

OPEN SESSION MINUTES  
MINUTEMAN REGIONAL VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
SPECIAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING  
MARCH 12, 2015 PM 6:15 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) (arrived 6:41 PM)	Jack Weis (Belmont) (arrived 6:15 PM)
Ford Spalding (Dover)	Doug Gillespie (Weston)
Cheryl Mahoney (Boxborough) (arrived 6:30 PM)	
Judy Taylor (Carlisle)	
Dave Manjarrez (Sudbury) (left at 9:25 PM)	

**Absent:** Alice DeLuca (Stow), David O'Connor (Bolton), Mary Ellen Castagno (Wayland), Daniel Mazzola (Lancaster), Sue Sheffler (Arlington)

**Also present:** Ed Bouquillon, Kevin Mahoney, Jack Dillon, Elizabeth Rozan, Bill Blake, Mary Ann Williams, Nancy Pierce, Steve Sharek, Lynne Foster, Margaret MacLean, Jason Tait

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

A quorum was late to assemble. Hearing no objections, the Chair reordered the meeting, and called the meeting to order with a quorum of 9 at 6:15 PM.

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

**a. Review of Project Cost and Taxpayer Impact Analysis, Lynne Foster and Margaret MacLean**

The Assistant Superintendent introduced Lynne Foster and Margaret MacLean of Unibank, who were present to answer any questions members had on the Project Cost and Taxpayer Impact Analysis distributed with the packet. He explained that this document was developed as a result of many requests for different scenarios with varied nuances related to the Building Project. He explained that this document represents the best forecast based on the underlying assumptions. He also noted that the model as presented makes no guarantee of future obligations given the number of variables that can impact the calculation. Mr. Mahoney explained that the report attempts to forecast assessments to member towns under three state supported building project options and two self-funded building repair options. The five-year forecast projects bonding impacts of any project to affect assessments in FY20. He then explained the assumptions as follows:

1. Full student enrollment of the school is projected at 628 students, of which 525 are from member towns.
2. Member town enrollment growth is 8% per year.
3. Annual financing of bonds assumes a 30 year level debt service schedule at a 3.5% interest rate.
4. Other factors include a
  - a. 2% inflation rate
  - b. 60% transportation reimbursement
  - c. Non-resident tuition set at 125% of statewide foundation budget.
  - d. Non-resident capital fee based on the per pupil costs of all 628 students
5. No assumptions have been made about towns that may decide to withdraw from the district.

[At 6:30 PM, Ms. Mahoney arrived; there were now 10 members present.]

Mr. Mahoney described elements of each page and the Appendix detail, and Ms. Foster explained details related to debt service, the verification of median home values by town assessors, interest rates, going to market in 2019, implementation in phases, and getting back into the MSBA pipeline, if status was lost, at 31% as opposed to 40%.

The need for towns to keep their superior ratings, the need for building repair, code compliance issues, length of time for project completion under various options, the MSBA extension deadline, and enrollment growth were issues raised.

[At 6:41, Ms. Banks arrived; there were now 11 members present.]

Anecdotal evidence of students' friends being appalled at the condition of Minuteman High School, using a more realistic enrollment projection, and using consistent references in the various versions were some of the points raised. That the Regional Agreement has not yet passed, the number of votes needed to approve the project, and whether capital fees would actually be implemented were also noted.

It was pointed out that any number of assumptions can be made in an analysis. Mr. Mahoney expressed appreciation to all who contributed content suggestions, and to Mr. Weis for his formatting suggestions.

### **3. SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE REPORT, *Ford Spalding and MaryAnn Williams***

#### **a. School Committee Communications Training, Jason Tait, *Office of Campaign and Political Finance***

There was a 3 minute recess while the presenter set up his computer. When he was all set, Mr. Spalding explained that Mr. Tait was invited to present so that School Committee members could better understand their role in the process of providing information to the communities.

Mr. Tait began his Ballot Question Seminar on the role of the Office of Campaign and Political Finance. He then covered the ground rules related to public employees, government buildings, and public resources. He described the 1978 Anderson Decision, town meeting v. election financing, distribution, objective or informational material, permissible distributions and actions of appointed officials, and prohibited actions by appointed officials. He discussed public meetings and hearings, equal access, municipal website, email, other electronic means, and newsletters. He explained 5 specific examples, and described details about Ballot Question Committees, disclosure, and resolution. Lastly, he encouraged contacting his office to get help in handling certain issues as they arise. His materials can be found as Attachment A.

#### **b. Review of Project Options ~ Overview and Discussion, *Nancy Banks***

Mr. Spalding reiterated the action plan in anticipation of the School Committee's vote at the May 19 meeting on their Preferred Schematic Design Option to submit to MSBA. He noted that there will be presentations given in each member town by April 30, and that there is a schedule which he will have distributed to the School Committee. At these meetings, members will gather input that will eventually be brought to the School Committee to assist them in making their vote. He noted that Nancy Banks gave her presentation in Acton the night before, and he invited her to give it again to the School Committee. Her presentation materials can be found as Attachment B.

Ford Spalding and Mary Ann Williams were available to answer questions. The voting requirement was clarified, specifically that if all 16 towns do not give Town Meeting approval, the District cannot issue debt. The evidence that the cost of the building is in line with recent similar projects, and how the relative cost can be measured was explained by the guidelines found in MSBA's space summaries, specifically that they measure sq. ft. and program space. The reason why a new building is cheaper was explained. The issue of town skepticism was raised. It was explained that MSBA is comprised of people who are interested in looking at the facts, being assured that communities have exercised due diligence and gathered objective information. It was explained that MSBA's desire is to see that a true feasibility study was done, so that a building will be cost effective and educationally appropriate. It was also noted that MSBA reserves the right to make the final decision on the best option for the District. Ms. Williams pointed out that she takes her job very seriously, and that she would not risk her reputation by opening up to suspicion. The Chair requested that a brief document be prepared to address these issues.

It was suggested that those who do the presentation when Mr. Mahoney or Superintendent Bouquillon are not present have a tutorial on the projected costs for their specific town. It was also suggested that the Engineering Report be made available in hard copy. Suggestions were made to improve the slides with explicit information on the Education Program Plan in the various options. Questions were raised about the building at Essex Agricultural School for comparison, but Ms. Williams did not have personal experience with that project. The soundness of the infrastructure of the Minuteman building was raised, and reference was made to the Engineering Report to avoid inflammatory language.

Appreciation was offered for this effort to educate the towns and drill into the cost options. A suggestion was made to include some detail on enrollment progression over time, and making it clear that the code issues referenced in the slides are not due to negligence but to being grandfathered in. A statement that it does not comply with current code could suffice.

MSBA's understanding of the rationale behind the 628 number was emphasized and the difference of \$100M between options #4 and #5 was explained. Building trends and that some 100 year old buildings are still in use were additional points raised, as was the impact and inefficiencies inherent in some of the options. Additionally, the consequence of having an NEASC accreditation at risk was also suggested as needing further explanation.

Appreciation was expressed that this was a great first meeting on the subject, where the issues were presented clearly and discussed at length. It was emphasized again that another short document is needed to further educate the lay person.

#### **4. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT: POSSIBLE EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 9:02 PM, the Superintendent explained the need for an Executive Session and possible vote, and the Chair explained the reasons as pursuant to Purpose 6 (MGL Ch. 30A, S. 21 (a) (6)): To consider the purchase, exchange, lease, or value of real property, as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body, and so the Chair declares. The following vote was taken:

##### **ACTION 2015 #17**

(Moved Spalding) and seconded (Flood)

To enter Executive Session for the purposes described above, with Dr. Bouquillon, Mr. Mahoney, Mr. Dillon, and Ms. Rozan remaining, and to return to Open Session

By Roll Call:

Manjarrez	yes	Taschioglou	yes
Taylor	yes	Horton	yes
Mahoney	yes	Weis	yes
Spalding	yes	Gillespie	yes
Stulin	yes		
Flood	yes		
Banks	yes		

**Vote:** Unanimous (with 11 members present)

#### **5. ADJOURNMENT**

The Committee resumed Open Session at 10:05 PM; no votes were taken, and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Rozan  
District Assistant

Nancy Banks  
Secretary

ATTACHMENTS TO THE MINUTES OF 3.12.15

- A. Jason Tait's Presentation Materials: Ballot Question Seminar
- B. Sample Community Presentation (Acton)