

OPEN SESSION MINUTES
MINUTEMAN REGIONAL VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
REGULAR SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
MARCH 1, 2016 6:30 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)	Jack Weis (Belmont) (arrived 6:50 PM)
Alice DeLuca (Stow)	Mary Ellen Castagno (Wayland) (left 8:00 PM)
Ford Spalding (Dover) (arrived 7:00 PM)	Doug Gillespie (Weston)
Vince Amoroso (Boxborough)	Pam Nourse (Acton)
Judy Taylor (Carlisle)	Sue Sheffler (Arlington)
Dave Manjarrez (Sudbury)	
David O'Connor (Bolton)	

Also present: Ed Bouquillon, Kevin Mahoney, Jack Dillon, Elizabeth Rozan, Steve Sharek, Len Simon, Diane Dempsey, Sheila Nagle, Werner Fritz, Mary Ann Ham, Dana Ham, Peter Braun

1. CALL TO ORDER: OPEN SESSION

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM, and noted that the meeting was being recorded by Mr. Manjarrez.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no Public Comment.

3. CHAIR'S REPORT, *Jeff Stulin*

a. Comments from the Chair

The Chair explained that pending State approval, there is now a new Regional Agreement, involving 10 communities. He explained further, with information received earlier in the day from the DESE, that the effective date of the agreement will be July 1, 2017. This will apply to all sections of the agreement, with the exception of Section IX e where the towns have agreed that withdrawing members would not be obligated for any debt incurred by the district after December 10, 2015. He noted that under this new agreement with a smaller School Committee, there are implications. Until then, obligations still exist, including participation, quorum based on 16 members, and 11 members required for some action. He noted that he intends that the Officers will meet to discuss the implications, and that the focus now is on the building project.

b. Communications

The Chair had no comments under Communications.

4. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT, *Jack Dillon*

a. Proposed School Calendar 2016-17

Mr. Dillon explained that the MCAS dates are still not known, but otherwise there are no additional changes to this draft calendar. He noted that DESE has acknowledged the delay, and that MCAS dates will not impact the overall calendar. Once known, they can be included and the calendar circulated. The sense from the School Committee was that there was no need to delay approval, and the following vote was taken:

ACTION 2016 #11

Moved (DeLuca) and seconded (Leone)

To approve the proposed School Calendar 2016-17, as presented

Vote: 13 in favor, 1 abstention (with 14 members present)

b. Overnight Field Trip: SkillsUSA State Leadership and Skills Conference

Mr. Dillon explained details related to this trip, and in response to questions, he agreed to follow up on the names of the chaperones, Mr. Mahoney explained that the District pays for the chaperones, and for students who express a hardship. Mr. Dillon noted that there has been no hardship expressed. He also noted in response to a question that the students are very excited about the trip. The following vote was then taken:

ACTION 2016 #12

Moved (DeLuca) and seconded (Leone)

To approve the Overnight Field Trip of the Minuteman Chapter of SkillsUSA Students to the Massachusetts SkillsUSA State Leadership and Skills Conference in Marlboro, MA on April 28-30, 2016, as presented

Vote: Unanimous

[At 6:50 PM, Mr. Weis arrived.]

5. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT, *Ed Bouquillon*

a. Update on Special Education Director Search

Dr. Bouquillon explained the process of the Special Education Director search (Attachment A), introduced his recommended candidate for the position, Amy Perreault, and opened the floor for questions from the School Committee members. In response to questions, Ms. Perreault addressed compliance, diversity of staff in terms of qualifications and strengths, varied disabilities of students, the mission of providing a full inclusion program so that all students have access to the full curriculum, and the need for staff to be aware of all curriculum areas unique to a technical school so that there is staff collaboration. She noted her educational background, which includes a Social Work license, an EdD degree, and a SPED license from the State of Massachusetts, as well as work experience that led her to this position at Minuteman. She noted that she loves the students and staff here, and hopes to further the passion students bring by their choosing to attend this high school. Regarding the interview process, it was noted that the President of the SEPAC served on the Interview Committee, and one of the two School Committee members who served on it pointed out how impressed she and the others were about Amy's leadership ability and commitment to Minuteman. The other School Committee member who served on the Interview Committee asked for details on the SEPAC interaction, and Ms. Perreault explained collaborative efforts being explored. It was suggested that the SEPAC become a member of MASSPAC, as they have excellent speakers, and that the District support this. The Chair explained that Ms. Perreault would have to agree that this was a direction she wanted to go in and follow up as needed. The member from Sudbury commended Ms. Perreault's credentials and qualifications, and explained that he would be abstaining from the vote, given that it involves a 3-year commitment, which he did not want to make for his town, since Sudbury is likely to leave the District. The following vote was then taken:

ACTION 2016 #13

Moved (Flood) and seconded (DeLuca)

Consistent with the School Committee Bylaws, Article III, Section 4, to approve the Superintendent's recommendation to appoint Amy Perreault as Special Education Director, under a 3 year contract and annual salary of \$125,000.

Vote: 13 in favor, 2 abstentions (with 15 members present)

The Chair offered his thanks and congratulations.

[At 7:00 PM, Mr. Spalding arrived.]

b. Discussion: Special Town Meeting Results (Regional Agreement and Withdrawal)

Dr. Bouquillon noted that by now, people are aware of the Special Town Meeting results. He had provided at the table his email correspondence with Christine Lynch, DESE, regarding next steps (Attachment B).

He then referenced a previous announcement that Minuteman recently received a \$500,000 state grant, for the Advanced Manufacturing & Metal Fabrication program. He explained that the competitive grant was announced by Governor Charles D. Baker during ceremonies at the State House on February 24. The Governor announced grants totaling \$9.3 million from the new Massachusetts Skills Capital Grant Program. 68 schools and training programs applied for grants; only 35 were successful. Minuteman received \$500,000, the largest grant possible under the program.

The member from Belmont noted that the Regional Agreement approval by 16 towns is a watershed moment in the history of Minuteman and he would like to hear any feedback from withdrawing towns on how the decision was made, or any plan on how they will provide education to the students in their town. The representative from Boxborough explained his town's position, which was based on geographical location to two additional vocational schools, low enrollment that would make providing transportation not an issue, and the opportunity to withdraw afforded by the new Regional Agreement. He noted that it would give students more choice, and the new school would not be open until 2020, while renovations have already been done at the other two schools.

c. Discussion: Bonding for the Building Project and Possible Vote MGL Ch. 71. Sec. 16 (d)

The Chair noted that some members would prefer that this item be discussed later in the meeting, after Item 8. There was discussion on the pros and cons of this, and it was agreed to leave the order as is.

The Superintendent called attention to the language at the table (Attachment C), noting this proposed vote had been reviewed by MSBA and by both Bond Counsel and District Counsel. He pointed out the May 2, 2016, date added to the last sentence, and the anticipated quick turn-around for DESE approval of the Regional Agreement, once they receive certified copies of the Special Town Meeting votes.

The Chair noted that a bonding vote requires a simple majority vote. A motion was made (DeLuca) and seconded (Leone) to bond for the building project under MGL Ch. 71m Sec. 16 (d), as presented.

The member from Belmont expressed his concern about the 60-day window to veto, given the May 2, 2016 date noted in the proposed vote and the fact that 10 towns have scheduled their annual town meetings for May 2 or later. He felt the date was off by a day or so. He referenced implicit understanding from the 1.21.16 breakfast that the 60-day window would be within the Town Meeting schedule, and that this vote, if approved tonight, would go against that understanding. He also expressed concern that there

were different opinions offered by different counsels, and voiced the likelihood of a legal challenge, similar to what occurred with the Feasibility Study over the school size issue.

A discussion ensued focused on the timing of the School Committee's vote, the timing of Town Meetings, the date-specific language of the vote, how it relates to MSBA's 120 day window and their June 30 deadline, and concern over antagonizing towns without working towards consensus. The effective date of the Regional Agreement was also raised as a concern, as was confusion over which version of the Regional Agreement the bonding vote would be taken under, thus causing concern over how towns were obligated to the debt incurred. Two counsel opinions from September 2015 were distributed (Attachment D).

The member from Boxborough suggested postponing the vote on bonding until DESE definitively approves the new Regional Agreement and clarifies its effective date and the debt obligation details that are of concern. He pointed out that under a vote taken tonight, Boxborough would likely disallow it; they need guarantees that they wouldn't be accountable for the debt.

Concerns were raised about what was termed the 11th hour, 59th minute change to the process, while all 16 members of the School Committee made an effort to be present for this vote tonight. The member from Boxborough noted that he did what he could to raise the concerns before the meeting.

The member from Sudbury noted that this is the closest this body has come to a decision, and he expressed his concern over the resistance to establishing a date that allows all factors to be known honestly and with good will. He expressed his opinion that the delay is fair for everyone. He questioned why the 6 departing towns would have to vote on bonding that would not affect them, and urged getting approval from the DESE first. The representative from Sudbury criticized the Superintendent and School Committee Officers for not compromising in the best interest of all 16 towns. He commended the Selectmen for taking things so far to reach agreement on an amended Regional Agreement.

The member from Lincoln pointed out that she was personally very disappointed at Lincoln's withdrawal, but that she agrees with the idea that departing towns need to know about debt clearly, and that it makes sense to wait until DESE makes its ruling.

The Chair expressed his concern over delaying the project. He noted that with the delay, there is greater likelihood of having to go to a district-wide ballot vote, to spend money (approximately \$75,000) ahead of time, and to face the shrinking deadline window. He wondered if spending that money sits well with members. He stressed that the delay decreases the value of the money available for the building project, which may mean cuts.

He noted that the vote could be postponed, and a special School Committee meeting could be called mid-March to take the vote after DESE's definitive action and clarification. Another member referenced the process of preparing the ballots, and the need for the Finance Subcommittee to find the money. The date of March 15 was suggested as a possibility, and since 13 people expressed that they could attend, it was determined that a meeting on March 15, 2016, at 6:30 PM was possible, instead of the March 22 meeting already scheduled. The following vote was then taken:

ACTION 2016 #14

Moved (Gillespie) and seconded (Manjarrez)

To table the vote on bonding until March 15, 2016

Vote: 15 in favor, 1 abstention (with 16 members present)

A request was made for an electronic version of the correspondence between the Superintendent and Christine Lynch, DESE, related to the effective date of the Regional Agreement that had been distributed at the table (Attachment B), to be sent to members.

The Superintendent stressed that there were 16 School Committee members present, and that the priorities of the towns withdrawing and the priorities of the towns staying are being weighed out. He noted the importance of expediting the certification process for the submission to DESE.

6. SCHOOL BUILDING REPORT, *Ford Spalding*

a. Update on MSBA Board Meeting held Jan. 27, 2016 and Next Steps

Mr. Spalding reviewed the MSBA meeting held on January 27, 2016, and noted the support they expressed for Minuteman.

b. School Building Committee Membership Roster

Mr. Spalding noted that MSBA has requested an updated roster of School Building Committee members, and he noted two changes that need School Committee approval. The following votes were then taken to update the School Building Committee Membership Roster for submission to the MSBA as requested:

ACTION 2016 #15

Moved (Leone) and seconded (Flood)

To appoint (now certified) Kevin Mahoney as MCPPO (Massachusetts Certified Public Purchasing Official) for the School Building Committee, taking over the role served by Don Lowe

Vote: 15 in favor, 1 abstention

ACTION 2016 #16

Moved (Leone) and seconded (DeLuca)

To appoint Jack Dillon, Principal, as a voting member of the School Building Committee, replacing Ernie Houle who is no longer at Minuteman

Vote: 14 in favor, 2 abstentions

Mr. Spalding also noted that he would like to have representation from all towns on the School Building Committee, and that people selected be actively engaged. A request was made for a list of current members.

Mr. Spalding also noted that he is beginning to develop a public education process on the School Building project. All School Committee members and School Building Committee members will be asked to participate to make presentations to the towns at as many meetings as possible.

A question was asked about the process for debt exclusion, and a discussion ensued about related timing and contingencies.

c. Update on Construction Management (CM) at Risk Process, *Kevin Mahoney*

Mr. Mahoney explained that the School Building Committee voted to develop a process for this, and that the application was submitted to the Inspector General.

[Ms. Castagno left the meeting at 8:00 PM.]

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

a. Acceptance of Donations

Mr. Mahoney explained that four donations have recently been offered, and asked for a vote to accept them. The following vote was then taken:

ACTION 2016 #17

Moved (Leone) and seconded (Gillespie)

To accept the following donations, as presented:

- 1.) the 2002 VW Passat
- 2.) miscellaneous plumbing items
- 3.) various carpentry tools
- 4.) the wheel alignment system

Vote: Unanimous

b. FY 17 Budget Update: Revision to FY 17 Revenue Plan and Town Assessments

Mr. Mahoney explained that because the Governor's budget was released after the School Committee's Public Budget Hearing, a revision to the FY 17 Revenue Plan and Town Assessments needed to be made, due to Ch. 71 and minimum required contribution adjustments. He explained the details, and noted that the assessments increased for three towns (Acton, Arlington and Stow) and decreased for the other thirteen towns. He pointed out that he distributed this update to the town managers. The following vote was then taken:

ACTION 2016 #18

Moved (Leone) and seconded (Gillespie)

To recertify the approval of the FY 17 Budget (v. 5.0) and the FY 17 Town Assessments (v. 5.0), dated 3.1.16, as presented

Vote: 14 in favor, 1 abstention (with 15 members present)

8. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Superintendent's Evaluation Subcommittee, *Dave Horton*

Superintendent's Mid-Cycle Report on Goals 2015-16

Mr. Horton explained this as a "formative" evaluation that is aligned with the DESE evaluation process. He explained that the Superintendent has provided a progress report, and the School Committee members will submit an assessment via SurveyMonkey. The Subcommittee will then review the assessments. The End of Cycle Progress Report ("summative") will be presented in May.

9. SECRETARY'S REPORT, *Dave Horton*

a. Approval of Minutes

A clarifying amendment was offered on the amendments, and the following vote was taken:

ACTION 2016 #19

Moved (Horton) and seconded (Leone)

To approve the past minutes of 1.19.16, as amended

Vote: 13 in favor, with 2 abstentions

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Rozan
District Assistant

David C. Horton
Secretary

ATTACHMENTS TO THE MINUTES OF 3.1.16

- A. SPED Director selection process
- B. Ed Bouquillon email correspondence with Christine Lynch, DESE
- C. Language for voting to bond for the Building Project under MGL Ch.71, Sec. 16 (d)
- D. Two legal opinions from September, 2015