

WEST BOYLSTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
WEDNESDAY, May 8, 2013

LOCATION: West Boylston Middle/High School Media Center

PRESENT: SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

John Owanisian, Chairman
Jennifer Breen
Richard Shaw
Erin Palumbo

ADMINISTRATORS

Elizabeth Schaper, Superintendent
Lawrence Murphy, Principal Middle/High School
Christopher LaBreck, Associate MS Principal
Marjorie McCarthy, Elementary Principal
Roger E. Pontbriand, Jr., Business Administrator
Sherri Traina, Special Education Administrator

COMMUNITY

Faculty & Staff:	2	Guests:	42
Student Advisors:	1	Press:	1

Mr. Owanisian opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone to the May 8, 2013 School Committee Meeting.

Highlight on Schools

Mr. Owanisian introduced Ms. Carolyn Somma and the Cast of Quixote who performed a song from the upcoming play called "The Blah Blah Cha Cha." The High School Performing Arts Workshop would be performing the play on Friday, May 10th and Saturday, May 11, 2013 at 7:00 p.m.

Approval of the Minutes

Mr. Shaw made a motion to approve the minutes of the regular School Committee Meeting of April 10, 2013; Ms. Breen seconded. Motion approved. **Voted 4-0-0.**

Student Recognition Awards

Ms. McCarthy presented Haley Fenlon , a 5th grader, with the student of the month award for Major Edwards, Mr. LaBreck presented the award to Riley Holm, an 8th grader, and Mr. Murphy presented, senior Curtis Stoychoff, with the student of the month award for the High School.

Student Advisory Council

Rachel O'Connor presented information relative to the spring musical, In It To End It, the Art Honor Society induction and the student advisory council's election of new members.

Acknowledgment Of Camera Crew

Mr. Owanisian thanked Mr. Bokankowitz for his work in filming the School Committee meeting.

Community Input

No community input at this time.

Subcommittee Reports

Mr. Owanisian called for a report from the Budget Subcommittee. Dr. Schaper asked the School Committee for their vote on the FY14 Budget.

Mr. Pontbriand stated a detailed budget summary was included in the School Committee's packet, which compares where the district is currently in FY13 as opposed to going forward and approving an FY14 budget. Mr. Pontbriand stated the report was broken into two categories – the school

operating budget and the school choice budget. Mr. Pontbriand stated that due to the anticipated revenue from Circuit Breaker Funds, the budget for FY14 was decreased by about 1%.

Dr. Schaper stated that in the budget presented in March there were some positions, which will now not be filled – a proposed custodian and a .2 music position – music therapist position, which will now be funded through an anticipated special education grant. Dr. Schaper also stated that we feel we can make due with just a .2 reduction in physical therapy services, based on the cased load of students.

Ms. Breen asked if the funds listed in School Choice would be depleted in order to balance the budget. Mr. Pontbriand stated that they would not.

A motion was made by Ms. Breen to accept the FY14 school budget of \$11,274,380.00, Mr. Shaw seconded; **Voted: 4-0-0.**

Mr. Owanisian called for a report from the Chapter 74 Subcommittee. Mr. Shaw indicated that there was nothing new. Mr. Owanisian stated that the committee met earlier with Representative O'Day and he suggested it might be a good idea to follow up with him or Senator Chandler. Mr. Shaw reiterated that idea.

Mr. Owanisian called for a report from the Marketing Subcommittee. Mr. Shaw made a motion to change the name of the Marketing Subcommittee to the Communications Subcommittee, Ms. Breen seconded; **Voted: 4-0-0.**

Mr. Owanisian informed the community that there would be a “West Boylston School Committee Blog” .

Mr. Owanisian called for a report from the Negotiations Subcommittee. Mr. Shaw indicated that an agreement with the paraprofessionals was in process. .

Mr. Owanisian called for a report from the Policy Subcommittee. Ms. Breen stated that the committee would meet next week. Dr. Schaper indicated that an email had been sent to staff for feedback relative to the homework policy - they would go over the material next week.

Mr. Owanisian called for a report from the School Building Subcommittee. Mr. Shaw indicated that both he and Mr. Pedone are on the Building Subcommittee and they have been working with Mr. Pontbriand. Information discussed by the Building Subcommittee pertained to the roof of the Middle/High School Building of which an architect performed an evaluation of the entire roof (not just the media center). He came back with a price of \$210,600.00 to completely fix the roof. Issues were also discussed with relation to the prior contractor's responsibility as to the roof leakage. Mr. Pontbriand stated that, with regards to financial aid, this project did not qualify as a green project. Mr. Pontbriand indicated it would be in the district's best interest to completely repair the roof now, so as to avoid future problems.

The Building Subcommittee also discussed a safety package for the schools. Mr. Shaw stated discussions with FinCom – who fully supports the locked portion of the package. He stated that they were a little bit surprised by the cost for the camera program, as they initially thought the price would cover just the outside portion of the buildings and not the internal spaces throughout the building. Mr. Shaw explained that the cost factor is due to the wiring for the cameras, which is significant, but that overall safety was the main goal.

The Building Subcommittee also discussed the ongoing possibility of converting the schools to

“FY14 Budget Vote”

natural gas through NStar and that 2,000 feet worth of piping would need to be installed between both schools. NStar stated that if we sign an agreement of usage, they will pay for the piping and its installation.

Mr. Owanisian called for a report from the Technology Subcommittee. He stated that the committee hadn't met recently but at their last meeting they had discussed with Dr. Schaper a potential plan to put more tablets into students' hands. Dr. Schaper indicated that this was not planned until the next school year.

Mr. Owanisian called for a report from the Transportation Subcommittee. Mr. Shaw indicated there was nothing at this time.

Mr. Owanisian called for a report from the Elementary School. Ms. McCarthy indicated there were many things going on at Major Edwards this month including the completion of the Major Edwards Mural on the stage in the gym. She thanked Ms. Leia Roberts for her vision and Mark Baldi of the WBAF for funding and support the mural.

Mr. Owanisian called for a report from the Middle School. Mr. LaBreck indicated students from grades 6, 7, 8, and 10 would participated in the Math MCAS test on Monday and Tuesday, May 13th and 14th. He also stated the 8th grade was getting back into the wing of school after having April vacation and traveling to Washington D.C. Mr. LaBreck also stated that an informational meeting for the parents of STEAM Academy students would be held on May 31, 2013.

Mr. Owanisian called for a report from the High School. Mr. Murphy stated that the kids were well behaved on the Washington D.C. trip and that it was an outstanding trip overall. Mr. Murphy advised those in attendance that the Relay Walk for the American Cancer Society was held and it was a huge success – so much so, that the Class of 2014 is already looking to plan for next year. Mr. Murphy also stated that the Class of 2013 is moving toward graduation and final exams are scheduled for Monday, May 20th through Thursday, May 23rd.

Mr. Owanisian called for a report from the Director of Special Education. Ms. Traina directed the committee's attention to Mr. Pontbriand.

Mr. Pontbriand told the committee that a monthly Expenditure report was included within their packets. Mr. Pontbriand stated that in the category of Special Education was a line for out-of-district tuition – the year to date balance of which is \$120,732.00. He stated that that balance would soon be offset by the Circuit Breaker funds that we are to receive in the amount of \$104,735.00. Mr. Pontbriand indicated that that amount would be applied towards the current deficit. Mr. Pontbriand stated that we have also applied for Foundation Reserve Allocations – “pot hole money.”

Mr. Owanisian called for a report from Dr. Schaper. Dr. Schaper directed the committee's attention to the first document within their packets – May Data Dashboard information – regarding the attendance rates at all schools. Major Edwards had over 95% attendance, Grades 6-8 - 96% and the high school had a little over 94%. Dr. Schaper also presented information relative to teacher attendance. She reminded the committee that we have wonderful substitute teachers in this district, but no one can do the job quite the way that the classroom teacher does, as they make the daily difference.

Dr. Schaper presented information relative to college acceptances for West Boylston – Class of 2013; stating that the 64 students have gained admission to 84 different colleges and universities including Boston College, Brown University and Georgetown.

Communication and Reports

Dr. Schaper presented an update on district improvement goals for 2012-2013.

The goals fell into three broad categories; 1. curriculum, instruction and assessment w. management and operations and 3. professional culture.

She reported that the schools worked on ten curriculum, instruction and assessment goals this year, all of which will be completed by the end of June. She highlighted the completion of planning for the STEAM academy that is slated to open in grade 7 in the fall, the amazing and transformative work that has been done with the our model classroom teachers at Major Edwards in literacy instruction, and the installation and use of our wireless network to begin the process of transforming instruction to make great use of 21st century technology.

In Management and Operations, she reported on three goals, which are completed. In the area of professional culture she spoke about the training that administration participated in to learn how to manage and execute the new teacher evaluation system. .

Mr. Owanisian was concerned about teacher absences – 15% of the teachers had 10 or more absences. He asked Dr. Schaper what she felt was an appropriate benchmark.

Dr. Schaper stated there are many circumstances that factor into teacher attendance such as lengthy illnesses. She noted also that we are always better off when the teacher is present. She cautioned that it is important to watch dashboard data over time rather than generalizing from a single month.

Mr. Owanisian called for a report from the school committee. Mr. Shaw indicated he nothing to report. Ms. Breen stated there was a date set for the dedication of the library at Major Edwards Elementary – June 13, 2013. Ms. Breen thanked all who came to the book fair at Major Edwards – they brought in just under \$6,000.00 and told those in attendance that the delivery date for the Mother’s Day plant sale would be Thursday, May 9, 2013. Ms. Breen stated that WestBEST awarded just under \$6,000.00 in teacher grants, most of which was technology based – 7 document cameras, 2 Apple TV’s (similar to a smart board – 1/3 the price), and 4 tablets in Mrs. Menendez’ third grade class room. Ms. Palumbo indicated there was nothing to report. Mr. Owanisian thanked Ms. Palumbo for submitting her articles to the Banner relative to the STEAM Academy and the Lions Scholar Program. Mr. Owanisian reminded the School Committee to return the Dr. Schaper evaluation papers to him by June 1, 2013.

At 9:03 p.m. a motion was made by Mr. Owanisian that the committee go into to Executive Session for the purpose of discussing strategy with respect to collective bargaining, and to discuss a complaint brought against an employee, and to return to open session only to adjourn. **Voted on a roll call Mr. Shaw-yes, Mr. Owanisian-yes., Mrs. Breen-yes, Mrs. Palumbo-yes.**

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Shaw at 8:52, seconded by Mrs. Breen. Voted 4-0-0

Respectfully submitted,

Marie Johnson
Recording Secretary