

OPEN SESSION MINUTES  
MINUTEMAN REGIONAL VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
REGULAR SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING  
OCTOBER 17, 2017 6:30 PM  
PAUL REVERE ROOM, MINUTEMAN HIGH SCHOOL

**Present:**

Dave Horton, Chair (Lexington)	Jennifer Leone (Lancaster)
Sue Sheffler, Vice-Chair (Arlington)	David O'Connor (Bolton)
Pam Nourse, Secretary (Acton)	Alice DeLuca (Stow)
Jeff Stulin, (Needham)	Ford Spalding (Dover)
Carrie Flood, (Concord)	Jim Gammill (Belmont)

**Weighted Vote:** Weighted Vote present at start of meeting: 100.00%

**Others Present:** Ed Bouquillon, Kevin Mahoney, Jack Dillon, George Clement, Elizabeth Rozan

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

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no Public Comment.

**3. STUDENT REPORT**

There was no Student Report, as the new student representative, Kaienteras "Jala" Maracle, a junior in the Health Assisting Program, was unable to attend.

**4. CHAIR'S REPORT**

**a. School Committee Goals 2017-18**

The Chair reported on the discussion held by the Officers to consider the recommended changes to the School Committee Goals 2017-18, and referenced a new draft, included in the packet, that reflected these revisions. He explained the proposed change in Goal 3, which now reads *Recruiting new member towns, in accordance with the process outlined in the Regional Agreement (Section VIII Admission of New Communities)*, and added that if departed towns wish to pursue an Intermunicipal Agreement (IMA), it is their responsibility to approach Minuteman. With regard to Goal #2, the Chair pointed reported that no change was made. The Secretary added that the greater value for School Committee effort was to increase enrollment from member towns, given the ambitious set of goals before the School Committee. The following vote was then taken:

**ACTION 2017 #68**

Moved (DeLuca) and seconded (Flood)

To approve the draft list of School Committee Goals 2017-18, as presented

**VOTE:** 10 members in room at time of vote

Weighted Vote present: 100%

Weight needed: > 50.00%

Names of towns opposing or abstaining: none

Final percentage results of vote: 100%

Final status of the vote: **Unanimous**

**b. Comments from the Chair**

The Chair also referenced the document included in the packet that described School Committee actions to support the School Committee Goals 2017-18. He noted that no vote was necessary, and that further details on enrollment will be discussed under items 7b and 9a. He asked that any suggestions to amend this list of actions be sent to Ms. Rozan.

**5. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

**a. Recommendation for Retirement Board Reappointment**

The Superintendent voiced his recommendation to reappoint Kevin Mahoney to the Retirement Board for another 3 year term. In response to a question, Mr. Mahoney explained the composition of the Retirement Board, which includes a member serving as Chair (himself, with a term appointed by the School Committee), the Treasurer (Laurie Elliott), an elected member (Elizabeth Rozan), a retirement member (Maria Oliveira) and an individual appointed by the other members (Norm Cohen). He noted that this Retirement Board is among the smallest of the boards across the state, but it is funded at approximately 90%. In response to a question, he pointed out that except for a reimbursement from the town of Arlington, which is now resolved, there have been no contentious or controversial issues. The School Committee then took the following vote:

**ACTION 2017 #69**

Moved (Flood) and seconded (Leone)

To approve the Superintendent's recommendation to reappoint Kevin Mahoney to the MRVTSD Retirement Board for a three year term November 16, 2017- November 15, 2020

**VOTE:** 10 members in room at time of vote

Weighted Vote present: 100%

Weight needed: > 50.00%

Names of towns opposing or abstaining: none

Final percentage results of vote: 100%

Final status of the vote: **Unanimous**

**b. Updates on Superintendent Leadership Goals**

**#1 Student Improvement: Academy Model Development**

The Superintendent gave an update on activities related to the Academy Model Development. He noted that current effort is organized around aligning staff with pathways, with areas categorized as Vocational, Academic, SPED, and Other. The work is focused on curriculum integration and framework development, at this point, and 15 faculty members have stepped forward to be involved. They will be paid a \$750 stipend for their efforts.

## **#2 Professional Practice: Legislative Engagement**

The Superintendent reported that on September 29, 2017, he had a breakfast meeting with the Legislators here at Minuteman to discuss a number of items including the building project, legislative priorities (including Ch. 74 regulations), and enabling legislation related to campus development. He explained that Peter Kochansky (Goulston & Storrs) spoke about how they have been discussing various models related to the enabling legislation, and that a special act, specific for this District only, is a first step. The Superintendent explained that with regard to the Ch. 74 discussion, Representative Jay Kaufman and Senator Jamie Eldridge expressed interest in being involved, and he has been in discussion with Representative Kaufman about strategies for reaching out to DESE on the matter. Representative Kaufman has arranged a meeting at DESE on October 30, 2017 with Acting Commissioner Wulfson, Cliff Chuang and Jessica Leitz to discuss Minuteman and the regulatory changes. The Superintendent informed the school committee that Goulston & Storrs is considering being involved on a pro bono basis. Additionally, he reported that Senator Cindy Friedman came to the meeting on 9.29 and visited the school the next day. He noted that he was pleased to see her support of Minuteman. The member from Belmont suggested that a new subcommittee be established specific to legislative engagement. The Chair indicated he will take it under advisement at the Officers Meeting. The member from Belmont also suggested that School Committee members could take the time to introduce themselves to their legislators. The Superintendent pointed out that a current list of Senators and Representatives has been created; Ms. Rozan will distribute. The member from Stow referenced an article related to the value of vocational education in light of current issues facing racial minorities in education.

## **#3 District Improvement: Increasing Membership**

The Superintendent reported that on October 11, he met with the Watertown Superintendent of Schools and the Watertown Business Manager to discuss the process and steps for joining. They discussed budget, transportation, a projected 5 year cost, and the general benefits that come with joining the District, such as the potential campus development, access to post grad programs, community education, and rental facilities at a reduced rate. He explained that the Watertown Superintendent agreed to continue the consideration and move the process forward, and that they will meet again to discuss next steps when the time is right. He stressed the importance of an MoU and of providing continuous access to students.

The member from Belmont speculated that the Belmont Superintendent may be open to a conversation as well, given Watertown's positive consideration. The Superintendent explained he has a meeting planned with member town superintendents on 10.20.17 to keep them up-to-date with the construction project, to discuss enrollment access, capital costs, and budget matters.

## **6. SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE REPORT**

### **a. School Building Committee Update**

Mr. Spalding reported that after an extensive cost reconciliation process, verifying that the project is on time and on budget, the 90% documents were submitted to MSBA earlier today, and the 100% documents will be sent in mid-November. The steelwork will begin December 1. In response to a question, he confirmed that segregated permitting is allowed, and that all permits needed at this point are in place. The Superintendent further explained that after the 100% documents are sent to MSBA, the team will begin the process of applying for the building permit, which is the last permit needed. The Chair extended appreciation to everyone for getting these permits in place. Mr. Spalding suggested that he will have Tripp McElroy from Gilbane give a presentation to the School Committee next time for a progress report. The member from Bolton wondered about visual documentation in real time to keep the students engaged in the project. Time lapse photography, live cameras, pictures from the roof, and security cameras were discussed. Mr. Spalding pointed out that he receives regular photo updates from the project manager. Some

of the pictures are posted on the website; these can not be enlarged from the website, however, as they can on a smart phone.

**b. Update from Superintendent Bouquillon re Seeking Relief on Permitting and Other Fees**

The Superintendent explained that he has spoken with the Lincoln Town Administrator regarding seeking relief on the permitting fees, and between these conversations and those with our attorney, he is continuing to get clarification. He explained some aspects of the existing permit fee structure, and Minuteman’s position that the costs should not be over and above the fees described within the Town bylaws, and the expectations that a permit fee should cover the inspectional services. He noted that there are still some unresolved issues, and explained that Minuteman’s attorney needs to speak with Lincoln’s Town Counsel, but there has been a delay. He is focused on gaining clarity on the process and procedures before escalating strategies.

**7. PRINCIPAL’S REPORT**

**a. Presentation on MCAS**

Mr. Clement began his presentation with the good news that Minuteman will be receiving public commendation from the Commissioner’s Office for being 1 of 7 schools across the state that has demonstrated the closing of performance gaps. He explained that Minuteman will continue with Level 1 rating, and explained some details related to “Next Generation” MCAS in 2019. (See Attachment A.)

Although, as the Superintendent pointed out, the information is embargoed until Wednesday, Mr. Clement reviewed the MCAS Annual Comparison in ELA, Math, and Science from 2006-2017, and it was agreed that the improvement in numbers were significant and not just “noise”. He explained some details regarding the 2019 test. How the tests will be scored and the potential impact were discussed. Mr. Dillon added that in a conference call with Jeff Wulfson on the subject, it was clear that many of the kinks are not yet worked out, and while data from grades 3-8 will be reviewed, the high school test will be different. He emphasized that things are changing and adjustments will be made, but at this point, there is a lot of uncertainty. How Minuteman addresses test anxiety was raised. Mr. Clement explained that in that area, nothing will change—there will still be test prep, practice, and support offered. Mr. Dillon explained that a big part of that support lies in feeding the students on MCAS days with breakfast and snacks.

**b. Presentation on Admissions and Enrollment**

Mr. Clement reviewed the current enrollment numbers as of October 1 (not yet certified), noting that of the 145 students for the class of 2021, 101 are in-district, and 44 are out-of-district. He explained that there is a 10.5% increase in freshmen enrollment, and that if ineligible out-of-district applications were deleted from the total applications, the acceptance percentage would be 74%, indicating that the effective yield has increased.

The discussion on admissions and enrollment included whether sophomore, junior, or senior admissions are allowed, whether the work with *Tools for Schools* has continued, the advantages of the “Career Tree” tool, the building of relationships with Superintendents, ensuring quality presentations by providing faculty with professional development, and convincing parents of the educational benefits of Minuteman. The strength of the Minuteman Parents Association in this effort, work done in Needham with the PTAs, and the recent good press for Minuteman (including Cindy Stumpo’s *Tough as Nails* program on WBZ [focused on girls in trades] and the world channel) were noted. The survey data and actual results of the recruitment efforts were discussed. How interest translates to actual enrollment, the role of parents in signing permission slips, parent impressions/understanding of vocational technical education, and the social needs of teens were cited as important factors in this translation.

To stay aware of the enrollment efforts and issues, the School Committee asked Mr. Clement for the links to the media publicity, and monthly enrollment reports, with data broken down by community and gender.

## **8. ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

### **a. Request to Change Date of February School Committee Meeting from Feb. 13 to Feb. 6**

Mr. Mahoney explained that he is requesting a change in the February meeting date to align with the plan to have the Public Hearing on the budget later than in past years. Instead of having it in January, he'd like to have it the first week of February, so that it occurs after the Governor's budget is released, which would make for more solid numbers, and give enough time before the first town meeting (Lexington, last week in March). He explained that the Towns are already asking for preliminary numbers as they begin their budget process. There was no objection to this request.

### **b. FY 19 Budget Process Calendar**

Mr. Mahoney also reviewed the FY 19 Budget Process Calendar, as informational. Ms. Flood, as Finance Subcommittee Chair, noted that the Finance Subcommittee had a good discussion on the process, and as part of their goals, will be receiving periodic financial reports on the school building project. She asked that if anyone has a suggestion for the Finance Subcommittee's attention, they should forward to Ms. Rozan. She explained that she and Kevin Mahoney spent time at Concord's Finance Committee on October 5. She noted that there were excellent questions from strong allies of Minuteman, who see viable trends in technical education as a contributing factor to workforce development and a strong economy. She also commended Mr. Mahoney for the great job he does representing Minuteman in public.

### **c. Disposal of Surplus Vehicles**

Mr. Mahoney explained that this item relates to vehicles used in the high school and post graduate automotive technology programs that are surplus and no longer being used for instruction, and the following vote was taken:

#### **ACTION 2017 #70**

Moved (Leone) and seconded (DeLuca)

To authorize the disposal of vehicles, as presented

**VOTE:** 10 members in room at time of vote

Weighted Vote present: 100%

Weight needed: > 50.00%

Names of towns opposing or abstaining: none

Final percentage results of vote: 100%

Final status of the vote: **Unanimous**

### **d. Acceptance of Donation: 5 HDTVs**

Mr. Mahoney called attention to the materials at the table describing the details of this donation (Attachment B). Mr. Dillon explained that these are brand new TVs, used only once. He explained that he's been told by the IT staff that their shelf life is long, and that they can be used in the new building. He further explained that the primary use for these TVs will be for information sharing, publicizing calendars, and providing other relevant displays. The following vote was then taken:

## **ACTION 2017 #71**

Moved (Spalding) and seconded (Leone)

To accept the donation of 5 (five) Lg. 49" HDTVs, as presented

**VOTE:** 10 members in room at time of vote

Weighted Vote present: 100%

Weight needed: > 50.00%

Names of towns opposing or abstaining: none

Final percentage results of vote: 100%

Final status of the vote: **Unanimous**

## **9. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **a. Enrollment Task Force**

In connection with Mr. Clement's presentation on Enrollment, Pam Nourse gave an update on the activities of the Enrollment Task Force, formed on 4.4.17. She explained that the members include herself, Dave Horton, Carrie Flood, and Jim Gammill, and that they met on 7.24.17 (with Mr. Gammill absent) to gather ideas on enrollment strategies. She noted that they developed a list of tasks that School Committee members could take on to help increase enrollment from member towns. She explained that the ideas can be grouped into three categories:

- 1.) Getting to know your town,
- 2.) Working with the PTAs in your town, and
- 3.) Ensuring a Minuteman presence in your town.

She elaborated on strategies for each. To get to know the town, one could understand the key town committees and the decision-making processes, set up a Minuteman subcommittee with representatives from those committees (Selectmen, School Committee, Finance Committee), and research and contact the Advisory Committee member to gauge their willingness to help with outreach. She suggested that inroads to the PTAs could be made by finding out who is the current president and reaching out to request an opportunity to present at a PTA meeting. Ensuring a Minuteman presence could begin with reviewing the town's website to ensure that Minuteman is prominent as an education option, and with coordinating a Minuteman presence at town events. She also noted that Mr. Clement expressed a willingness to be available to discuss strengths and challenges in each town regarding enrollment and access to students, parents, and staff, and that he offered to develop a set of talking points for School Committee members to use.

A number of additional suggestions were made. The member from Dover commended Mr. Sharek for his PR work on behalf of Minuteman, and he suggested that that people sign on to *Google Alerts* to get notices about Minuteman. The member from Lancaster suggested that people publicize the services that are available at Minuteman. The member from Needham suggested that a carefully vetted, conservative, and honest list of the advantages of Minuteman, and why one should go here, be outlined as part of a "master list" of talking points being developed and that this could be used as a handout. He also suggested that what college means to parents be given consideration, and related points raised were the advantages of college clarity, status vs. choice, cost, and how a Minuteman education addresses these concerns. He also cautioned against being viewed by town PTAs as interfering.

It was suggested that getting to parents before middle school was important, as was reaching the rising 6<sup>th</sup> graders. Dr. Bouquillon noted that this is part of the outreach to the Superintendents, as they must approve such efforts. The member from Concord noted that it is a legal requirement of sending districts to provide avenues for vocational schools. The member from Stow suggested that all previous nonsense about

misunderstanding what technical education is should be abandoned, and reframed to focus on Minuteman as a resource and a national model. The Chair noted that he attended the presentation at Diamond Middle School earlier in the day. He commended Mr. Clement on his presentation, and noted that giving parents a handout to take home would be great. The importance of working with Guidance Counselors was also noted, and the idea of a speaker series to draw parents was suggested. Mr. Dillon pointed out that the MPA were discussing a speaker series this year, and it was pointed out that the MPA would be presenting to the School Committee on November 14. The member from Bolton suggested talking with alumni about how Minuteman impacted or influenced their choices.

The Chair thanked Ms. Nourse for her presentation, and summarized that focusing on enrollment was most important, that many great ideas were discussed to address this, and that it is clear that parents are key. Material requested will be distributed, there will be enrollment reports at upcoming meetings, and the handout of “talking points” will be developed and made available to School Committee.

**b. Liaison to General Advisory Board**

Sue Sheffler gave a brief summary of the recent General Advisory Board meeting she attended. She pointed out that it was well-attended by Department Heads, MPA members, business partners and alumni. She noted that there was information shared on the Advanced Manufacturing program, the Minuteman 101 and the Peer Mentoring initiatives, the Job Board, and the Minuteman Futures Foundation.

**10. SECRETARY’S REPORT**

Having received no amendments to the draft minutes, Ms. Nourse made a motion, which was seconded, and the following vote was taken:

**ACTION 2017 #72**

Moved (Nourse) and seconded (Stulin)  
To approve the draft minutes of 9.19.17, as presented

**VOTE:** 10 members in room at time of vote  
Weighted Vote present: 100%  
Weight needed: > 50.00%  
Names of towns opposing or abstaining: none  
Final percentage results of vote: 100%  
Final status of the vote: **Unanimous**

**11. POSSIBLE EXECUTIVE SESSION**

The Chair explained that there was a need for Executive Session related to campus development and approval of past minutes. The following vote was then taken:

**ACTION 2017 #73**

Moved (Leone) and seconded (Sheffler)  
To enter into Executive Session at 8:40 PM, pursuant to:

- a. MGL Ch. 30A, Sec. 21(a) 6, to consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property, as an open meeting discussion may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body, and the Chair so declared, and
- b. MGL Ch. 30A, S. 22 (f) to review, amend, finalize and approve minutes from Executive Session of the Committee held on: 10.13.15, 12.13.16, 1.19.17 and 9.19.17, and to determine whether continued non-disclosure of such minutes is appropriate, with Dr. Bouquillon, Mr. Dillon, Mr. Mahoney, and Ms. Rozan remaining present, and the Committee not returning to Open Session.

**VOTE:** 9 members in room at time of vote [Needham out of room.]

Weighted Vote present: 91.28%

Weight needed: > 45.64%

Names of towns opposing or abstaining: none

Final percentage results of vote: 91.28% by roll call

O'Connor (Bolton) Yes

Gammill (Belmont) Yes

Spalding (Dover) Yes

Leone (Lancaster) Yes

DeLuca (Stow) Yes

Flood (Concord) Yes

Horton (Lexington) Yes

Sheffler (Arlington) Yes

Nourse (Acton) Yes

Final status of the vote: **Unanimous**

## **12. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at the end of the Executive Session at approximately 9:15 PM by roll call vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Rozan  
District Assistant

Pam Nourse  
Secretary

Attachments to the Minutes of 10.17.17

- A. MCAS and Enrollment Presentation
- B. Donation details