

KING PHILIP REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE
MINUTES
March 2, 2015
King Philip Regional High School Library

CALL TO ORDER: Mrs. Martin called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

ROLL CALL OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Members Present:	Norfolk:	Noelle Tonelli, Jeff Chalmers, Michael Gee
	Plainville:	Patrick Francomano, Ann-marie Martin, Charlene McEntee
	Wrentham:	Lynn Desrochers, Jim Killion
Members Absent:		Danielle Schmitz
Municipal Representative:		Charles Kennedy present
HS Student Council Representative:		Edward Cullinane

The meeting is being videotaped this evening by Wrentham Cable Access. Mrs. Martin explained that the public may visit the district's website at 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. Mrs. Martin also explained the procedure for public comment.

DELEGATIONS, VISITORS, PUBLIC PARTICIPATION, ETC.:

Dr. Gilson, Dr. Oliveira, Ms. Lacher
Mrs. Lambert, HS Science Teacher and HS Science National Honor Society Students:
A. Bender and O. De La Torre
Mr. Meichelbeck, District Treasurer
Mr. Lynch and Mr. Connor: Lynch, Malloy, Marini, LLP

CONSENT AGENDA

Approval of Minutes:

None

Payments of Bills, Financial Report:

Warrants/Budget Report & Transfers

Communication:

Board & Administrator, February 2015, Vol. 28, No. 10
Murphy, Hesse: *Education Client Alert*, January 2015
Murphy, Hesse: *Education Client Alert*, February 2015
Education Week: University Surprises New Admits With In-person acceptances, 2/4/15
Education Week: International Study Ranks Schools on Social Stress, Equity, 1/28/15

AGENDA ITEMS:

Approval of Minutes:

None

HS Science National Honor Society:

Mrs. Lambert, HS Science Teacher, introduced her students, A. Bender and O. De La Torre who are members of the HS Science National Honor Society. They attended the School Committee meeting to promote the King Philip Cultural Lecture Series entitled, "Nature Talks...Are You Listening" sponsored by the King Philip Science National Honor Society. There will be three shows hosted by Naturalist Brent Nixon that are open to the community:
Wednesday, March 18 at 7pm in the KP Middle School: Alaska!
Thursday, March 19 at 7pm at the KPRHS: Brown and Black Bears of North America
Saturday, March 21 at 10am at Stony Brook Wildlife Sanctuary: Coastal Bald Eagles.

Communication:

KP in the News:

- KP Science National Honor Society, entitled, "Resident Scientist" dated February 25, 2015;
- An article in The Sun Chronicle, entitled, "KP DECA racking up many awards," dated February 24, 2015;
- Annual Town Reports for the 2013/2014 School Year;
- 2015 Disclosure Statement Forms.

NEW BUSINESS:

Independent Auditor's Report: Mr. Lynch and Mr. Connor of Lynch, Malloy, Marini, LLP
Joseph Meichelbeck, District Treasurer

Mr. Lynch and Mr. Connor presented the School Committee with the Fiscal Year 2014 Audit in which they explained that the primary objective of each audit is to express an opinion as to whether the District's financial statements are presented fairly and conform with the Generally Accepted Accounting Principals. Mr. Lynch also explained the Single Audit procedure and opinion. He noted the results of the opinion are an unmodified opinion and that no material weaknesses or significant deficiencies were reported in the report on internal controls over financial reporting and on compliance and other matters. No reportable issues were noted on the special education cluster. The District's schedule of expenditures of federal awards and reporting are all stable.

Mr. Lynch summarized the financial information.

Mr. Lynch reviewed the "Suggestions for improvement in accounting procedures and internal controls" as part of the audit noting the key highlights for suggestions and recommendations as follows:

- Formal reconciliation of withholding accounts and activity;
No formal review of those accounts being documented to help to detect any errors that may occur, i.e., health insurance withholding accounts;
- Enhance monitoring and review of general ledger account set up.
This is to get the district's general ledger more in line and consistent with UMAS, bonds payable; there was old balance in federal grant fund in the amount of \$63,000 recommended it be looked at and closed out as appropriate.
- Enhance departmental receipts reporting monitoring:
All supporting documents should be available at the time that the deposit is made and sign off what it is they are reporting on. *PayPal* being accepted should offer more detailed reporting. Alternative services seem to all be the same.
- Continually evaluate control environment and internal risk assessments, including approval of warrants:
In accordance with M.G.L., those issues were addressed before the end of the audit. Mr. Lynch suggested that the District continues to monitor the control environment and make improvements where necessary. Such as 1099's not being issued; food service invoices put individually into warrants; recommend improvements on the purchase order system; unclaimed checks, due to recent change in the law that would need to be adopted by the district.

The auditors met and reviewed the reports with the Dr. Zielinski, Mr. Schaefer and Mr. Meichelbeck and feel that there is a good financial team in place.

Discussion ensued on the future liabilities such as health insurance and the Cadillac assessment under the Affordable Care Act. Mr. Lynch explained that the audit did not encompass this matter.

Discussion ensued on inventory of capital assets and an example was given on the donation of a musical instrument in excess of \$4000 and how this would be recorded. Mr. Lynch explained that the Minutes of the School Committee meetings are part of the audit process and that acceptance of this type of donation would be voted upon and accepted as part of the record.

- ✚ **A Motion was made by Mr. Francomano, seconded by Mr. Gee, to accept the Independent Audit Report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2014 by the firm of Lynch, Malloy, Marini, LLP. All in favor.**

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Bi-County Collaborative: Surplus Funds

In a memorandum dated December 12, 2014, Dr. Zielinski explained that there was a change in collaborative regulations by the state. One change in the regulations allows for the Collaborative Boards to determine the amount of surplus (not to exceed 25% of the collaborative's operating budget) based upon the collaborative's previous fiscal year's total expenditures. This surplus fund is similar to our regional excess and deficiencies fund, with one distinction. The purpose of the 25% cap is to allow the collaborative to maintain approximately 3 months total operating expenses due to the volatility of enrollment in the programs.

If there is a "surplus" that remains after the year's financial books are closed, then the Board can vote on how the surplus can be spent. Some possibilities include a refund to member districts, a reduction in the following year's tuition cost, and use in a capital fund.

The Board determines in the late spring what to do with the "surplus funds" if any actually remain. The Board elected to create a capital fund last year for BICO where some surplus funds were placed. The funds in that account earmarked to be used toward updating technology for the BICO programs. BICO has not upgraded its technology (student use and staff) in over 6 years. The Board has not discussed yet what it is considering should there be "surplus funds" remaining after this year.

Mr. Meichelbeck explained how the actual surplus number was determined or the unassigned balance of E&D which would have been voted upon by the BICO Board.

Dr. Zielinski will review the capital plan that was approved by the board. Discussion ensued on use of assistive technology being part of BICO's general budget and we pay for it. Ms. Lacher noted that she has never been approached to buy a specific piece of equipment for a student.

REPORTS FROM SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

- Norfolk School Committee Representative - Mr. Chalmers: None
- Plainville School Committee Representative - Mrs. McEntee: The Plainville School Committee had a presentation by the Food Service Director, budget hearing, discussion about snow days, presentation by special education director and programs in Plainville.
The King Philip Regional School Committee would like to hear the special education presentation at a future meeting.
- Wrentham School Committee Representative - Ms. Schmitz: None
- HS Student Council Representative: Mr. Cullinane
KP Cares: KP Cares is hosting a Charity Volleyball Tournament for the Relay for Life on Wednesday, March 4th at 6pm.
Debate: Participating in a Field Trip on March 30th to Providence College to see a College Debate.
Student Council: 20 Student Council Members will be attending the Massachusetts Association of Student Council's Annual Conference in Hyannis next week.
Drama & GAPS: Drama is currently working on their Spring Play "An Appointment with Death" by Agatha Christie.
Science National Honor Society: The Science National Honor Society will present a Cultural Lecture Series open to the public on March 18th, 19th, and 21st. The presentations are by Brent Nixon.
Sophomore Government: Sophomore Semi-Formal Dance is being held on March 13th.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

FY16 Budget:

As requested by the School Committee, Dr. Oliveira presented the Guidance Counselor Action Plan for an additional guidance counselor position at the high school. The goal is to enhance the services to students and to employ a comprehensive model of the American School Counselor Association (ASCA Model) where students will benefit from a three tiered balanced support system. Dr. Zielinski noted that the general recommendation is no more than 300 students per guidance counselor. Currently the HS guidance counselors are over that recommendation. The recommendation also suggests that the department head has a reduced caseload.

Dr. Oliveira explained the time allocation to be more in line with American Association of Guidance Counselors. Responsive services occur fast while other services need to occur at the same time.

Discussion ensued on the need to look at the entire standard such as a comprehensive self-study and the frameworks which has not yet been presented.

Dr. Oliveira suggested that this is a first step and there would need to be work done over the summer as part of professional development to write the curriculum with the vision to go into the classroom, there is a greater vision to work toward the model. Having an additional counselor will help to begin the process. A three-year plan can be developed and then come back to the Committee.

There was discussion of definitive goals and an action plan, so that improvement can be seen and measured.

Concern was expressed that this was not discussed in the Budget and Finance subcommittee meeting with the curriculum team leaders in December.

Dr. Oliveira stated that restructuring of the guidance department will need to take place if an additional guidance counselor is not approved.

District Office Reorganization:

The School Committee would like to see the district office reorganization goals accomplished by January 2016. The job descriptions for the new positions should be written at the same time to get everything aligned so that it is clear. Operational manuals, and procedural manual should be aligned with the audit report; these manuals will be overseen by Dr. Zielinski and Mr. Schaefer.

FY16 School Budget:

As outlined in the presentation for the FY 2016 King Philip Regional School District Budget, the following is recommended:

Recommendation #1:

- ✚ **A Motion was made by Mr. Francomano, seconded by Mr. Gee, to move that the King Philip Regional School Committee approve an FY 2016 Debt Service (Prop 2 ½ excluded) Budget of \$2,371,464. (2.8% decrease)**

The Debt Service Assessments shall be:

Norfolk	\$ 812,938
Plainville	\$ 616,818
Wrentham	\$ 941,708

All in favor.

Recommendation #2:

- ✚ **A Motion was made by Mr. Francomano, seconded by Mr. Killion, to move that the King Philip Regional School Committee approve an FY 2016 Operating Budget of \$29,097,346 (5.8% increase) and an Operating Assessment of \$ 21,151,246 (7.9% increase).**

The Operating Assessments shall be:

Norfolk \$ 7,877,636
Plainville \$ 4,888,442
Wrentham \$ 8,385,168
All in favor.

Mr. Schaefer wanted the Committee to be aware, that the Governor's budget will be coming out on Wednesday and that the town assessment of the operating budget potentially may change.

DECA Update:

Dr. Zielinski in a memorandum dated February 23, 2015, provided an update from Mr. Dow on the DECA overnight field trip information to the DECA State Conference in Boston from March 12-14, 2015.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Use of Good Friday for School Cancellation Day:

Dr. Zielinski provided the committee with survey results that were calculated on snow cancellation make up days. The survey results for both staff and community indicate that April 3, 2015, Good Friday, is a viable option as a one-half day of school.

- ✚ **A Motion was made by Mr. Francomano, seconded by Mr. Gee, to use April 3, 2015, Good Friday, as an additional ½ day of school for 2015, whether or not there are any additional snow days. All in favor.**

2015/2016 School Year Calendar (2nd Reading):

Dr. Zielinski presented the proposed 2nd reading of the 2015/2016 school year calendar with a start date for staff on Tuesday, September 1, 2015. Students would begin school on Wednesday, September 2, 2015. Pending no school cancellation days, the anticipated last day of the 2015/2016 school year would be Friday, June 17, 2015. The superintendents of the three towns have had dialog over coordinating their calendars if any significant changes are made to the school year calendar.

Discussion ensued on having September 4 as a ½ staff/student day off and to make Friday, March 25, 2016 (Good Friday) a full day of school.

- ✚ **A Motion was made by Mrs. Tonelli, seconded by Mr. Francomano, to change the 2015/2016 School Year Calendar to reflect that Friday, September 4, 2015 is a half-day for staff and students and Friday, March 25, 2016 (Good Friday) become a full day of school. Pending no school cancellation days, the anticipated last day of the 2015/2016 school year will be Wednesday, June 15, 2016. All in favor.**

Dr. Zielinski will notify the community via a ConnectEd message reflecting the School Committee's decision.

Discussion on consolidating the February and April vacation days into a single vacation in March for the 2016/2017 school year ensued. Another option discussed was to drop the February vacation, but keep the April vacation. Review the testing schedules.

Discussion ensued on whether the committee will consistently use Good Friday as a school day or committing to the 2015/2016 year only. It was determined that this topic will be based upon discussion on a year-by-year basis.

Job Descriptions (1st Reading):

Dr. Zielinski presented the following job description:

Media Specialist (1st Reading). Dr. Zielinski noted that this job description is an update to a previously approved job description.

NEW BUSINESS (continued):

Town Meeting Warrant Article to Amend the Regional Agreement:

- ✚ **A Motion was made by Mr. Francomano, seconded by Mr. Gee, that the King Philip Regional School Committee approve the language for AMENDMENT NUMBER SEVEN to the King Philip Regional School District Agreement and forward the language to the member towns for inclusion in the Annual Town Meeting Warrant for the spring. All in favor.**

The Committee would like to ensure that the legal counsels of the member towns also receive this notification.

Superintendent Evaluation:

The Superintendent's Evaluation will be distributed at an April School Committee meeting.

School Committee Self-Evaluation:

The School Committee Self-Evaluation will be distributed at an April School Committee meeting.

Recommendations or Questions from Individual Committee Members:

Late Communications:

"Worcester, Shrewsbury officials say state cripples schools with outdated spending formula," telegram.com dated 3/2/15. Mr. Schaefer provided the KP comparisons. The Committee has asked that perhaps all three towns could complete this and a comparison table could be provided.

Public Comment:

Mrs. Barbara Snead wants to support the additional guidance counselor position.

Mr. Charles Kennedy commented that the additional staff of the business office does not impact the students directly.

Mr. Edward Cullinane supports the additional guidance counselor position.

Adjournment:

- ✚ **At 8:55pm, a Motion was made by Mr. Francomano, seconded by Mr. Gee, to adjourn into Executive Session for the following purpose: to discuss 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, only to return to open session for purposes of adjournment. All in favor by roll call vote: Yes (8); No (0).**
- ✚ **At 9:40pm, a Motion was made by Mrs. McEntee, seconded by Mr. Gee to adjourn. All in favor by roll call vote: Yes (8); No (0).**

Respectfully submitted,

*Lisa Barrett Witkus
Executive Assistant &
Secretary to the School Committee*