



DRACUT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING Minutes

DATE: April 25, 2011

LOCATION: Dracut Senior High School

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Matthew Sheehan, Chairman
Dr. Michael McNamara, 2nd Vice Chairperson
Mr. Ronald Mercier
Mr. Michael Miles

ABESNT

Mrs. Bonita Elie, 1st Vice Chairperson

SCHOOL PERSONNEL AND OTHERS PRESENT:

Dr. Stacy Scott, Superintendent of Schools
Mr. Thomas Rose, School Business Administrator
Attorney Edward Morris
Cynthia Curtis, Recording Secretary

CALL TO ORDER:

The regular session meeting of the School Committee was called to order by Chairman Matthew Sheehan at Dracut High School at 7:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND MOMENT OF SILENCE:

Chairman Sheehan called for the pledge of allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. Motion by Dr. McNamara, seconded by Mr. Mercier to approve the Finance Sub-Committee minutes of February 11, 2011

Vote: Unanimously approved

2. Motion by Mr. Mercier, seconded by Dr. McNamara to approve the regular session minutes of April 11, 2011

Vote: Unanimously approved

3. Motion by Mr. Mercier, seconded by Dr. McNamara to approve the executive session minutes of April 11, 2011

Vote: Unanimously approved

Mr. Sheehan asked Attorney Morris if the executive session minutes could be released. Attorney Morris stated that no items could be released at this time.

APPROVAL OF BILLS AND PAYROLLS:

Bills and Payrolls were signed by Mr. Sheehan, Mr. Miles and Mr. Mercier

Mr. Sheehan announced that Mrs. Elie could not attend the meeting this evening due to illness.

PRESENTATION OF SENIOR HIGH STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

No student report

COMMUNITY INPUT:

Mr. Joseph Wilkie of 41 Regency Drive was present to give an update on the Friends of a New Dracut High School. Mr. Wilkie thanked everyone for all their hard work and reminded the community to attend the special town meeting on April 27th and to vote on May 2nd.

Each Committee member recognized Mr. Wilkie, Mr. Sancier and all the people involved with the Friends of a New Dracut High School for all the work with the project and getting the community involved.

Mr. Sheehan asked that a letter be sent to Mr. Wilkie and the Friends of a New Dracut High School.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

No Committee Reports

COMMUNITY CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

- April 27th Special Town Meeting
- May 2nd Elections
- May 3rd Dracut Scholarship Meeting
- May 3rd School Committee Reorganization Meeting
- May 8th Mother's Day
- May 9th School Committee Meeting

SUPERINTENDENT'S INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

Dr. Scott noted some highlights from Brookside Elementary School. Dr. Scott attended a poetry assembly on April 25th at Brookside and thanked Mr. Moulton, English Language Arts Supervisor for his work during Poetry month. Students attended field trips sponsored by the PTO to visit local animals and students also participated in a waste free day.

Monthly Attendance Profile:

Dr. Scott noted the attendance profile in the agenda.

Staffing Announcements:

Dr. Scott proposed that the duties of the current position of head custodian be redistributed to the Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds and a secretary in the Business Office. This proposal is being offered due to the resignation of the head custodian during mid-year. The position was posted and there were no applications. The Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds is already directly involved in the facilitation of the duties of this position and Dr. Scott is recommending that the Committee approve this request.

4. Motion by Mr. Miles, seconded by Dr. McNamara to accept the proposal from the Superintendent and redistribute the duties of the current position of head custodian to the Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds and a secretary as presented.

Discussion was held regarding this proposal regarding posting and salary. The head custodian position was posted internally and there was no interest in the position. The secretarial position will be posted and will continue to be posted annually. The Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds salary will be revised to reflect an increase of \$4,000 and the secretarial stipend will be in the amount of \$2,600. These amounts are already budgeted through the operational budget. The stipend position would be eliminated from the custodial contract.

Roll Call Vote:

Dr. McNamara	Yes
Mr. Mercier	Yes
Mr. Miles	Yes
Mr. Sheehan	Yes

OLD BUSINESS

Dr. McNamara wanted to clarify a recent article in the Lowell Sun Newspaper on April 17th regarding discussion at a meeting regarding Good Friday. Dr. McNamara read the article that stated that Dr. McNamara proposed with doing away with Good Friday. Dr. McNamara stated that he was upset with the article and that he never proposed to do away with Good Friday. It was brought up for a point of discussion when the school calendar was topic of discussion. Dr. McNamara reiterated that he did not propose or make a motion to eliminate Good Friday as a holiday. Dr. McNamara wanted to correct the record and hopes that reporting of items will be more precise and accurate.

NEW BUSINESS:

Dracut High School Addition/ Renovation Project

Dr. Scott invited the district Department Chairs to address the Committee and community regarding the high school project and the impact the project will have on their department.

Mr. Generoso, Dracut High Principal

Mr. Generoso indicated that there are areas in the school that are inadequate including certain hallways, gymnasium and auditorium. Mr. Generoso also addressed the traffic flow and overcrowding of the hallways.

Mr. Leon Grande, Fine and Performing Arts

Mr. Grande addressed the limited space in the music rooms, art room and auditorium. The art department has one art room and two classes occurring at the same time. The lighting needs to be addressed and the kiln is out of operation. There is no graphic art classes offered due to lack of space.

There is only one music room that services four hundred students a day. There are insufficient storage and practice rooms. The auditorium has inadequate ventilation and the stage is small in size and shows are not being presented as they should be. There is no longer a TV production class being offered due to lack of space.

Mr. Douglas Souza, Mathematics Coordinator

Mr. Souza addressed the lack of technology available and how this affects the teaching of mathematics in the school. Classrooms have limited internet access. Students and teachers could benefit more if technology was upgraded and working.

Mr. Kenneth Hughes, History Coordinator

Mr. Hughes also addressed the need for increased resources in technology. Students will be more energized and enthusiastic if the technology in the school were working properly and available. This will also benefit the teachers in the classroom. Opinion polls were taken in the classes and all students are behind the high school project.

Mr. Robert Moulton, English Language Arts

Mr. Moulton agreed that resources in technology affect the classroom. Teachers travel throughout the school due to lack of space. With the overcrowding of hallways, sharing of classrooms and traveling between classrooms is difficult for students and teachers. The curriculum needs to be altered when technology fails on a particular day.

Mrs. Kathleen Downing, Science

Mrs. Downing addressed classes that are not being offered and over two hundred students were not accommodated in marine biology and environmental science due to lack of space. At times thirty six students are enrolled in one classroom. Labs have four to six students in a lab group which causes a concern for safety. Classrooms have insufficient power affecting all science classrooms.

Christine Lord, Foreign Language

Mrs. Lord addressed overcrowding and lack of space. There are eight teachers in foreign language department and two teachers float during the day. All paperwork and books are carried to the different classrooms by the teacher. Lessons needs to be revamped with the lack of white boards. There is a lack of audio ability which is needed in foreign language to assist students with listening and learning different languages.

Paul Kalous, Project Manager

Mr. Kalous acknowledged the work of the Permanent Building Committee. The Committee challenged the project manager and architect to come up with the most practical and cost effective solution for Dracut. Mr. Kalous commended the members of the Permanent Building Committee.

Al Cuevas, Architect

Mr. Cuevas thanked all the teachers for their presentations and their concerns in the building. The architects have presented a project that is the most cost effective and wishes everyone the best in this endeavor.

Timothy Woods, Athletic Director

Mr. Woods addressed the lack of space in the gymnasium which has seating for 367 people and there are over 1,100 students in the school. The gymnasium is at maximum capacity. There is a lack of ventilation in the gymnasium and locker rooms. A new gymnasium will enable us to implement a program for students with disabilities. Mr. Woods also addressed the usage of the gymnasium not only from the athletic program but from the recreation department. A new field house will also provide additional classrooms. Students will no longer have to run throughout the hallways for indoor track.

Andrew Graham, Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds

Mr. Graham noted that the 1995 renovation did not address the needs of the building. Currently there are ten modular classrooms. Mr. Graham addressed the need to updates to the ventilation and electricity. The building needs additional space and updates throughout the building. There is a lot that is accomplished in the building with very little.

Roberta Otremba, Librarian

Mrs. Otremba indicated that a new library is needed to support 21st century learning. The current library is overcrowded and inadequate and there is a lack of technology in the current library. With over 1,100 students there is room for only fourteen computers in the library.

Vincent DeNufrio, Industrial Arts Teacher

Mr. DeNufrio noted that over three hundred students sign up for wood shop but only a little over two hundred are accepted due to lack of space. The woodshop tables are out of date and there is concern for safety in the woodshop room.

Dr. McNamara noted that this project is an investment to the community. Dracut has paid for other projects throughout the state and now is the time to get our tax dollars back. Dr. McNamara urged the community to attend Town Meeting and vote on election day.

Mr. Sheehan noted that Dracut is one of sixteen out of 351 cities and towns chosen by the State. Dracut will receive .63 cents for every \$1. This project, once completed, will be a state of the art facility. Mr. Sheehan also urged the community to attend Town Meeting and vote on election day.

Dr. Scott thanked the guests, staff, families and children for attending this evening.

Mr. Sheehan announced to the Committee that Mr. Pete Wilde has resigned from the Dracut Access Television Board as School Committee representative. Mr. Sheehan noted that this topic should be on the agenda for the next meeting.

Dr. Scott announced that if anyone would like a tour of the facility to contact the Superintendent's Office.

ADJOURNMENT:

5. Motion by Mr. Mercier, seconded by Mr. Miles to adjourn the regular session meeting of the Dracut School Committee.

Roll Call Vote:

Dr. McNamara	Yes
Mr. Mercier	Yes
Mr. Miles	Yes
Mr. Sheehan	Yes

The regular session meeting of the Dracut School Committee meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cynthia Curtis
Recording Secretary

List of documents and exhibits:

1. School Committee agenda packet