

OPEN SESSION MINUTES  
MINUTEMAN REGIONAL VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
SPECIAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 16, 2014 7:00 PM  
PAUL REVERE ROOM, MINUTEMAN HIGH SCHOOL

**Present:**

Jeff Stulin, Chair (Needham)	Kemon Taschioglou (Lincoln)
Carrie Flood, Vice Chair (Concord)	Dave Horton (Lexington)
Nancy Banks, Secretary (Acton)	Jack Weis (Belmont)
Alice DeLuca, (Stow)	Daniel Mazzola (Lancaster) (arrived 7:03 PM)
Ford Spalding (Dover)	
Cheryl Mahoney (Boxborough)	
Judy Taylor (Carlisle)	
Dave Manjarrez (Sudbury)	
David O'Connor (Bolton)	

**Absent:** Mary Ellen Castagno (Wayland), Doug Gillespie (Weston), Sue Sheffler (Arlington)

**Others Present:** Ed Bouquillon, Kevin Mahoney, Ernie Houle, Brendan Dutch, Audrey Cassidy, Marjorie Daggett, Connie Maynard, Ed DeLuca.

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

The Chair opened the meeting at 7:00 PM and noted that the meeting was being recorded by Mr. Manjarrez.

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT**

The Chair explained the parameters of the Public Comment, and Mr. Manjarrez (Sudbury) expressed his concerns about what he calculated as a \$2.5 M deficit in tuition revenue, and offered his opinion that member districts pay this through over-assessments to subsidize non-resident students.

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

a. Governance Issues and e. Concerns on Member Communication, Email and Other

The Chair asked to combine the a. Governance Issues item with e. Concerns on Member Communication, Email and Other. Hearing no objection, he addressed a number of Governance issues supported by the School Committee's policies on ByLaws, Member Ethics, Officer Roles, School Committee Meeting Processes and Procedures, Open Meeting Law, and Rules of Order. He described how he intended to work as Chair within these policies, and asked that any suggestions be forwarded to him through Ms. Rozan, and he will take them under advisement for possible discussion. He emphasized that he is always looking to improve the functioning of the School Committee. He expressed that he has heard from a number of members who expressed a desire that something be done about the email communications, which he described as falling into 3 categories: illegal/OML/Executive Session violations; legal, but violating School Committee policies or norms, and generally obnoxious, those that include articles with insulting or erroneous commentary. He noted that in future his intention is to communicate with officers about these matters to help him decide whether to bring to the full School Committee for action. He also noted that there are some pending issues from recent Public Records Requests that he will address at the next meeting.

b. Draft Subcommittee and Task Force List 2014-15

The Chair reviewed the Draft Subcommittee and Task Force List, noting that there are fewer Subcommittees being proposed. He outlined what was different in each from last year's charges and assignments. It was suggested that the Communications Subcommittee might work more effectively as a Task Force. The Chair suggested getting a plan in place, and he would reconsider if that turned out to be a better option. Hearing concerns from the member from Sudbury at his deletion from the Finance Subcommittee, the Chair pointed out that he, too, would no longer serve on that Subcommittee. A motion was made (Weis) and seconded (Manjarrez) to reinstate Dave Manjarrez to serve on the Finance Subcommittee, suggesting that the School Committee would function more efficiently if any

financial matters of concern are resolved at the Finance Subcommittee level before coming to the full School Committee. It was pointed out that these are all Open Meetings, and the goal is not to cut off communication, but to limit the size of the working group. It was also noted that he had served on this Subcommittee last year, had a voice at the table, and his concerns were often arbitrated and presented to the School Committee. The member from Sudbury noted that he is now retired, but his work on Minuteman matters has developed into a full-time job. He noted that while he is not a CPA or an accountant, he is acquainted with forensic auditors who have helped him, and his goal is to see a workable, sustainable model for the school. He stated that he will continue to find the truth, and if other members don't like it, they can choose not to vote for him. It was pointed out that non-member subsidy is a big issue for this member, and the smaller forum is a better place to address the concerns. It was noted that all members are allowed to provide input on this and any issue. It was also noted that there were members who were asked to serve and could not, and that everyone is aware of the cost differentials and is working to rectify them. The following vote was then taken:

**ACTION 2014 #88**

Moved (Weis) and seconded (Manjarrez)

To reinstate Dave Manjarrez as a member of the Finance Subcommittee

**Vote:** 5 in favor, 8 opposed (with 13 members present)

This action did not pass. A vote on the main motion was then taken as follows:

**ACTION 2014 #89**

Moved (DeLuca) and seconded (Spalding)

To approve the Draft Subcommittee and Task Force List 2014-15

**Vote:** 11 in favor, 2 opposed (with 13 members present)

The approved list can be found as Attachment A. The Chair extended appreciation to everyone for their service.

c. Approved District Goals 2014-15: Measurement Criteria

The Chair reviewed the assignments of those responsible to develop language for the measures that will be used to evaluate the achievement of the District Goals approved on 7.8.14, and explained that the School Committee will vote on these measures at the next meeting. Concern was raised that Ms. Castagno was being assigned to a group, and she was not present. It was agreed to vote the list as presented, and it could be revised, should she refuse the assignment. The question of interface was raised, and the Chair noted that those assigned would have to find their own way to arrive at the measures. He also noted that he found making these assignments was a hard charge to execute. The following vote was then taken:

**ACTION 2014 #90**

Moved (DeLuca) and seconded (Spalding)

To approve those responsible for developing measurement criteria, as approved by each subcommittee

**Vote:** Unanimous

The approved list of those responsible can be found as Attachment B.

The Chair raised an additional concern and noted that he'd like to add it to the October agenda. He offered that now that the building size and Education Program Plan have been voted on, it is time for the School Committee to focus on what comes next. Referring to the unique opportunity being presented as the building project moves forward after these two recent votes, he asked that members consider the following: Assuming a school size of 628 and the voted Education Program Plan, what can be done to help plan a school that is effective for the students and affordable for the communities. He asked people to submit comments by email to Ms. Rozan, who will compile comments for the "Next Steps" discussion at the October meeting. There was some confusion expressed about what he was seeking, and once clarified, he noted that a reminder email will be sent out.

d. MASC/MASS Joint Conference: Voting Delegate

Confirming attendees at the November conference (Taschioglou, Manjarrez, and Mahoney), the Chair nominated Cheryl Mahoney to serve as Voting Delegate. With no objection, the following vote was taken:

**ACTION 2014 #91**

Moved (Stulin) and seconded (Spalding)

To appoint Cheryl Mahoney, Boxborough, as Minuteman's Voting Delegate at the Annual MASC/ MASS Joint Conference Business Meeting in November 5-8, 2014.

**Vote:** Unanimous

The Delegate then asked that people review the resolutions listed on MASC's website, and let her know if there are concerns.

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

a. Opening of School

The Superintendent reported that the Opening Day went well, and deferred to the Principal for further details. Mr. Houle explained that there was a smooth start to the year. He highlighted the finalization of classes with some teacher reassignments, the beginning of a Debate Club, the scheduling of a 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Hall of Fame event, which will be held on October 18, 2014 at the Sons of Italy Hall in Woburn, and extended appreciation to the Maintenance staff for getting the building ready for opening. There was a question raised about this year's enrollment number. The Superintendent noted that the Freshman number was lower than anticipated, and he agreed to provide the exact numbers once they are available.

b. Overnight Field Trip: Environmental Students to AMC Facility in Berkshires

The Superintendent called attention to a note from the trip coordinator, Terry Regan, who explained that due to circumstances beyond control, his overnight field trip dates have changed from September 23-26 to November 4-7, 2014, but that all other details of the trip request remain the same.

**ACTION 2014 #92**

Moved (Spalding) and seconded (Weis)

To approve the Overnight Field Trip for Environmental Students to the AMC facility in the Berkshires November 4-7, 2014, as presented

**Vote:** Unanimous

c. Update on NEASC Report

The Superintendent gave an update to the School Committee on the NEASC Report, noting that it is still not available for distribution, and that he anticipates that it will be available in the November timeframe.

d. Updated on Proposed Changes to DESE Ch. 74 Regulations

The Superintendent updated the School Committee on the timeframe for the approval of the Commissioner's proposed changes to the Ch. 74 Regulations, as described in the Commissioner's March 14, 2014 letter to the Board of Education. He noted that after the Board of Education reviews in October, there will most likely be a Public Comment period. He noted that some of the proposed changes include admissions, exploratory, and capital fee for receiving districts involved in an MSBA project, which would be beneficial to Minuteman. He noted that if approved, these would be mandatory regulations, and that the mechanics for their Public Comment will be available on their website.

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

a. Update on MSBA Process and Schedule

The Chair of the School Building Committee reported that the School Building Committee met on 9.15.14 to get focused on the MSBA Feasibility schedule, with the next key target date of 1.15.15, when the recommended Preferred Schematic Design will be submitted to the MSBA. On 9.29.14, the group will meet again, and consider three recommended schematics-- a new building, a renovated building, and one that combines the two. He also explained that the School Building Committee is forming two subcommittees: one to study a non-MSBA renovation plan, to support student/staff safety, consider current deteriorating building conditions, and current/future educational programs; the other will focus on communications, to support the school's ongoing communication efforts with member communities specific to the Building Project, and working in collaboration with the School Committee's Communications Subcommittee and the Administration. He urged that meetings with town officials, school committees and town administrators, parents, alumni, and citizens of the 16 member towns begin now. He reported that he has sent out requests to the towns of Acton, Carlisle, Sudbury, Lancaster, Weston, and Wayland requesting representation on the School Building Committee. He also noted that the project must be future-oriented to offer the best career and technical education facility possible. He clarified that Town Meetings will be considering

the plans in 2016, and will need to come to unanimous agreement. He also noted that there will be no need for special town meetings this year. He confirmed that all School Building Committee meetings are open meetings, and that agendas and minutes are posted on the website. In response to a question about whether the group would accept analysis, he confirmed that anyone can communicate with him as Chair of the School Building Committee. In response to other questions, he also confirmed that there is enough of the \$740K left to complete the work of the Feasibility Study, and that the Designers are committed to completing their work under the existing budget. He also confirmed that MSBA has not officially voted the 628 number, but they have expressed verbal ok on it, and that he is not aware of how they calculate their numbers. In response to questions about the Regional Agreement and those communities that haven't taken action, he noted that this is not related to the work of the School Building Committee. The MSBA has been curious, but work with them is not slowing down while this is being resolved. He stressed that the School Building Committee operates under the current Regional Agreement. The Superintendent noted that he will provide an update on the Regional Agreement at the October meeting.

## **6. ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT FOR FINANCE REPORT, *Kevin Mahoney***

### **a. Update on Capital Repairs**

The Assistant Superintendent gave an update on the unexpected discoveries during the projects for which the school Committee had voted \$351K for roof repairs, wall replacement and skylight repair. He explained that these surprises necessitated 4 change orders totaling \$83K. He explained that after an analysis of the problems encountered due to original preexisting conditions and water damage, he has put the contractor on hold for the skylight work, until a source of funds can be identified to move forward. In response to concerns raised, he assured the School Committee that there is no potential liability due to this action. The involvement of the Minuteman employee responsible for facilities management, the stabilization fund, the impact of not having had a viable R&M plan, and these repairs being outside the scope of the 40% MSBA reimbursement were discussed.

### **b. Financial Statements for Period Ending June 30, 2014**

The Assistant Superintendent explained that because a Finance Subcommittee meeting had been cancelled to accommodate the Education Plan Task Force, these statements were not reviewed by the Finance Subcommittee, but will be in future. They are being provided as informational, per the School Committee request. In response to a question, he noted that he anticipates a draft Auditor's report in the November/December timeframe.

### **c. Regional Transportation Fund**

The Assistant Superintendent explained, as informational, the details of recent legislation that was passed, sponsored by the Mass. Association of Regional Schools (MARS), to allow School Committees to establish a transportation fund. He explained how regional transportation currently works, on an estimated reimbursement basis, and that this legislation will allow transfer into a reserve account, with the surplus usable as a revenue source. He explained that guidelines will be forthcoming, and he will bring the item for a School Committee vote at that time. A member explained that at one time there was 100% reimbursement, but this didn't last long. She noted that time spent on buses is not educational, and that this legislation is a bright spot. She urged members to extend appreciation to their legislators.

## **7. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Superintendent Negotiations and Evaluation Subcommittee, *Dave Horton***

#### **a. Draft Superintendent's Goals with Measures for Evaluation**

The schedule for this item was explained, specifically that this draft is being presented as informational, members should review and get comments in within a week, and it will be on the October agenda for a vote. It was pointed out that details of item #4 complement the communication efforts and staff relations. Concern was raised that the "measurable" criteria appears to make the goals less ambitious, and that the process seems confusing.

## **8. SECRETARY'S REPORT, *Nancy Banks***

### **a. Approval of Past Open Session Minutes: 7.8.14**

The Secretary reported that the only comments received involved minor punctuation. Hearing no other comments, she asked for a motion, and the following vote was taken:

**ACTION 2014 #93**

Moved (DeLuca) and seconded (Spalding)

To approve the past Open Session Minutes of 7.8.14 as presented

**Vote:** 10 in favor, none opposed, 3 abstentions (with 13 members present)

A member asked about reviewing Executive Session minutes not released. It was pointed out that this was done with attorney consultation in September, 2013.

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Rozan  
District Assistant

Nancy Banks  
Secretary

**ATTACHMENTS TO THE MINUTES OF 9.16.14**

- A. Approved Subcommittee and Task Force List 2014-15
- B. Approved List of Those Responsible to Develop Language for the Measurement Criteria on Approved District Goals.