Superintendent distributed a document related to Pathways to Bonding after MSBA Approval on January 27, 2016 (Attachment C). He discussed the possible sensitive dates, and various strategies under consideration, pointing out that none is without risk. He stressed the importance of keeping the students in mind. It was noted that Boxborough's Special Town Meeting is scheduled to occur after the School Committee meeting on February 23<sup>rd</sup>, and the Chair suggested adding in February 25 and March 1 as possible additional School Committee meetings, as the vote on bonding should not occur before all Special Town Meetings have been held. It was also noted that it was likely that at least the Boards of Selectmen in all the towns would be recommending the proposed changes to the Regional Agreement.

#### **e. Appointment of Special Education Director**

The Superintendent noted that to date no permanent Special Education Director has been named. He summarized the selection process and noted that the position was posted, 9 candidates submitted applications, and 2 finalists have been selected. He also noted that the interview committee is being formed, with parent, staff, and School Committee involvement. A series of questions will be developed, the interview committee will meet before the first interview and after the second one, and will rank

candidates. The Superintendent will make a selection from the interview committee's input. With regard to the former Special Education Director, he noted that he did not divulge details, out of respect for confidentiality required in this personnel matter.

## **5. SCHOOL BUILDING REPORT, *Ford Spalding***

### **a. Report on Meeting with MSBA**

Mr. Spalding explained that the team met with the MSBA staff on January 7 to discuss their review of the Module 4 submission. They emphasized that they were pleased with Minuteman's progress and will meet on January 27 to recommend in one vote a number of school projects, Minuteman included. He also explained the final reimbursement number that MSBA cited for Minuteman, namely 44.75% of *eligible* costs, which is up from 40%, for an actual rate of 31.7% of the total cost of the building project. There was a discussion about whether materials distributed reflected this detail, that this was the grandfathered rate, what materials are available to explain it, and the work a member of the Concord Board of Selectmen offered to create a spreadsheet that would calculate net present value of the project under varying conditions. The Superintendent noted that his office is preparing 10 slides to reflect accurate financial information.

## **6. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT, *Jack Dillon***

### **a. Preliminary Review of Proposed School Calendar 2016-17**

Principal Dillon reviewed the draft calendar, He noted that there are no major differences between this calendar and the current one, but that DESE has not yet released MCAS dates, and the Admissions staff is planning more time between the November showcase days and the Career Day event. He anticipates including this information and presenting the final calendar for a vote in February.

### **b. Out-of-State Overnight Field Trip: Cooperstown**

Principal Dillon explained the details of this field trip, and the following vote was taken:

#### **ACTION 2016 #2**

Moved (DeLuca) and seconded (Leone)

To approve the April 19-20, 2016 Baseball Program Out-of-State Overnight Field Trip to Cooperstown, NY

**Vote:** Unanimous

### **c. Overnight Field Trip: FFA Convention**

Principal Dillon explained the details of this trip, and the Superintendent added that both trips comply with all School Committee policies and procedures. The following vote was then taken:

#### **ACTION 2016 #3**

Moved (DeLuca) and seconded (Sheffler)

To approve the March 16-18, 2016 Horticultural Club's Overnight Field Trip to Sturbridge, MA for FFA Convention

**Vote:** Unanimous

## **7. ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT, *Kevin Mahoney***

### **a. Approval of FY 17 Budget and Preliminary Assessments**

A motion was made (Spalding) and seconded (Flood) to approve the FY 17 Budget as presented. The presentation was commended, the corrected sheets at the table were pointed out (Attachments D and E), and clarification was made in response to questions that related to the statewide foundation budget; Ch. 70 formulas; SPED enrollment by graduation year; the benefit of leasing vans; the Post Grad tuition rate and its impact on enrollment; transportation allocation by town as a percentage of total enrollments; the

ratio between the decrease in out-of-district enrollment (2/3rds) and decrease in the non-member tuition rate set by DESE (1/3rd), contributing to the revenue decrease in prior year tuition on the FY 17 Revenue Plan; the impact of the early retirement notification process on planning, and staffing in light of the 628 student enrollment number. The following vote was then taken:

**ACTION 2016 #4**

Moved (Spalding) and seconded (Flood)  
To approve the FY 17 Budget as presented  
**Vote:** Unanimous

A motion was made (DeLuca) and seconded (Leone) to approve the FY 17 Preliminary Assessments as presented. The member from Boxborough pointed out that there was an anomaly in the way assessments are calculated, particularly with regard to the Middle School Programs, as they are lumped in and give a false impression of the per pupil cost. He asked that steps be taken to separate out how they are billed and accounted for in next year's budget. Mr. Mahoney agreed to do this. The following vote was then taken:

**ACTION 2016 #5**

Moved (DeLuca) and seconded (Leone)  
To approve the FY 17 Preliminary Assessments as presented  
**Vote:** Unanimous

Appreciation was extended to Kevin Mahoney for the great work on this budget, and to the Finance Subcommittee for the strong, cooperative manner in which they worked with him to reach this fine result.

**b. Approval of 2016-17 Post Grad Tuition**

A motion was made (Spalding) and seconded (Sheffler) to approve the 2016-17 Post Grad Tuition rate, as presented. Mr. Mahoney pointed out that there was no change in this tuition rate from FY 16. A question was raised about whether the decline in enrollment was due to the rise in tuition, and it was suggested that the School Committee revisit the issue of whether raising the tuition rate such that students absorb 50% of the cost has had an impact on enrollment. The eligibility for loans, the impact of the economy, and the trends seen in community colleges were noted. It was explained that Minuteman is unable to offer a payment plan or federal loan programs; the school considered having the Post Grad program accredited, which would allow for these opportunities, but this was dropped with the building considerations, as these programs will not be offered during the day in the new school. The following vote was then taken:

**ACTION 2016 #6**

Moved (Spalding) and seconded (Sheffler)  
To approve the FY 17 (2016-17) Post Grad Tuition rate, at the same rate as FY 16 (2015-16) as presented  
**Vote:** Unanimous

**c. Acceptance of Car Donation**

A motion was made (Spalding) and seconded (Leone) to accept a car donation as presented. Mr. Mahoney noted that this car will be used for student learning in the Post Grad program. The following vote was then taken:

**ACTION 2016 #7**

Moved (Spalding) and seconded (Leone)  
To accept the donation of a 1997 Ford Mustang 2 Door Coupe  
**Vote:** Unanimous

**d. Review of 2<sup>nd</sup> Q. Financial Reports**

Mr. Mahoney pointed out that these reports were being provided as informational. He explained that they are used as a tool to assist in the development of the final FY 17 budget recommendations, and the projections are used for ending the fiscal year with adequate reserves.

**8. SECRETARY'S REPORT, Dave Horton**

**a. Approval of Minutes**

The following votes were taken on the past minutes:

**ACTION 2016 #8**

Moved (Horton) and seconded (Leone)

To approve the past minutes of 12.15.15

**Vote:** 12 in favor, 1 abstention

**ACTION 2016 #9**

Moved (Spalding) and seconded (Leone)

To approve the past minutes of 12.21.15

**Vote:** 12 in favor, 1 abstention

It was pointed out that vote #101 of the 12.21.15 minutes, was *to table the vote to authorize bonding until no later than the February 23, 2016 Regular School Committee Meeting*. It was clarified that another vote could be taken at that meeting to extend it, given the Boxborough Town Meeting date, as discussed earlier.

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

The Superintendent noted that due to a scheduling mix-up on the part of the Lowell Auditorium staff, the place of this year's graduation has been changed from the Lowell Auditorium to the Tsongas Arena. He also noted that this will be free of charge, and that it may be held at the Tsongas Arena in the future. The following vote was then taken:

**ACTION 2016 #10**

Moved (Leone) and seconded (Weis)

To adjourn the meeting at 9:20 PM

**Vote:** Unanimous

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Rozan  
District Assistant

David Horton  
Secretary

ATTACHMENTS TO THE MINUTES OF 1.19.16

- A. K. Mahoney Public Hearing Presentation on the Proposed FY 17 Budget
- B. SEPAC Ch. 71B Sec. 3
- C. Pathways to Bonding MSBA Approval January 27, 2016
- D. FY 17 Estimated Revenue Plan v. 4 1.19.16
- E. FY 17 Assessment V. 4 1.19.16