

School Committee: Ms. Silvers, Mr. Sears, Mr. Flynn, Mr. Batacchi, Ms. Sparhawk, Mr. Valentini, Ms. Sahn, Ms. Rundle

Absent: Mr. Stewart, Ms. Fields

Administrators: Mr. Hastings, Mr. Turner, Mr. Devoti

Press:

Student Representative(s):

Others: Mr. Charles Ketchen, Chair, Alford Select Board; Mr. Nathaniel Yohalem, Chair, New Marlborough Select Board; Ms. Linda Higgins

1. Vice Chairman Silvers called the meeting to order at 6:11 p.m.
2. **Approval of Minutes:**
Ms. Silvers requested the addition of the word, “that” under Item 3C, in front of the words “we adopt . . .”
Ms. Sparhawk moved to approve, with that addition. Mr. Flynn seconded the motion, and it was so voted, unanimously..
3. **Communications from the Audience Pertaining to this Evening’s Agenda**
 - A. There was no Student Representative report.
 - B. There were no communications from the audience.
4. **Updates/Presentations:**
 - A. Mr. Valentini stated that the Finance Subcommittee has met three times, and has come up with preliminary budget numbers for FY’15. Mr. Hastings stated that one teaching position and one education support professional position will be eliminated through attrition. He said that additions to the budget will hopefully include after school programming, funding to allow the music students to travel out into the community, and funding to allow the music department staff to attend the state conference, which occurs while the students are attending All State performances. Additionally, the director of food services position has been folded into the regular budget.

Mr. Valentini reviewed the numbers in the proposed capital budget. He explained that there is currently \$30,000 included for use at the community schools. He said that the Buildings, Grounds & Technology Subcommittee will meet again on Tuesday, January 28 to refine those numbers. Also included in the capital budget is funding for air conditioning for the second floor of the high school. The Subcommittee voted to request that this item be funded through a loan to be paid off over five years.

Mr. Valentini then moved that the School Committee approve the District seeking a loan for \$150,000, not to exceed \$200,000, to install air conditioning units in the second floor of the high school building for a period of five years. Ms. Sparhawk seconded the motion.

A question and answer session took place. Mr. Turner explained that although the engineer's estimate of the cost was \$125,000, it would likely cost more, due to interest.

In additional discussion, the Committee agreed that a concrete plan needed to be developed prior to asking the permission of the towns for a borrowing. It was also requested that the Business Manager research what, if any, effect the units would have on the roof membrane. Mr. Valentini withdrew his motion.

Mr. Valentini reviewed anticipated revenue numbers and preliminary assessment increases to each town. He stated that he will get the numbers to Monterey and Sheffield in hopes of receiving feedback prior to preliminary adoption on February 6.

Committee members noted that the state budget is not yet finalized, and it was suggested that letters be requested from the five towns and from the public requesting increases in funding for Chapter 70 and Chapter 71. Mr. Valentini offered to draft a letter to the towns requesting that they do so. Ms. Silvers offered to be of assistance, as well. Mr. Turner reported that at a webinar hosted by MA Association of School Superintendents, it was suggested that the governor had level funded these areas to allow the legislators to make increases, as this is an election year. He said that MASS sees these figures as the minimum, and not the maximum.

5. **Business**

- A. Superintendent's Report: Superintendent Hastings reported on recent events at the schools, and he informed the Committee of upcoming events. At his request, Ms. Silvers informed the committee that the *eagle fund* will hold its anniversary celebration on March 14, with presentations which will highlight programs that have received major awards, including robotics and archery. She invited other members to let her know of any suggestions they may have.

Superintendent Hastings also informed the Committee of an error on the pay chart for Payroll Personnel, which they approved at their last meeting.

- B. School District Advisory Board: Ms. Silvers explained the background behind the creation of advisory boards for schools. She also explained that such boards typically provide human resources in terms of apprenticeships and internships for students and classroom volunteers and mentors for teachers. She said they often also help provide fiscal resources for items that the average school district cannot afford.

Mr. Flynn then moved the following: To establish an ad-hoc working committee of the Southern Berkshire Regional School District's School Committee to make recommendations to the full SC regarding establishing an advisory board for the district;

Further, this ad hoc committee shall consist of three members of the SC and the SBRSD superintendent;

Further, the ad hoc committee shall report back to the full School Committee during the full SC meeting of March 13 with a brief written report and oral report as to its findings and recommendations on each of the following items; however, at the discretion of the ad hoc committee, not limited to these items:

- Summary of meetings held including attendees and outcomes of meetings
- Specific recommendation as to whether to move ahead with establishing an advisory board
- If recommending establishing the advisory board, potential board members (can be positions as opposed to specific names), size of board, reporting relationship vis a vis school district and school administration
- If possible, a suggested chair for the board

- If positive, suggested purpose, mission and committees (to be used for outreach when a chair is selected)
- Potential issues of concern
- Suggested time line for establishing the SBRSD Advisory Board

Further, in doing its research, the ad hoc committee shall at least meet with the following:

- ❖ those necessary to determine governance (Ex. Policy Committee),
- ❖ at least two private sector leaders,
- ❖ two select board members,
- ❖ member of the higher education community,
- ❖ non profit leader,
- ❖ local entrepreneur,
- ❖ three staff members including bargaining unit leader
- ❖ philanthropist
- ❖ community leader

Further, in doing its research and making its recommendations, the ad hoc committee shall take into consideration at all times the regional nature of the school district.

Mr. Sears seconded the motion.

Following discussion, Mr. Flynn moved to amend the motion to say that the ad hoc committee will report back to the full Committee not later than the meeting of April 10. Ms. Sparhawk seconded. It was so voted, unanimously.

It was agreed that Superintendent Hastings, Ms. Silvers, Ms. Fields, Mr. Flynn, and Ms. Sahn will serve as the ad hoc committee.

- C. Request to Set June 7, 2014 at Tanglewood as the Graduation Date for the Class of 2014: Mr. Sears moved, seconded by Mr. Valentini, to approve June 7, 2014 at Tanglewood as the Graduation date for the Mt. Everett Class of 2014. It was so voted, unanimously.
- D. Subcommittee/Representative Reports:
Policy Subcommittee: Mr. Flynn moved, seconded by Ms. Sparhawk, to approve Policies IHBG, Homeschooling; JFAB, Admission of Nonresident Students; and DBI, Budget Implementation. Ms. Sahn noted that Policy DBI should refer to Finance Subcommittee, rather than Budget Subcommittee. The policies were then approved, with that amendment.

Executive Evaluation: Mr. Flynn reported that the subcommittee met earlier in the evening and will meet again on January 30 to review the entry report of the Superintendent. He said that they have agreed to propose that the Superintendent present his report to the School Committee at the last meeting in February.

Food Services: Ms. Sahn reported on the recent meeting. She said they intend to present a report of the work of the ad hoc subcommittee at the February 27 School Committee meeting. She said that they had discussed the permanent subcommittee's work going forward, and it will include such things as how to grow, prepare, and eat food, as well as health and wellness.

(Ms. Silvers requested that no additional major presentations be scheduled for the February 27 meeting.)

Buildings, Grounds & Technology: Mr. Valentini said that he had nothing to add, other than what was produced in the capital budget.

- E. Collective Bargaining: Superintendent Hastings explained that there had been some conflicting information dealing with catastrophic illness leave for family members in the Unit D contract. He said that the Association had agreed that each day donated would equal a day for the accepting party. The attorney has drawn up a side letter to that effect, along with a new application form, reflecting that change. All else had been agreed upon previously. Ms. Sparhawk moved to approve the Unit D Contract dated July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2016, with those changes, as presented. Mr. Sears seconded the motion. The vote:

Mr. Valentini	yes	Ms. Sparhawk	yes	Ms. Rundle	yes
Ms. Sahn	yes	Mr. Sears	yes		
Mr. Batacchi	abstain	Mr. Flynn	yes		

- F. Financial Updates: Mr. Turner reported that salary adjustments had been made for the “Payroll Personnel”, as voted at the last meeting. Following brief discussion, Mr. Flynn moved to correct the discrepancy pointed out by the Superintendent earlier in the evening. Mr. Sears seconded the motion. Following discussion/clarification, Mr. Flynn modified his motion to correct the discrepancy pointed out by the superintendent in his report and to amend the contracts for the Business Manager and Director of Student Services to reflect the changes and the addendum. Mr. Valentini seconded the motion, and it was so voted. (Mr. Batacchi abstained.)

Mr. Turner reported on the 2014 Project 351, which had occurred on Saturday, January 18. He said that one eight grade representative of each District town had traveled to Boston to do community service. He said that it was the fourth year of the program.

6. **Communication from the Public/Requests for Future Agenda Items:** There were no communications or requests from the audience.

Mr. Flynn moved, seconded by Mr. Sears, to adjourn the meeting. It was so voted, and the meeting adjourned at 7:57 p.m.

Documents presented at this meeting:

- *Agenda, School Committee Meeting #1,470*
- *Minutes of Meeting #1,469*
- *Preliminary FY'15 Budget Documents, dated January 23, 2014*
- *Letter from Mt. Everett Principal Glenn Devoti, Dated October 31, 2013*
- *Statement by Finance Subcommittee Chair Vito Valentini Re: Preliminary FY'15 Budget*
- *Policy Drafts: IHBG, Homeschooling; JFAB, Admission of Nonresident Students; DBI, Budget Implementation*
- *Paper prepared by Ms. E. Bonnie Silvers Re: School District Advisory Boards, with accompanying motion to establish an advisory board*
- *E-mail from Michelle A. McNulty of Murphy, Lamere and Murphy Law Firm, PC, dated January 16, 2014, Re: Unit D Catastrophic Family Illness*
- *Family Sick Leave Side Letter*
- *Catastrophic Sick Leave Appendix C Revised*