

Minutes of Meeting of the Policy Subcommittee of SBRSD

Date: March 21, 2019, **Time:** 5:05

Who Present: Dennis Sears, Arthur Batacchi, Jane Burke, Jon Bruno, Beth Regulbuto, Ken Knox

Description/Minutes of Discussions:

1. Call to Order – Dennis Sears, Chair
2. Public Comment - none
3. Approval of minutes from meetings of March 11th & March 14, 2019
 Motion to approve minutes of March 11th - Art Batacchi

 Second Jon Bruno

 Vote – yes unanimous

Motion to approve minutes of March 14th - Art Batacchi

Second Jon Bruno

Vote – Yes unanimously

4. **Discussion of changes to policies BEDH and BEDH-E** – public participation at school committee meetings. This agenda item was prompted by letter sent from attorneys for the district Michelle McNulty and Peter Summers to school committee chair Ken Knox regarding the “Natick decision” and possible impact on the SBRSD policy concerning public comment in school committee meetings.

 In brief they stated “We recommend that the Committee consider amending its policies to remove the mandatory public comment period at regular Committee meetings and, to the extent the Committee continues to include public comment at any of its meetings, update its public comment policies to specifically define prohibited speech and/or conduct in a manner consistent with the Natick decision.”

 It was also stated by Jon Bruno and Ken Knox that they had been advised at trainings conducted by the Massachusetts Association of School Committees to drop public comment from Committee the agenda as it can lead to litigation on the grounds of free speech. After much discussion the sub-committee members decided to ask to have this matter placed on the agenda for the next full committee meeting under new business.

Motion by Jane Burke

“Recommend that the full committee approve a temporary suspension of public comment period while pursuing a legal ruling on how and if the public comment policy can be crafted without impinging on the public’s right to free speech. An attempt will be made to get a timely, clear response from Attorney General Maura Healey about what we should do.”

Second Jon Bruno

Vote – Unanimous yes

5. **Discussion of changes to policies** BDA – school committee organizational meeting and BDE subcommittees of the school committee with possible actions

Motion to accept the amendment to BDA regarding organizational meeting of school committee and present to full committee as written by Dennis for first read -Jane Burke

Seconded – Jon Bruno

Vote – Unanimous Yes

Motion to accept the amendment to BDE regarding the warrant subcommittee and present to full committee as written by Dennis for first read – Jon Bruno

Seconded – Art Batacchi

Vote – Unanimous Yes

Motion to Adjourn – Art Batacchi

Second – Jane Burke

Vote - Unanimous

6:40