

**KING PHILIP REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
MINUTES  
July 11, 2017 - Retreat  
King Philip Middle School - Library  
18 King Street, Norfolk, MA 02056**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Mr. Francomano, Chair called the meeting to order at 9:00AM

**ROLL CALL OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**

Members Present:	Norfolk:	Kenneth Dow, Michael Gee
	Plainville:	Patrick Francomano, Charlene McEntee, Samad Khan
	Wrentham:	Trevor Knott, Jim Killion

Members Absent:	Norfolk:	Jeff Chalmers
	Wrentham:	Erin DeStefano
	Plainville:	Present

HS Student Council Representative: None

The meeting is not being videotaped. Mr. Francomano explained that the public may visit the district's website at [www.kingphilip.org](http://www.kingphilip.org) to review informational documents pertaining to each school committee meeting. Videotaped meetings may be viewed in their entirety at [www.wrenthamcableaccess.com](http://www.wrenthamcableaccess.com) Mr. Francomano also explained the procedure for public comment.

**DELEGATIONS AND VISITORS**

Dr. Gilson, Ms. Lacher, Mr. Bois, Mr. Azer (arrived at 9:18am)

**AGENDA**

Mr. Francomano opened the meeting commenting on the budget process referenced in his memorandum dated July 9, 2017. He indicated that the school committee is well aware of the budget process and that the budget itself has been the subject of much discussion with particular emphasis on transparency and credibility. There have been past efforts to demystify the budget process that have been met with limited success. More importantly, these budget discussions have led to conversations about what a KP education represents and what KP should look like in the future. Additionally, there have been many citizens who have been engaged in these conversations and who wish to become involved and work collaboratively with the School Committee. This provides us with an excellent opportunity to have broad-based community discussions around educational programming and design, communicate the multiple facets of the KP operations budget and give the public an opportunity to become invested in "their school."

**09:10 AM Auditor's Contract**

Dr. Zielinski has had extensive discussions with the auditors Lynch, Malloy, Marini concerning the quality of the auditor's presentation. She has been assured that going forward the presentation will be professional and that questions will be fielded and replied to appropriately. The Finance Committee has reviewed and recommends approval of a contract for FY17 through FY19.

- ✦ **A Motion was made by Mr. Killion, seconded by Mr. Gee, to accept the proposal from the auditing firm of Lynch, Malloy, Marini, LLL of Norwell, MA to provide auditing services related to the District Audit and the DESE Compliance Audit for the dates and fees as follows:  
FY17 - \$21,500  
FY18 - \$22,250  
FY19 - \$23,000  
All in favor.**

### **09:10 AM - 09:20 AM FY 17 & 18 Budget Update**

Dr. Zielinski provided a memorandum to the School Committee dated July 10, 2017 outlining the FY17-18 Budget update. As of this date, the District is still awaiting the Governor's approval of the budget approved by the House and Senate for FY18. Discussion ensued on available grants and Circuit Breaker with respect to the state's budget which at this point is unknown. Dr. Zielinski explained that Mr. Schaefer and Mr. Meichelbeck are assisting with the end of the year report and Mr. Azer will be starting his new position as Director of Finance on July 17, 2017. The auditors will be starting the auditing process and it is anticipated that all of the documents relating to the certification of the Excess & Deficiency fund by the Department of Revenue by August 1, 2017.

### **Overtime:**

With reference to Mr. Francomano's memorandum dated July 9, 2017, there should be greater effort required to track and explain overtime. Building Principals should report information to the Finance Director and report to Finance Committee on a monthly basis and the full School Committee for review in late fall.

Dr. Zielinski explained the implementation of the Veritime System in which hourly employees' time will be monitored. This would include custodians, secretaries, teacher assistants and cafeteria workers. A comparison review will be provided to the School Committee once the system is in place to compare FY17 with FY18 overtime. Last year September was the biggest month due to opening of school according to Dr. Zielinski.

### **Cell Phones:**

Cell phone allocation, plan detail, usage & cost should be reported to the School Committee for review in September with opportunity for full policy discussion.

### **Individual Employment Contracts (IEC):**

Provide IEC salary structure & benefits' history w/ full district & building organizational chart in August/September to the School Committee. This report is to understand the salary and benefit structure and to see how things flow with regard to the administration and other members of the staff (Technology, Human Resources and the Executive Assistant and other staff members) who have individual employment contracts with the District.

### **Communication:**

The School Committee and the Administrative Team should develop a collaborative communication strategy that provides accurate information about the budget and its impact on educational programming and consistently keeps parents, community and staff properly informed. Every effort should be made to avoid the perception of the use of "scare tactics."

FY 18 & 19 budget activity should focus on maintaining KP's current high-quality programming, identifying inefficiencies and verifying the credibility of the FY 18 baseline budget. Except as part of an ongoing implementation plan of an existing program or for a compelling need, financial proposals for new programs and staff should not be considered until a comprehensive review of the District's vision, mission and strategic plan. However, this should not be meant in any way to discourage the ongoing enthusiasm, creativity and dedication that is currently displayed by our faculty and staff. Administrators and department heads should be responsible for and have a demonstrable understanding of the budget that s/he oversees.

(Mr. Azer arrived at 9:18am.)

- Discussion ensued about having the building administrators, principals and special education director have a clear understanding of their budget and be able to access whatever information they need and work with Finance Director for 17/18 budget. Mr. Francomano indicated that this expectation was discussed at the last finance committee meeting. The focus is that all

administrators have more involvement and a good understanding of their budget and not rely on central office for information.

- Recommendation that FY19 is the year to add new initiatives, with the consensus to maintain KP's high quality programs and reputation will be addressed. The definition of high quality and how it is defined will also be discussed.
- The budget subcommittee is going to be monitoring this process and change the nature of the CTL presentations in January.

### **09:20 AM - 09:35 AM Committee Operations Discussion**

With reference to Mr. Francomano's memorandum dated July 9, 2017:

Any thoughts on how meetings might be conducted differently?

Suggest moving to a timed agenda for planning purposes; the time would be unofficial and agenda would reflect that the times are anticipated only and do not represent appointments or public hearings.

Consider meeting in Norfolk town hall if available – cameras are stable and both layout & acoustics are better than HS library.

### **Committee Operations:**

- Discussion ensued on having meetings in different towns and do a rotation for community access.
- Mr. Francomano suggestion was to see if it is feasible to move to Norfolk Town Hall where they are equipped with broadcast facilities in place in the building itself, much better acoustics and much nicer layout.
- The potential movement of meetings was discussed. A suggestion was to change the location of the meetings on a quarterly basis for consistency. Discussion ensued on broadcasting live or via Utube and who would be filming the meetings and to explore the pros and cons under which mechanism would be beneficial for community outreach.
- Discussion ensued on rotating either one meeting a month or on a quarterly basis. Depending on the time of the year and what is going on in the towns. Mr. Killion and Mr. Knott suggested keeping it as a KP facility (either at the HS or MS) as much as possible and not keep one town a permanent home.
- Mr. Francomano suggested a volunteer subcommittee be formed and come back with recommendations.
- Put this task into PR Subcommittee and have the agenda focused on that town. Do a survey and send out links after the meeting another topic for PR subcommittee. Discussion for working groups.

### **Operations:**

- Discussion ensued on the Agenda format and to cut out smaller topics and focus on leadership and budget and to provide an Executive Summary instead of broad presentations.
- Move local elementary reports after New Business.
- Follow the agenda for each category. Especially if there are going to be items that are going to be taken out of order.

### **Review & Discussion of Roundtables:**

Mr. Francomano provided the meeting notes of the 3 meetings (June 9, 13 and 21, 2017) held by the Budget & Finance Subcommittee as part of the roundtable discussion process. These 3 meetings were held over a three-week span, running 2-3 hours each. They were fairly well attended and made for excellent discussion.

Discussion ensued that the overall perception in the community of the three towns is that when the budget is presented, the community is skeptical of what is being presented and the perception is a "scare tactic" and the people of the community don't believe us anymore.

Perception around this year's budget process is going to be a big challenge to resolve. There are 2 ways to looking at this, what is the problem, what do we want for KP, and how do we build a

momentum to achieve it; or, how do we work the budget with increases that are legally required. PR and getting the community involved and a lot of suggestions creating in district programs and folks don't know that. There are a lot of good ideas, shared services, and regionalization. We need to define who we want to be as a district and how to support that or how to continue to operate and go through this cycle every year and treading water.

Dr. Zielinski noted that presenting the budget has several layers. Presenting to the School committee is very involved; presenting to the communication so that they can understand it. Articulate a budget that contains areas that the elementary does not have, such as payroll and health care that the towns do not have. Have to find a way to express this as a way to be pointed out to selectmen not necessarily to the parents. Do a cost analysis comparison with and without those items, with towns, elementary, all municipals. And from a parents' perspective, we do an ok job of promoting our successes with ConnectEd messages and asking the elementary districts to share this information with their community posts, but how do we do a better job with senior centers and using social media to our benefit instead of utilizing our time doing damage control and use a PR committee. Also what is allowable with sanctioned power for using social media and a, clear, consistent but controlled message of what is going on out there.

### **Public Participation:**

Discussion ensued with Ms. Tracy Mazur and Ms. Julie Radwitz who recapped how PR can be improved and better ways to communicate and eliminate *Facebook* chatter and how to minimize negativity in the community about the budget process. As an example, the cell phone usage should be addressed once and then focus on bigger areas for cost savings such as regionalization, special education programs and strategic planning and bring in a consultant and start by surveying all of the stakeholders and reviewing our goals to get people involved and see what kind of school we want to be. Looking back at the budget to see if this coincides with the strategic plan. Get all the information and implement what was said.

Mrs. McEntee noted that PR has always been in the forefront and when things are good no one pays attention, and when things are bad everyone pays attention and we need to find happy medium. A better presentation of the budget which is our fiduciary responsibility needs to improve and strategic planning is important.

Discussion ensued on town vs. town on the assessment for each town and the formula. The perception is that KP is a singular entity and not part of any town whereas the towns look to KP to see what we are doing and the challenge of bringing everyone together. Mr. Francomano indicated that we need to look at data and advocating for the budget, we are operating the same way as the town and the concern is the funding formula not mismanagement.

Dr. Gilson reflected on the budget process. She noted that we revised our presentation to expand the transparency, but in this process there is also a lot of education that is a cyclical process and the new business directors have experience to bring forward and we have struggled with the timeline and legal requirements. If the elementary school had the same timeline, their reiteration may be similar. We have done a great job becoming extremely transparent for education and different levels of staff and community, how do you know when it is appropriate to ask a question or leave a meeting or when the actual item has been approved. There is also that hidden dynamic, managing the special education budget is extremely stressful and if we cannot go back to the towns to reexamine it is not due to mismanagement, but making the process more manageable.

Dr. Gilson continued that at a town meeting, if KP is spending this amount of money then it will impact this and this, but we don't want to compromise because of KP, but schools do take up the bulk of the budget over time and if we were to examine trends over years it may not be KP's fault but it is the cost to be part of the town and we have tried our best to do what is best. Healthcare has been discussed over the years at different junctures, and now we have two buildings that are aging beautifully and gracefully. We try to be proactive and present so much information we may need to re-explain to reestablish ourselves.

Discussion ensued on the towns assessments. Mr. Azer noted that at Dennis-Yarmouth, from a regional district, we did a deep dive on the formula to get the minimum contribution, found it was helpful and you rely on the state budget to get the town assessment when it is available.

Discussion ensued on looking at opportunities for the school committee to report o the towns and to perhaps set up a schedule for the committee to attend selectmen and finance meetings of the three towns and report to the towns. Mrs. McEntee noted that the Plainville superintendent does a state to the state report and this would be a great opportunity to introduce the new Director of Finance to the towns and build that relationship.

### **10:30 AM - 11:30 AM Discussion of Working Groups**

Discussion ensued on the consideration of Community Working Group Advisory Team to organize & help keep things on track with the make up being as follows:

Supt or Admin Designee

School Committee Member(s)

Two Community Members

As an example use a:

\*Budget analysis

Identify Documents & Materials Required for Understanding/Presentation

Meet w/ Selectmen & Finance of the three towns, what documentation are you looking for

Do a thorough analysis on subject areas (SPED, Regular Ed, Admin, Tech) working with finance director on Grounds/Maint/Repair, Athletics/Extra Curricular, Revolving Accounts)

Present/Discuss with KP Finance Subcommittee

Present different subject areas at 4 public forums – (single agenda full school committee meeting – 2nd meeting of month?) with sufficient public notice & invitations to all town fin coms & BOS.

Sept: General Overview & SPED

Oct: Regular Ed

Nov: Admin, Tech, Grounds/Maint/Repair

Dec: Athletics/Extra Curricular, Revolving Accounts

Continue to work together as 2019 budget is being developed.

Discussion was held to propose a comparable working group be formed among the 3 towns and 4 school committees to focus on regional efficiencies and be able to troubleshoot, with the regional efficiencies being separate and distinct. All these working groups would eventually roll up into a strategic planning. Add a strategic plan working group but the first step would be to create and organize working groups ahead of the strategic plan.

Mr. Francomano said to seriously consider that you have all the information that you need. (i.e. using the correct education model). Would it behoove us to have roundtable discussions from a programming or scheduling standpoint with those who have used these tools? Discussion of regional efficiencies does it make sense for us to reach out to the three towns and the three school committees to see how we can benefit from different collaborations.

Mr. Gee indicated that there are some general mandates or guidelines that these groups needs to keep in line and PR may be recommending that we have a dedicated personnel to this and this is what the person does and make it sustainable.

Dr. Zielinski noted that discussion needs to take place on what the end goal is that a stakeholder survey is developed there may be some things related to curriculum, discuss internal and external PR if you are going to leverage social media that group will have to connect with the Technology Committee and has to become part of official King Philip webpage.

Ms. Mazur suggested that you have your advisory team who will then decide what is going to be the focus and how to communicate with the public, get members and co-chairs in place and explain that this is your mission. How are you going to get it done and then assign co-chairs a timeline of objectives and how they are going to get them done so that everything is structured? The advisory team needs to decide what this is going to be for the sake of continuity and everyone can work together. First establish the group that is going to get this going.

Mr. Francomano noted that it is not in the budget to have a PR person. There needs to be a school committee presence at community events such as the fall festivals from school committee perspective and on the building level.

Mr. Francomano said that assuming there is consensus that there is auspices under the superintendent to begin work on these three groups and appoint a school committee member(s) as a member of the advisory team and Mr. Gee has volunteered.

✚ **A Motion was made by Mr. Knott, seconded by Mr. Killion, to appoint Mr. Gee as the school committee member of the advisory team. All in favor.**

✚ **A Motion was made by Mr. Killion, seconded by Mr. Gee, to appoint Mr. Trevor Knott, appointed as school committee member. All in favor.**

Dr. Zielinski, Superintendent appointed community representatives:

– Julie Radwitz and Tracy Malloy

Dr. Zielinski will check with Attorney Waugh on the Open Meeting Law compliance for the posting of these meetings.

Upon discussion it was decided that the following members would chair each group as follows:

1. Budget – Patrick Francomano
2. Public relations – Samad Kahn
3. \*Stakeholder survey
4. \*Education Program Models
5. Strategic Plan Working Group: Mrs. McEntee  
(Mr. Chalmers is on the Strategic Planning Committee for Norfolk.)

(Mrs. McEntee left the meeting at 11:30am)

Lunch – 11:30am – 12:15pm

The meeting reconvened at 12:15pm.

### **12:15 PM - 01:15 PM Superintendent Search Process**

What makes sense for 2018-2019 interim or long term? Mr. Francomano asked for suggestions from the committee as to how they would like to proceed. Do you want someone to troubleshoot or initialize a search for a long-term individual? Conduct the search yourself or use MASC, NESDEC and Ray and Associates, other national groups available? It is a lot of work then the committee may choose to take on. If we do elect to have a search firm then we would ask for them to come in can do a presentation and may cost up to \$12,000. In the past MASC ran the search process.

Dr. Zielinski suggested that the Committee look at the superintendencies of the 3 sitting superintendents in the elementary districts and maybe one may want to take on KP in the process. The downside to that, according to Mr. Francomano, is that one superintendent for 2 districts then you have one person and 2 masters who will answer to the elementary and regional school committees. You could share a superintendent with Pre-K to 22 with one or more of the other towns, then you may be looking at more of

an interim position. Would any of those superintendents be interested in taking this on? This topic was discussed during roundtable discussions.

Discussion ensued that there would have to be a subordinate to superintendent. You need to make that offer to the towns because that has been an ongoing conversation and see if it is a viable option. A scenario that why would a current superintendent, for a nominal raise in pay, why would they want to do this job?

Dr. Zielinski indicated that when you look at a town that has multiple buildings and 5000 students in enrollment, you are looking at the structure of the district. Mr. Gee said that without doubling their pay, and the individual will oversee an additional 2 buildings, obviously there would need to be additional support.

Dr. Zielinski said that so it is not always financial, the issue becomes programmatic. There is now an opportunity for the committee to consider this idea based upon how the district became developed.

Mr. Azer referred to Dennis-Yarmouth (DY) which is a K-12 district, however, both towns looked to deregionalize but they both realized it was too expensive. If you merged with one or two of the districts you may have to do a tuition agreement which would be amending the regional agreement to a larger population and the commissioner would need to approve this and there are a number of scenarios that may come into play.

Mr. Knott indicated that there is such a continuity is there some real merit to this and I would be open to look at this.

Mr. Francomano indicated that you would need to look at the variations of a shared superintendent. Where both committees are employing the same superintendent, a superintendent union would be separate school committees and districts and a central office, or a full superintendent.

Mr. Knott said that the appeal of the role will be stronger based upon the less fragmented this would be.

Discussion ensued on a full amendment of the regional agreement or some middle ground. There are steps that could be taken, but the groundwork needs to lay that ground out.

Discussion continued that if you are going to get buy in from the elementaries (one of them directly) at a minimum they are not going to want to give up their superintendent. Which means you will need agreement from the other towns because you cannot unilaterally say we want to be K-22 district. The structure will need to be outlined according to Mr. Francomano

Mr. Knott indicated that this is a broad concept K-22, K-6 whatever leadership, MS and HS and maybe have a single school committee and one budget process. School councils will be as big or as strong as they want. The biggest fear of full regionalization is that parents fear that their child may go to school in a different town.

Mr. Azer referred again to DY in which students went to school in their own towns until they went to high school. The towns held community meetings and the biggest issues were would 8<sup>th</sup> grader still play sports and how long will the bus ride be? The reason given was the closing one of the elementary schools and budgetary reasons. If regionalized KP, have one central office, one school committee, shared resources, bring in MARS. If you are looking at this because of a vacancy of superintendency. In DY, contracts were aligned.

Mr. Gee said that he didn't know if it is worth moving forward with it, I like the idea that we are part of this process and bring in a consultant and explore as part of this process. After this year's budget process, frankly I could see it becoming an emotional issue too.

Mr. Gee asked who do you make the inquiry of, a consultant, how can we explore this or make a recommendation, or put it to bed.

Mr. Francomano referred to a statute that provides for a regionalization study committee and funding that may go with it. The best approach would be to reference the statute and present to the 3 boards of selectmen, who are the parents of the 3 towns, and say here is where we are no harm no fowl in terms of doing a study and we are suggesting it to you because you are the ones empowered to do this. And then the ball is in their court with a short window and depending on their response that would dictate whether you want an interim or long term search.

Mr. Gee suggested that we have been tasked to look into this and we are seeking a recommendation.

Mr. Francomano would accept a motion assuming that it is permissible, to send correspondence to the 3 boards of selectmen and school committee chairs of the three towns, referencing the statute, requesting that they call for the formation of a study committee to look at this which would involve legislative approval and may take up to 3 years to process.

Mr. Gee asked is we should have this conversation face to face first and then present and deliver a hand delivered letter.

Mr. Knott suggested that the committee show up with the letter along with a baseline and whether there are third party benefits to suggest this. Here is what came out of the roundtable discussions and the working groups and perhaps form a group with 4 towns additionally and one of the questions that has been raised has been the concept of regionalization. We don't have an opinion as a school district, but continue to be at a loss as to how to handle this and having a committee would be beneficial.

Have a letter reviewed for the school committee meeting in August.

Mr. Gee said that the timing is throwing me off and the sense of urgency for superintendent search and regionalization. Mr. Francomano said to then proceed with search for an interim.

(Mrs. McEntee returned at 12:50pm.)

Discussion ensued and it was recommended that Chris Lynch of MASC come to a school committee meeting to see what steps are involved with regionalization as she is the expert.

Mr. Francomano indicated that if you are planning to do a search because the process is time consuming and my concern is that you will be not moving forward in any direction and then being stuck quickly. The Committee needs to decide what are we looking for?

Mr. Dow asked whether both a search for an interim and regionalization be done at the same time?

Mr. Gee: Carefully framed and it would be nice to see what they think before we send the letter as it came up in roundtable discussions as a perception.

Mr. Knott: Share the outcome of the roundtable discussions and was brought up a number of times.

Mr. Killion: we need to communicate with the boards and put the ball in their court and see how they would react to a regionalization study.

Mr. Francomano: The timing issue could take up to 3 years or more, but communicating to 3 different towns and boards we could make reference to having a committee for the BOS to call for a committee to look into the regionalization aspect and talk about other areas to keep the momentum going, but what do we do in the meantime, interviewing/utilizing search firm and how do you want to proceed so that we obtain proper background materials for the next meeting?

Mrs. McEntee: Highly recommend a firm. This process may take up 3-6 months with focus groups, etc. Confirm costs for long term or interim basis?

Mr. Francomano and Mr. Gee thanked Dr. Zielinski for her input and professionalism.



**Recommendations or Questions from Individual Committee Members:**

None

**Public Comment:**

None

**ADJOURNMENT INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION**

(Mr. Ken Dow recused himself from executive session.)

- ✚ **At 1:11pm, A Motion was made by Mr. Gee, seconded by Mrs. McEntee, to adjourn into Executive Session for the purposes of discussing strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares; and, not to return to open session. All in favor by roll call vote: Yes (6); No (0).**

**Adjournment:**

- ✚ **At 1:28pm, A Motion was made by Mr. Gee, seconded by Mrs. McEntee to adjourn. All in favor by roll call vote. Yes (6); No (0).**

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Lisa B. Witkus  
Secretary to the School Committee*