

Blackstone-Millville Regional District School Committee

Minutes of Meeting January 9, 2014

The Blackstone Millville Regional District School Committee met in the library of the Frederick W. Hartnett Middle School at 6:30 p.m. with the following members present:

William F. Chaplin, Jr., Chairperson
Steven J. Tringali, Vice Chairperson
Wendy L. Greenstein, District Treasurer
Catherine A. Robinson, Assistant District Treasurer.
Erin P. Vinacco, District Secretary
Michael J. Buckley, Member
Diane C. Robin, Member
Brian T. Faulkner, Member

Also in attendance was Perry P. Davis, Ed.D, Interim Superintendent of Schools.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States was recited.

Student Representatives

Morgan McCarthy - The Boys and Girls basketball hosted games recently at BMR – there is a good chance for boys to be in the playoffs – They are preparing for the Empty Bowl fundraiser on February 12th at the BMR High School. Tickets will be on sale at the door. Just jeans January is taking place – slightly worn jeans can be donated – The gingerbread contest raised funds for toys for tots -

Thomas Gallagher – spoke on the stuco pep rally – seniors won everything – beat the teachers in the tug of war – underclassmen were involved – looking at class trip and end of the year – 83 days left for seniors – the prom will take place at the Lakeview Pavilion in Mendon – there is a band concert at the High School tonight at 7 pm.

Public Forum – no one present for this-

Motion: It was moved by Mr. Buckley, seconded by Mrs. Vinacco and unanimously voted to accept Consent Agenda A which includes Warrants, Use of School Facilities, Field Trip requests and Minutes of Meeting of December 12, 2013.

Report of the Superintendent –

Motion: It was moved by Mrs. Robin, seconded by Mrs. Greenstein and unanimously voted to participate in the fuel oil bill with French River to get our oil from Petroleum Traders at a rate of \$3.0097.

Roof Projects – The roof at the Complex is substantially completed except for the trim which is being worked on. Despite the rain, snow and cold they are wrapping it up. The weather did make things a challenge. MSBA will do an audit and close out the project. We have a bond anticipation note out and will work with the Town of Blackstone to see how they want to structure the loan.

MSBA will go beyond the one year time limit for the High School roof. Construction documents will be worked on. The District must retain an asbestos engineering firm and the project at the High School will have some of the asbestos containing materials removed. Tighe and Bond will do this part of the project which is folded into the contract. They want to use the company that the District has been using at the High School for containment of asbestos.

Millville roof project – sent to MSBA for review and vote at their Jan. 2014 meeting. The total cost for the project will be \$1,530,517. Dr. Davis is asking the Committee to take action on this. After this motion they will go to the Millville Board of Selectman to proceed. Borrowing is through the Town of Millville and it is the Town's responsibility since they own the Millville Elementary School. If the Town of Millville does not pass an override the District will not incur the debt.

BLACKSTONE-MILLVILLE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
DEBT FOR ROOF PROJECT AT MES

MOTION NO. 1

Motion: It was moved by Mr. Buckley, seconded by Mr. Faulkner and unanimously voted by a roll call vote that the Regional School District hereby appropriates the amount of \$1,530,558 for the purpose of paying the costs of replacing the roof and its appurtenant components at the Millville Elementary School located at 122 Berthelette Way, Millville, MA including the payment of all costs incidental and related thereto (the "Project"), which proposed repair project would materially extend the useful life of the school and preserve an asset that otherwise is capable of supporting the required educational program, and for which the District may be eligible for a school construction grant from the Massachusetts School Building Authority ("MSBA"), said amount to be expended at the direction of the District School Committee. To meet this appropriation the District is authorized to borrow said amount under and pursuant to Chapter 71, Section 16(d) of the General Laws and the District Agreement, as amended, or pursuant to any other enabling authority. The District acknowledges that the MSBA's grant program is a non-entitlement, discretionary program based on need, as determined by the MSBA, and any costs the District incurs in excess of any grant approved by and received from the MSBA shall be the sole responsibility of the District; provided further that any grant that the District may receive from the MSBA shall not exceed the lesser of (1) fifty seven and seventy four one-hundred percent (57.74%) of eligible, approved Project costs, as determined by the MSBA, or (2) the total maximum grant amount determined by

the MSBA; and provided further that the approval of the District's borrowing by this vote shall be subject to and contingent upon an affirmative vote of the Town to exempt its allocable share of the amounts required for the payment of interest and principal on said borrowing from the limitations on taxes imposed by M.G.L. 59, Section 21C (Proposition 2 ½); and that the amount of borrowing authorized by the District shall be reduced by any grant amount set forth in the Project Funding Agreement that may be executed between the District and the MSBA.

MOTION NO. 2

Motion: It was moved by Mr. Tringali, seconded by Mr. Buckley and unanimously voted by a role call vote to further move that, within seven (7) days from the date on which this vote is adopted, the Secretary be and hereby is instructed to notify the Board of Selectmen of each of the member towns of this District as to the amount and general purposes of the debt herein authorized as required by the District Agreement, as amended, and by Chapter 71, Section (d) of the General Laws.

The 60 day clock starts today. They will need to ratify in Millville or take no action. They will call a special town meeting. It is the Selectman's decision to put it on the ballot and have it voted on. They can avoid a special town meeting under the law.

Dr. Davis recognized a Superintendent's scholar at the High School. Daniel Manning was voted as the Mass Association Superintendent scholarship award recipient. He was present at a luncheon with the Superintendent's in Massachusetts. He is an accomplished young man and an excellent representative of this award.

Water damage at the Middle School – Resulted in water damage in the nurses office and general area. Mr. Cameron assessed the situation and worked with the insurance adjuster. It was a major disruption but all has been repaired. The wall board was removed, dried and properly treated. A full accounting will be given by the insurance adjuster. We are only responsible for the deductible on the repairs.

Cafeteria - Jean Sheridan informed Dr. Davis of the condition of the revolving account in the food service department. They have had a number of equipment issues that needed to be addressed. They began the year with \$30,000. The freezers and coolers needed repairs so they are using much of these funds. Historically they have not needed to repair anything in the cafeteria in a long time.

They also needed added staffing for an additional \$16,000 expense. Due to a resignation by a staff member in the kitchen they have hired the monitor to replace her and did not replace the monitors position.

This account is also responsible for the health insurance taken by cafeteria employees.

Dr. Davis will report back to the Committee in the spring with more information.

Mrs. Sheridan has done an outstanding job but Mr. Buckley is hesitant to subsidize the cafeteria operation. He asked if they have looked at increasing the prices of lunches.

Now that they have to meet the current health standards it is more difficult for the cafeteria workers.

Commodities have gone down and having to buy food on the wholesale market is problematic.

They need fresh fruits and vegetables which adds to the cost.

Most of what they do in the cafeteria is prep and serve and not so much from scratch.

Mr. Faulkner is surprised at the amount of the repair being done in the Middle School cafeteria.

There was a major issue with a compressor at the Middle School.

Extended Day Program – provides an option for parents with before and after school daycare-

Nadine Carter is in charge of this program. Millville had to eliminate the program but they were able to maintain the program at the A.F. Maloney school with about 25 students per day. They are looking at a \$17,000 deficit at the end of the program this year if things run at the same rate they are now. K-5 population is included. The director's salary is the biggest liability for the program. She has tried advertising and it has not worked yet. They knew it may not take off right away. Dr. Davis has reviewed all areas with her.

Mr. Buckley would like to see a formal report from Nadine Carter on what she has done to promote the day care. They wanted a dynamic person who is pushing the program. He is questioning how can they get more kids? They are now competing with the Boys and Girls Club in town. When school is canceled the Boys and Girls Club is still opened but the District program cannot open during the school vacations or during school closings.

Mrs. Vinacco feels that they should be able to make it more dynamic than the other program in town. They will now leave 25 parents high and dry. We did not capture as many students as we may have potential for in the future.

Mr. Buckley and Mrs. Vinacco believe Mrs. Carter should come to the Committee and get help with what steps she can take to lower the deficit.

Dr. Davis has spent time with her at the beginning of the year to help her advertise and get the word out. This needed to be done sooner than this. He feels the timing of it was difficult to do the notification. The question remains, what can she do to make them want to send their children here? It was a rushed program. The Committee needs to decide if they will move this forward. The kids are in the cafeteria the entire time. They should be more creative with the program and get feedback from the parents that are participating. They may need to offer the program during the school vacation weeks.

Dr. Davis stated that they can afford the program until the end of the year. Be sure the advertised things are actually happening and determine how you can compete with the other day care centers in Town.

They will have Mrs. Carter at the first meeting in February. Please email the specific questions to Dr. Davis so Mrs. Carter can prepare for the next meeting.

Motion: It was moved by Mrs. Robinson, seconded by Mrs. Robin and unanimously voted to return the paragraph left out in 2008 to the Educators Contract.

Bullying prevention intervention policy – They had trouble posting it and they will bring it back for another vote at the February meeting.

Technology Acceptable Use Procedure – a policy for faculty and staff that all employees will need to sign.

This needs to be put in place and it will become part of the packet in the fall for faculty. There is no expectation of privacy when using our system. There is already one for students but not for staff and this needs to be put in place.

Review of the current FY14 budget – looking at potential deficits in the current budget – \$446,281 deficit in special education– There is good news. An audit of circuit breaker funding for this year looks like we will get \$385,000 which will reduce the Special Education deficit to \$61,281. There are always fluctuations in special education. The substitute account has a deficit and could become larger.

However, we will not have the money in anticipation of an offset for next year and circuit breaker is not always there. Chances are not good that we will know next year's number by the time we go through with our budget for FY15.

For the FY14 budget we have saved money in health insurance and the superintendent's salary.

State transportation – we have not yet received a payment for this -

School Choice –

We currently have 78 students that have school choiced out an only 28 student that have school choiced into our District. We currently have a deficit of \$244,507.

Mrs. Robin wants to do advertising on the positiveness in our school and take a survey.

Budget information –Dr. Davis wants to start looking at the information and ask more questions. He relies on members of the Committee for the history on the past budgets so he can understand the implications for the development of this budget.

Revenue Assumptions – these have not changed yet – We should see this by the end of the month – there will be some Chapter 70 adjustments since we will have fewer students in the District next year – we will receive D.E.S.E. estimates in the spring – they will get a full understanding of the budget and the grants – race to the top grant ends – lower enrollment which is indicated by NESDEC numbers indicate this – English Language learner population is growing and they will need to provide additional teaching time in this area – we do not have teachers that are ELL trained – we were not eligible for teacher training this year – Milford schools have shared their resource of information and laws with our District –

World languages at the high school – we currently have teachers that are teaching a sixth class – we may want to hire someone as a full time person –

Librarian at the high school is needed – no one to consult and work with faculty and staff-

Athletic Director – he is teaching 4 classes and should be teaching 2 classes – he is stretched very thin – not realistic – The Athletic Director position is very complex and he must supervise the coaches – many are not faculty members in our District –

Program needs – Dr. Davis directed principals to build their budget based only on the needs of the students – it should be on the list because there is a student need for the funds and items – must justify why they need things –

Projecting no major technology purchases – this is what the Assistant Superintendent was going to work on but you do not have one – always a need to replace some technology items –

Professional development – continuing the literacy initiative and the District determined measures, teacher mentoring and data teams -

NEASC – starting the process and it is an expense –

Adjustments in health insurance – estimating that Medex will continue to be reduced – estimating our health insurance will increase no more than 6% -
Our rates are below the GIC rates –

Reflect on the budget overview – budget development goals – share information top of priority list – thoughtful and reflective process – need to be sensitive of revenue – the Special Education budget cannot be perfect –

Personnel is what they need to focus their discussion on – he does not like to spend too much time looking at small items in the budget – line items have been zeroed out which does not make sense – entrusting that the School Committee will make the right decisions-

The administrators are prepared to come in and talk about their needs and visions- they are still given the financial reality – it might be a no this year but it could be something we are working towards –

Different mind set now – they can engage in dialogue –
Mr. Buckley wants to see creativity from the administrators –
Accepting realities of being a small school and how you can shift and change faculty to make things work – How are things working out and how they can move forward – building blocks –

How to maintain all of the buildings properly-

Mrs. Vinacco – feels that 28 students to a foreign language class is too high.

Sub Committee reports

The Superintendent's Search committee is made up of Diane Robin, Erin Vinacco, Karen Breault, Kathy Jones, Jerry Finn, Robert Dubois, Mike Dudek, Jennifer Wing, Kathy Stearman, Mr. Buckley and Joe Stares.

On February 13th the screening committee will present the candidate list at our meeting.

They hope to have a person appointed by March 31st-

Mr. Buckley sent out a job description – they will be sure that all get it and discuss it the next time –

Public relations – walk through the buildings – see when people are available – they would like to do this on a Saturday – good bridge that they make the effort to get people in the buildings – they will videotape it and do it live and those that cannot attend can see it on video –

Budget – scheduled meeting for next Thursday –

Regional Agreement – seeing the pulse of the Committee – talked about a goal- what are the problems – advantages and disadvantages – end time for the study – goal is to provide an equal opportunity for all students to earn a good education in the District – it is worth looking into since Millville student enrollment is declining – it is one sentence in the agreement that they need to change to be able to utilize their facilities-

Advantages – supports team teaching and a group as a whole, balancing class size across the District, students would unite younger than sixth grade – more creative scheduling – adjusting staffing – consolidating efforts, inter-grade collaboration – focus on one specific developmental stage-

Disadvantages – class sizes and not knowing where this will go, logistical and financial implications, travel time from one town to the next, lose older student as role models, parents may have kids in different buildings, volunteering and spread out time in both buildings, lack of familiarity, change in one building to the next building – change in stability-

Next steps – question of declining enrollment and where the Committee stands-

How does Millville continue to sustain the cost of keeping a building open that is half empty?

Mr. Tringali is in favor of it – educational aspect should outweigh the financial-

Mr. Buckley – makes sense both educationally and financially – include them in discussions way before town meeting – what is the cost difference between educating a student in the town of Millville and in Blackstone-

Mr. Faulkner – don't minimize the Millville culture – big sense of community that centers around the Millville Elementary School-

Mrs. Robin – have the community help with the research and then they will understand the research – this is how to get people to buy into this-

Public Forum – there were no items

Committee Forum

Mr. Tringali – thanks and congratulations for taking the A.P. Biology class to Bridgewater State laboratories with great exposure to a college campus-

Mr. Buckley – is saddened by the loss of reading teacher Mrs. Susan Decker. Congratulations to Dr. Davis for keeping the schools open on Thursday –

Mrs. Robin – great performance and wonderful audience turnout for the production of Alladin - they will also have a spring production –

Mrs. Vinacco wishing all a happy and healthy new year -thank you to all of the people, parents and staff that have helped with the search-

Mr. Chaplin – Danny Manning – top quality teen could not have picked a better person-

Motion: It was moved by Mrs. Robin, seconded by Mrs. Robinson and unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 9:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Monique F. Simard
Recording Secretary

ATTEST: _____
Erin P. Vinacco, District Secretary