

WEST BOYLSTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
WEDNESDAY, January 9, 2013

LOCATION: West Boylston Middle/High School Media Center

PRESENT: SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

John Owanisian, Chairman
Jennifer Breen
Richard Shaw
Erin Palumbo
James Pedone

ADMINISTRATORS

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

COMMUNITY

Faculty & Staff:	4	Guests:	26
Student Advisors:	2	Press:	1

Mr. Owanisian opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone to the January 9, 2013 School Committee Meeting.

Approval of the Minutes

Mr. Owanisian indicated that a correction needed to be made to the December 12, 2012 School Committee Minutes to indicate that Mrs. Breen was not present.

Mr. Shaw made a motion to approve the minutes of the regular School Committee Meeting of December 12, 2012; Ms. Palumbo seconded. Motion approved. **Voted 4-0-1.**

Student Recognition Awards

Mr. Owanisian introduced Dr. Schaper, who presented the Student of the Month Award to Major Edwards Elementary student, Benjamin Pino, as Ms. McCarthy was not in attendance.

Mr. LaBreck presented the Student of the Month Award from the Middle High School to 6th grader, Jack Fenlon.

Mr. Murphy gave the Student of the Month Award for the High School to a 9th grade student, Caitlin Smith.

Student Advisory Council

Mr. Owanisian introduced the members of the Student Advisory Council who updated those in attendance regarding current events happening in the Middle/High School. Kelly Sorge indicated the Middle School PBIS Ambassadors would be helping at the Move Up Night for 5th grade parents. Kelly also indicated the Math Team has been doing quite well, and that some of its members have been on the team since 6th grade.

Tyler Armev stated that the National Honor Society just finished the Teen Drive, which was a program to help make kids more aware of distracted driving. He stated that in February, they are planning on having their annual Have a Heart Food Drive. Tyler stated that Student Council would also be planning a masquerade dance and preparing for the Red Cross Blood Drive.

Acknowledgment Of Camera Crew

Mr. Owanisian thanked the camera crew for all of their hard work.

Highlight on Schools

Mr. Owanisian indicated his wish to honor the High School football team, and introduced Dr. Schaper who introduced the senior members of the football team as well as members of the coaching staff. Dr. Schaper presented Mr. Murphy who thanked the team, coaches and all involved with the football team for the enormous amount of pride that they have brought to our school and our town.

Coach Tinglof thanked the School Committee, the community and all those in attendance for having the team appear before the School Committee. He stated that it was an honor to get a call from Mr. Murphy saying that the coaches and some of the players could appear before the School Committee to be recognized for their accomplishments. Coach Tinglof indicated the football team ended up with a season record of 12-1; the most wins in the school history, and also won the second Super Bowl since 1988.

Mr. Owanisian stated that he would like to present a citation from the school committee to Coach Tinglof and all the members of his team. Coach Tinglof read the citation to those in attendance.

Community Input

Mr. Owanisian called for community input.

Oil Bid Vote

Mr. Owanisian called for information about the oil bid. Dr. Schaper directed members to a memo that was included in the School Committee packet from Mr. Roger Pontbriand. Mr. Pontbriand explained the contents of the document indicating that the oil bid was facilitated through the French River Education collaborative. Mr. Pontbriand told the committee that Dennis K. Burke, Inc. won the bid with the best price (\$3.14/gallon) for the July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014 time period.

Mr. Pontbriand told the committee that the oil bid was based on our average consumption of oil from year to year, and that we would realize a \$4,000.00 savings from over year. Mr. Pontbriand told the School Committee that it was the administration's recommendation that the School Committee vote to approve this particular bid for the #2 fuel oil at \$3.14/gallon.

Mr. Shaw asked Mr. Pontbriand why the bidding date was changed.

Mr. Pontbriand indicated that the French River collaborative thought that at that time, it was the best price at which to purchase the fuel oil due to a down-swing in the market.

Ms. Breen asked Mr. Pontbriand if Dennis K. Burke was a new company to the West Boylston School District, and Mr. Pontbriand stated that it was not. He indicated that the district had worked with Dennis K. Burke, Peterson Oil and Global Oil in the past.

Ms. Palumbo asked if the contract could contain a provision that if oil prices fall below a certain value we would get an adjustment.

Mr. Pontbriand indicated there could be an overage clause or an underage clause, but that it fluctuates.

Mr. Owanisian called for a motion to accept the oil bid for FY14. Mr. Shaw made a motion to accept the oil bid for FY14 from Dennis K. Burke, Inc.; Ms. Breen seconded. Motion approved: **Voted 5-0-0.**

Mr. Owanisian stated that there would be a public hearing concerning budget planning scheduled for March 13, 2013.

Budget Planning Public Hearing

Dr. Schaper indicated that we are required to announce the date of the public hearing on the school budget. She stated that that public hearing would be conducted just before the School Committee meeting on the evening of March 13, 2013

Dr. Schaper also announced that two Budget Subcommittee meetings will be held on February 25, 2013 and March 25, 2013.

Mr. Owanisian asked if that meeting would be held in the auditorium. Dr. Schaper indicated that it would most likely be held in the media center.

Sub-Committee Reports

Mr. Owanisian called for a report of the Budget Sub-Committee. Mr. Shaw indicated that there was nothing to report at this time.

Mr. Owanisian called for a report of the Chapter 74 Sub-Committee. Mr. Pedone indicated that there was nothing to report at this time.

Mr. Owanisian called for a report of the Marketing Sub-Committee. Ms. Palumbo stated that last month the sub-committee met with her father, who is a marketing consultant. Ms. Palumbo indicated that her father returned his report to the Marketing Sub-Committee and indicated that we should focus on our team of small schools; that that is really the strength of our school and what we want to pinpoint when we look at any marketing concepts. She also stated that he suggested we do some sort of Gorilla Marketing during the time frame when students interested in School Choice are considering their options (January – March), and to use our volunteer forces such as parents and the PTA. He had a final idea of running a community survey on the perception of the schools, just to get an idea of what the community thinks of the schools relative to quality, facilities, sports, etc.

Mr. Owanisian stated he attended the Marketing Sub-Committee meeting and he felt that it was very productive.

Mr. Owanisian called for a report of the Negotiations Sub-Committee. Mr. Shaw stated that there was a tentative agreement with the teachers, at this point, and after a long period of time, an agreement was reached just prior to the holidays.

Mr. Shaw thanked Dr. Schaper for her involvement in the negotiation process, as well as former School Committee member, Ms. Bohannon, Selectman McCormick, and the teachers.

Mr. Owanisian called for a report of the Policy Sub-Committee. Ms. Breen stated that the Policy Sub-Committee met on January 8, 2013 (Ms. Breen, Ms. Palumbo and Dr. Schaper) and went over the policy binder looking for policies that need to be updated. One of the policies that they felt needed some attention is the Homework Policy, which has not been updated since approximately 1982.

Ms. Breen indicated that Dr. Schaper would be gathering policies from other districts that are similar to us, and the sub-committee would reconvene and meet again to discuss the homework policy as it relates to students today.

Mr. Owanisian called for a report of the School Building Sub-Committee. Mr. Pedone indicated that there was no update at this time.

Mr. Owanisian called for a report of the Technology Sub-Committee. Mr. Pedone indicated that there was no update at this time.

Mr. Owanisian called for a report of the Transportation Sub-Committee. Ms. Palumbo indicated that there was no update at this time.

Communication and Reports

Mr. Owanisian indicated that although Ms. McCarthy was not in attendance, she did issue a report which was included in the School Committee's packet.

Ms. Palumbo thanked Ms. McCarthy for her suggestion to have people be able to tour the elementary school.

Ms. Breen stated that she did have the pleasure of speaking to the 2nd graders when they did their unit on penguins. She encouraged the community, if they had a background that parallels any curriculum in the schools, to contact the administration or their child's teacher that they offer to come in to share their experience with the students. She indicated it was a great way to enrich the curriculum without adding cost to the programs.

Mr. Owanisian called for a report from the Middle School. Mr. LaBreck indicated that next Wednesday, January 16, 2013, is the 5th grade informational night, in which parents of 5th graders come to the middle school to hear from 6th grade teachers, learn about the curriculum, and tour the building.

Mr. Owanisian asked Mr. LaBreck if there was anything further to report regarding the STEAM Academy. Mr. LaBreck stated that they had met and were making progress, and would start getting into curriculum development within the coming weeks.

Ms. Breen asked Mr. LaBreck if we were still on target for this September and if there was a specific time for when parents might know that they are going to be able to apply for their student to enter the STEAM Academy. Mr. LaBreck stated that they would expect to be inviting students to apply at the end of the third quarter and that students would be able to apply based on their academic performance, their performance on MCAS testing, their attendance, and teacher recommendation.

Mr. Shaw asked if there was a limit as to how many students would be able to attend the STEAM Academy. Mr. LaBreck indicated that the academy was developed as an honors program, created for students particularly in the areas of math and science. .

Mr. Owanisian called for a report from the High School. Mr. Murphy indicated that during December, it was a joy to watch the students perform in a variety of areas. He stated that the students put on a play called "The Worst High School Play in the World", which was very well done. He stated that it was a very enjoyable month.

Mr. Murphy explained to those in attendance, that they've been working on the Emergency Management Program, which they started to review before the Connecticut tragedy. Mr. Murphy stated that he has gathered a committee together, and they were to perform a walk-through tomorrow on January 10, 2013, by the policy and fire personnel in both buildings so that they are familiar with both buildings in case of an emergency.

Mr. Murphy indicated that through Deb Goodwill's "27 Acts of Kindness" students were looking to provide money so that they could purchase groceries to a need family for 27 days.

Mr. Shaw asked if there were AED's at each school (per law). Dr. Schaper indicated that each school, did indeed, have an AED and that they met the specifications laid out in the law. She stated

that a report was provided to the Department of Education.

Mr. Owanisian called for a report from the Director of Special Education. Ms. Traina indicated that she had nothing to report at this time.

Mr. Owanisian welcomed Mr. Pontbriand and asked if he had anything to report. Mr. Pontbriand passed out a summary expenditure report to the School Committee as to where we are financially. Mr. Pontbriand indicated that the document was a summary for their review, and that it is not his usual policy to present any figures to the committee the night of the meeting. He stated that in the future, he will always give committee members time to review the figures before the meeting.

Mr. Owanisian called for a report from Superintendent Schaper. Dr. Schaper welcomed Mr. Pontbriand to the district.

Dr. Schaper indicated that the packet contains a thank you letter that the district sent to Mr. Elton Drew acknowledging a generous donation presented from the Ellison Foundation. Dr. Schaper expressed grateful for the continued support of the Ellison Foundation which allows us to run incredible art, music and drama programs in our schools.

Dr. Schaper directed members to an updated curriculum revision cycle, which is an overview of the seven year plan for curriculum revision that will allow the district to remain faithful to implementing new curricula as they are put forward by the Massachusetts DESE.

Dr. Schaper indicated that a significant amount of time and resources have been devoted to developing our English Language Arts Curriculum this year by our English Language Arts Curriculum Team which has been meeting regularly since September.

Dr. Schaper provided an update on our district's security plans and process. She stated that in the aftermath of that tragedy, a team comprised of school administrators, local and state emergency personnel, met and made some decisions about safety improvements that can occur immediately and to begin some long term planning. Included in the immediate responses was a plan for a presentation by the local SWAT team for the faculty. This presentation occurred on Monday afternoon. She indicated that they will keep the committee updated as we move forward with the safety plans and upgrades.

Dr. Schaper indicated the district also launched a web site survey. The survey was sent to all families in the district and will remain open until the end of January at which point the technology committee will analyze the results in order to determine next steps.

The technology committee also launched a Teacher Technology Self Assessment Survey. This survey is designed for teachers to self-assess and determine their level of technology aptitude. It is a skill specific survey. Dr. Schaper explained that we would use the result of this survey to plan professional development for teachers in the use of technology.

Mr. Owanisian stated that he was very appreciative of the web survey and was looking forward to the results of that survey.

Mr. Owanisian called for an update from School Committee members. Mr. Shaw indicated that we would be sending a check to the town regarding use of the fields.

Ms. Palumbo indicated there was nothing new to report.

Ms. Breen stated that the naming committee, which was put together to name the library at Major

Edward's Elementary after Anne Marie Richardson, would be meeting on Tuesday, January 15, 2013, at which point they would reconvene and have a report next month for the committee.

Ms. Breen also stated that WestBEST's mailer went out in October. She stated that they have received, to date, just shy of \$2,500.00 in donations from the community and she expressed her gratitude to those that have sent in checks.

Ms. Breen indicated that in March of 2013 WestBEST would be putting on a Father/Daughter Dance at the Middle/High School.

Mr. Owanisian asked Ms. Breen when the normal meeting time would be for WestBEST, so that anyone in the community who was interested could attend. Ms. Breen stated that they normally meet on the third Thursday of every month.

Mr. Shaw stated that committee has requested that the athletic director be given field usage by February 4, 2013, as the schools always get first choice.

Mr. Owanisian stated that he is a member of the town wide planning committee, which is chaired by the town administrator. He stated that an update to the town's master plan has been delayed, but it is underway. He indicated that the last update to the town's master plan was in 2005. He mentioned that Mr. Gaumond hopes that the fall 2013 meeting will have an updated master plan. Mr. Owanisian indicated that he spoke with Dr. Schaper last week and that they intend to update an appendix within that that describes the schools' mission and strategic goals.

Mr. Owanisian explained that at the last School Committee meeting, he did propose a mid-year mini retreat during the February School Vacation Week. He asked Dr. Schaper if we had a date as of yet.

Dr. Schaper indicated that all members indicated they could be available on Thursday (2/21) or Friday (2/22) morning 8 – 12.

Mr. Owanisian stated that the meeting would be used to create a dashboard (two or three page document to be reviewed on a three month basis) data indicator.

At 8:20 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, returning to open session only to adjourn, Mr. Shaw seconded; **Voted on a roll call Mr. Pedone-yes, Mr. Shaw-yes., Mrs. Breen-yes, Mr. Owanisian-yes, Mrs. Palumbo-yes.**

The School Committee returned from Executive Session and a Motion to Adjourn was made at 9:10 p.m. by Mr. Shaw, seconded by Mr. Pedone. **Voted 5-0-**

Respectfully submitted,

Marie Johnson
Recording Secretary

Executive Session

Adjournment