School Committee Minutes
Town Hall Meeting Room
Monday, May 11, 2009
7:00 P.M.

Members attending: Virginia Justicz, Stu Sklar, Patty Wenger, Keith Cheveralls, Piali De, Lorraine Leonard, Thomas Jefferson

Call to Order – Thomas Jefferson, Superintendent, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and welcomed new member, Piali De, and returning member, Patty Wenger. He also thanked the outgoing Chair, Stu Sklar.

Election of Officers

Patty Wenger made a motion and Piali De seconded to nominate Keith Cheveralls as Chair.

VOTED (5/0) to accept the motion. (Virginia Justicz (Yes), Stu Sklar (Yes) Patty Wenger (Yes), Keith Cheveralls (Yes), Piali De (Yes).

Piali De made a motion and Stu Sklar seconded to nominate Virginia Justicz as Vice Chair.

VOTED (5/0) to accept the motion. (Virginia Justicz (Yes), Stu Sklar (Yes) Patty Wenger (Yes), Keith Cheveralls (Yes), Piali De (Yes).

Stu Sklar made a motion and Virginia Justicz seconded to nominate Patty Wenger as Secretary.

VOTED (5/0) to accept the motion. (Virginia Justicz (Yes), Stu Sklar (Yes) Patty Wenger (Yes), Keith Cheveralls (Yes), Piali De (Yes).

Minutes

Stu Sklar made a motion and Piali De seconded to approve the Minutes from the April 27th meeting at the next meeting on May 26th.

VOTED (5/0) to accept the motion. (Virginia Justicz (Yes), Stu Sklar (Yes) Patty Wenger (Yes), Keith Cheveralls (Yes), Piali De (Yes).

Student Report

Molly O’Rourke-Friel reported that Middle School Drama received a gold medal for its play, “Tales of Trickery” and three students also won awards. She further reported that Middle School Band and Chorus will participate in the Great East Music Festival at Six Flags. She also reported on the State Science Fair.

Rachael Kipps reported that Bromfield will hold a Blood Drive on May 18th, the Iced Coffee House was postponed, AP Exams were winding down, the car crash simulation will be held on Thursday, and Prom and Celebration are on Friday.
School Committee Reports

Stu Sklar reported that the Suburban Coalition’s Annual Meeting is scheduled for May 20th in Dedham and the Municipal Partnership Act with Jamie Eldridge as Chair will hold its meeting this Friday. He further reported that HES School Council elected its new community member, Carlene Phillips. The Council also needs new parent members and interested parties should contact Mary Beth Banios. The Parent Communication Survey showed that parents preferred to receive communications electronically. Curriculum Night was a success. The Council is working on updating the website and has started a Google calendar of school events. Piali De recommended both schools utilized the Google calendar idea. Stu further informed the Committee that the School Improvement Plan will be in draft form by the end of June.

Virginia Justicz welcomed back Piali and Patty. She thanked the Town for supporting the School’s Warrant Articles and Keith for his work on them. She recommended that the Health Insurance discussion stay an active topic.

Piali De stated that she was glad to be on the Committee and was looking forward to working with the members.

Keith Cheveralls informed that it was Teacher Appreciation Week which is co-sponsored by the PTO and the School Committee.

Patty Wenger thanked everyone for their help with Celebration. She invited the public to the open house on Friday from 9:00-10:00 p.m.

Superintendent Report

Dr. Jefferson sympathized with Leominster School District and its oil spill. He commented that natural gas was the way to do. He gave an update on the HES School Closing due to the H1N1 virus, and thanked Mark Force, the custodial staff and the nursing staff for their efforts. He has applied for a waiver of the make up day with ESE and will let the Committee know as soon as possible. He advised that the next DEAC meeting was scheduled for May 19th. He also informed that the Middle School Drama Festival prompted many requests for School Choice openings.

Old Business

FY09 Budget Report

Lorraine Leonard provided a FY09 Budget Report updated through April 30th.

FY10 ARRA – Stimulus Funding
Dr. Jefferson advised that the stimulus amount was still unknown and that he was in the process of drafting the IDEA grant.

**Superintendent Evaluation and Contract**

The Chair questioned why the Committee did not vote on the evaluation and why only the former Chair signed the new contract. Stu Sklar, former Chair, stated that the Committee followed the MASC Guidelines and past practices. He further stated that the bottom line was that the Superintendent met expectations. Patty Wenger stated that she would like the policy to be that the Committee review the actual written evaluation and contract before they are asked to vote on it. Virginia Justicz stated that it was the Chair’s prerogative. Keith asked the Superintendent his perspective, and Dr. Jefferson stated that his evaluation was the only public document, and that he had asked his Administrative Council to conduct evaluations on his performance. Piali De stated that she believed the Committee had always voted on the evaluation in the past so that the evaluation was the voice of the Board, and then the Chair would discuss it with the Superintendent.

Piali De made a motion and Patty Wenger seconded to vote on the evaluation that was read at the Meeting on April 27th.

The Committee discussed the motion. Virginia suggested they go forward as is and that a policy perspective was necessary in the future. Stu felt they should honor what the Committee voted to do last March and follow the MASC guidelines. He also noted that the MASC Guidelines as well as the Committee’s policy were silent on the issue.

Piali withdrew her motion. She stated for the record that she felt it was not an evaluation of the board without a vote of board.

The Committee then discussed the extension of the Superintendent’s Contract. Dr. Jefferson and Stu Sklar indicated that it was basically the same contract with some minor language changes. The Chair requested the Committee allow him to speak with School Counsel on the language changes and report back to the Committee at the next meeting. The Committee agreed. Piali De stated again there were some process points and that the document should be signed by all members. The Chair asked Dr. Jefferson to inform School Counsel of the new Committee. Stu Sklar stated for the record that the February 3, 2005 Contract was only signed by the Chair.

**New Business**

**Liaison for Sub-Committees**

The Committee appointed the following new liaisons for the sub-committees:

- Board of Selectmen – Keith Cheveralls
- FinCom – Keith Cheveralls and Virginia Justicz
- Policy – Virginia Justicz and Keith Cheveralls
Facilities Task Force/Land Use/Indoor Air Quality – Patty Wenger and Virginia Justicz
DEAC – Keith Cheveralls & Piali De
SEPAC – Virginia Justicz
Bromfield School Council – Stu Sklar
HES School Council – Patty Wenger
Capital Planning – Keith Cheveralls
Suburban Coalition – Stu Sklar
HEAC/Energy Subcommittee – Patty Wenger
Strategic Planning – Piali De
Stipend – Virginia Justicz
ZBA/Planning Board – Keith Cheveralls
Contract Negotiations – Virginia Justicz

School Committee Goals

The Committee discussed the process for goal setting. Piali De asked Dr. Jefferson to prepare a District Report. She will send a timeline to the Chair and the Recording Secretary as to the process and members will send their goals for a compilation. The Committee will discuss further at the next meeting.

Meeting Schedule

The Committee decided to change the regularly scheduled June 8th meeting as it is Special Town Meeting to June 9th and to add another meeting on June 29th if necessary.

Data Driven Decision Making for School Boards

The Chair stated he would send the Committee a link to the National School Board Association’s “Improving School Board Decision Making” and asked the Committee to review the document for goal setting and budget planning purposes.

Future Agenda Items

The Chair read Policy BEDB to the Committee regarding agenda items. He suggested the public send their items one week prior to a meeting and that Committee members will give their items at the end of each meeting for the next meeting. The Committee also discussed sending out packets electronically.

Gifts

No gifts were presented.

Adjournment

Patty Wenger made a motion and Stu Sklar seconded to adjourn the meeting.
VOTED (5/0) to accept the motion. (Keith Cheveralls (Yes), Virginia Justicz (Yes), Stu Sklar (Yes), Patty Wenger (Yes), Piali De (Yes).

Meeting adjourned at 9:38 p.m.
Minutes submitted,

Jackie Smith
Recording Secretary