

Southern Berkshire Regional School Committee
Mt. Everett Regional School
Sheffield, MA
February 6, 2014
Meeting #1,471

School Committee Members: Mr. Stewart, Ms. Silvers, Mr. Valentini, Mr. Batacchi, Ms. Sahn, Mr. Sears, Ms. Sparhawk, Ms. Fields

Absent: Mr. Flynn, Ms. Rundle

Administration: Mr. Hastings, Mr. Turner

Press: CTSB TV

Student Representatives: Madison Ryan

Others: Ms. Brenda Olivieri; Mr. Andrew Rapport; Ms. Linda Higgins

1. Chairman Stewart called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.
2. **Approval of Minutes:**
Ms. Silvers requested the addition of the word, "Findings" under Item 5D, (Entry Findings Report). She also requested the deletion of the word "a" (prior to "borrowing") in the second paragraph on page 2. In addition, she asked that reference be made under Item 5F to the fact that Mr. Turner had accompanied the 8th grade youngsters and had performed volunteer service alongside Dr. Matt Malone, Secretary of Education. Mr. Sears moved, seconded by Mr. Batacchi, to adopt the minutes, as amended. It was so voted, unanimously.
3. **Communications from the Audience Pertaining to this Evening's Agenda**
 - A. Student Representative Madison Ryan introduced herself to the Committee and distributed information about the recently completed student survey. She informed the Committee about upcoming events. Following a question and answer session, Committee members thanked Madison for her report.
 - B. There were no communications from the audience.
4. **Updates/Presentations:**
 - A. Innovation School: Mr. Hastings explained that he had received a prospectus from Ms. Woodsome, Elementary Principal, proposing the development of Innovation Schools at both the New Marlborough Central and Undermountain Elementary Schools. He said that the next step is to select a screening team to review the prospectus. He asked that the Committee choose one of their members or a designee to represent the School Committee.

Mr. Sears moved that the School Committee select a School Committee member to serve on the Committee. Ms. Sparhawk seconded the motion, and it was so voted.

Mr. Stewart stated that he had decided that the only appropriate way to make the selection would be by nomination and vote of the full School Committee.

Mr. Sears moved to place in nomination the name of Bonnie Silvers. Mr. Valentini seconded the motion. Mr. Sears then moved to accept the nomination by acclamation. Ms. Sparhawk seconded the motion, and it was so voted, unanimously.

Mr. Stewart noted that Mr. Hastings and Ms. Silvers will be joined on the screening committee by Ms. JoAnn Gavriety, representing the Teachers' Association.

Mr. Sears reminded all that the committee is a public body, and any deliberations must be done under the Open Meeting Law.

- B. Superintendent's Report: Mr. Hastings reported on events that had taken place recently, as well as upcoming events (report on file). At Mr. Hastings' request, Mr. Rapport explained the book selling program that he has developed, in collaboration with the Sheffield Historical Society, for the Life Skills students.
- D. Request for Preliminary Approval of Overnight Field Trip: Following a brief presentation by Ms. Courtney English and a question and answer session, Mr. Valentini moved to grant preliminary approval of the 2015 band/chorus trip to Los Angeles. Ms. Silvers seconded the motion, and it was so voted, unanimously. Ms. English will seek final approval in the fall of 2014.
- C. Mr. Valentini moved to preliminarily approve the District's Operating, Transportation, and Capital Budgets, as presented. Ms. Sparhawk seconded the motion. Discussion took place, with Mr. Sears expressing concern as to whether the District would be able to garner the votes to pass the budget in four of the five towns. Mr. Sears requested that an analysis of alternatives be prepared. Ms. Silvers suggested that as the Superintendent, Business Manager, and Finance Committee Chair were to begin visiting the towns' finance committees and select boards, they go into those meetings with a prepared sheet highlighting what has already been taken out of the budget and the savings realized. Mr. Valentini stated that the trio will collect all of the information they can gather from the meetings with the town boards and then hold another Finance Subcommittee meeting after receiving the feedback. He stressed that the budget figures represented the highest number and that the budget is still a work in progress.

The Committee then voted preliminary approval, unanimously.

Mr. Sears moved that the School Committee vote to have whomever the proper representative of the School Committee may be speak with Berkshire School about compensating the District for the students who reside on their campus, with the understanding that if the School Committee is not satisfied, they will begin action at the state level to make that happen.

Mr. Sears contended that at the present time, there are many students enrolled in the District who reside on the Berkshire School campus where no real estate taxes are paid, thus the district receives no revenue for those students. Ms. Sahn stated that as the town of Sheffield pays for those students, it should be the town's concern, rather than the District's. Mr. Sears re-stated the motion; no second was heard. Further discussion took place, with members expressing a desire for additional information. Mr. Stewart stated that more background was needed, and he suggested that the Committee place such a discussion on the agenda before summer, once they have additional information.

- D. The Committee discussed parameters for allowing the Superintendent to consult with the District's attorney for routine matters. It was generally agreed that the matter should be returned to the Policy

Subcommittee for development of better guidelines that would give the Superintendent enough leeway so that he/she would not need to seek the approval of the School Committee too often.

E. Subcommittee/Representative Reports:

1) Mr. Valentini reported that the Buildings, Grounds & Technology Subcommittee had not gathered a quorum for their last meeting, thus they were unable to take any votes. However, they did discuss and informally agree to request that funds be included in the FY' 15 Capital Budget to replace the carpet at South Egremont School and to revamp the kitchen area at New Marlborough Central School to allow the food service director to deliver and clean up after lunches.

2) Ms. Silvers reported that at the Executive Evaluation Committee meeting held on January 23, Ms. Sahn had joined the subcommittee, and Mr. Flynn had again been elected chair. Mr. Hastings had presented his Preliminary Entry Findings Report. They will meet on February 13 to review the next iteration of his report, and he will present the report to the full School Committee on February 27.

F. Mr. Valentini moved to grant the approval of the School Committee to make a submission to the School Building Authority to get into the accelerated program for purposes of roof and boiler work. **[Resolved:** Having convened in an open meeting on February 6, 2014, prior to the closing date, the School Committee of the Southern Berkshire Regional School District, in accordance with its charter, by-laws, and ordinances, has voted to authorize the Superintendent to submit to the Massachusetts School Building Authority the Statement of Interest Form dated February 17, 2014 for the Mt Everett High School/Undermountain Elementary School located at 491 Berkshire School Road, Sheffield, MA which describes and explains the following deficiencies and the priority category(s) for which an application may be submitted to the Massachusetts School Building Authority in the future. The district is submitting a SOI for Priority 5 which requests "Replacement, renovation or modernization of school facility systems, such as roofs, windows, boilers, heating and ventilation systems, to increase energy conservation and decrease energy related costs in a school facility". The district is specifically requesting replacement of the boilers and roof; and hereby further specifically acknowledges that by submitting this Statement of Interest Form, the Massachusetts School Building Authority in no way guarantees the acceptance or the approval of an application, the awarding of a grant or any other funding commitment from the Massachusetts School Building Authority, or commits the City/Town/Regional School District to filing an application for funding with the Massachusetts School Building Authority.] Ms. Silvers seconded the motion, and it was so voted, unanimously.

Mr. Turner presented a listing of requested transfers to be made in order to cover the recent salary adjustments of Payroll Personnel and Unit D employees. Following a question and answer period, Mr. Sears moved, seconded by Ms. Silvers, to approve the transfers, as requested by Mr. Turner (copy on file with these minutes). It was so voted, unanimously.

Mr. Turner distributed a quote from a vendor for the air conditioning of the second floor of Mt. Everett, noting that it had come in above the engineer's estimate. Ms. Silvers asked that names of vendors with whom the engineer had worked be requested. Mr. Turner and Mr. Finkle will do additional research.

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

5. G. Executive Session: Mr. Sears moved to enter into executive session for the purpose of discussing litigation strategy (because holding such discussion in open session could have a detrimental effect on the District's position), and not to return to open session. Ms. Silvers seconded the motion. The vote:

Mr. Sears yes Ms. Silvers yes Ms. Fields yes

Mr. Valentini yes Ms. Sparhawk yes Mr. Batacchi yes
Mr. Stewart yes Ms. Sahn yes

The Committee entered into executive session at 8:28 p.m.

The Committee came out of executive session at 8:50 p.m.

On a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 8:51 p.m.

Documents presented at this meeting:

- *Agenda, School Committee Meeting #1,471*
- *Minutes of Meeting #1,470*
- *Request for Overnight Field Trip to Los Angeles, CA, April 16-20, 2015*
- *Policy File BDG, School Attorney*
- *Resolution, dated January 31, 2014, re: Authorization to submit a Statement of Interest Form for the Mt. Everett igh School/Undermountain Elementary School*
- *Innovation Schools approval Process*
- *Prospectus (Revised September, 2013) for The Whole Child Innovation School at Mill River, Massachusetts, and The Whole Child Innovation Program at Sheffield, Massachusetts Paper prepared by Ms. E. Bonnie Silvers Re: School District Advisory Boards, with accompanying motion to establish an advisory board*
- *Presentation of the Southern Berkshire Regional School District FY 15 Budget, Preliminary Adoption February 6, 2014*
- *FY 15 Preliminary Budget, Operating and Transportation Budgets, Draft, 2/03/2014*
- *Memo Re: Transfer Requests from Bruce Turner, Business Administrator, dated February 6, 2014*
- *DRAFT – **The Bold Eagle**, February, 2014, Volume 8*