

Approved December 14, 2009

**DRACUT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**Harmony Hall**  
**November 23, 2009**

**PRESENT:** Mr. Matthew Sheehan, Chairperson, Mr. Michael Miles, Dr. Michael McNamara, Ms. Bonnie Elie, Mr. Ron Mercier, Mr. Steven Stone, Attorney Kevin Murphy, Ms. Lynne LaFerriere, Recording Secretary

**CALL TO ORDER:**

The Regular Session of the School Committee was called to order by Mr. Sheehan at Harmony Hall at 7:00 p.m.

**REGULAR SESSION:**

**I. Moment of Silence and Pledge of Allegiance:**

Mr. Sheehan called for the pledge of allegiance, and a special moment of silence for Ms. Morrison's brother-in-law.

**II. Approval of Minutes:**

1. Motion by Ms. Elie, seconded by Mr. Mercier, under discussion, to approve the November 9, 2009 regular session minutes.

Mr. Mercier – under discussion – change Attorney Morris' name to Attorney Murphy in the last line just before Motion #9.

Vote: Unanimously approved

2. Motion by Dr. McNamara, seconded by Ms. Elie to approve the October 22, 2009 finance sub-committee minutes.

Dr. McNamara – change time of adjournment to 12:10 P.M.

Vote: Unanimously approved

**III. Approval of Bills and Payrolls:**

Mr. Rose reported the bills and payrolls were approved by Mr. Sheehan and Mr. Miles.

**IV. Community Input:**

Mr. Robert Young – Englesby Intermediate School – Mr. Young thanked the committee for their support over the past 9 years as Principal at Englesby Intermediate School. He worked with a wonderful staff and it is a pleasure working for Dracut Public Schools. The Committee thanked Mr. Young and wished him the best of luck.

**V. Committee Reports:**

Dr. McNamara reported on the finance sub-committee. Met with Mr. Rose, Dr. Mullin and Mr. Sheehan on November 12<sup>th</sup>. He updated the committee on the documents handed out at the previous meeting. He received in-depth documentation and reviewed the budget – transfers and revolving accounts.

- Requested information on positions referenced to at last meeting – noting was presented, wanted all info. before presenting.
- Status of mats – Mr. Rose will get the status

- Breakdown to stimulus funds – salary portion, close to \$600K
  - o Position, grade, school, full-time, part-time, salary
- Detail of stimulus grant

Mr. Mercier to Dr. McNamara – gymnastic mats – where is the money coming from?

Dr. McNamara – did not know

Mr. Miles to Dr. McNamara – when is stimulus money coming?

Dr. McNamara – still hearing it is coming

Mr. Sheehan – no documentation

Mr. Stone – 10/16 – takes 3-4 weeks turnaround, 5-6 weeks is not unheard of

#### **VI. Community Calendar of Events:**

Mr. Sheehan read the community calendar of events.

- Dr. McNamara requested 12/2 Parker Avenue Meeting, 7:00 P.M. be added to calendar.

Mr. Mercier requested Dr. Trouville to have the principal of Parker Avenue school send a letter to the parents informing them about the meeting

Mr. Miles agreed

- Added 12/9 – 4:00 P.M. Office personnel, 4:30 P.M. Custodians

#### **VII. Old Business:**

Mr. Miles – gym mats – sub-committee met and agreed the school department would buy mats – where will the money come from?

Mr. Sheehan – out of budget

Mr. Miles – Mr. Rose told Mr. Woods we should have money donated.

Mr. Mercier – Pop Warner – would split the cost of mats – total cost \$6,000.

Dr. McNamara – recall Mr. Rose said a purchase order was generated

Mr. Stone to Mr. Rose – will get update

#### **IX. New Business:**

Mr. Sheehan passed the gavel to Mr. Miles

3. Motion by Mr. Sheehan, seconded by Mr. Mercier, under discussion, for board to ask for a hiring freeze except for the open positions that have come before the board.

Mr. Sheehan indicated that the open positions are: Special Ed teachers at High School and Englesby, Vice Principal at Junior High and Vice Principal at Englesby, Special Education Paraprofessionals at Brookside and Campbell and .4 Kindergarten Teachers at Campbell, Greenmont and .4 Paraprofessional at Greenmont.

Mr. Mercier – would it come from board or superintendent to hire?

Attorney Murphy – will come before board

Dr. McNamara – any open positions that exist today or in the future are brought before the board to approve filling – responsibility of superintendent to fill.

Roll Call Vote: Dr. McNamara – yes, Ms. Elie – yes, Mr. Mercier – yes, Mr. Miles – yes, Mr. Sheehan – yes

Mr. Miles passed the gavel to Mr. Sheehan

4. Motion by Mr. Miles, seconded by Ms. Elie for Mr. Sheehan to form a committee with 1 or 2 members to speak with Mrs. Espindle as interim superintendent position if we need her.

Dr. McNamara under discussion – think we want to be careful to not have specific recruits.

5. Motion by Dr. McNamara, seconded by Mr. Mercier to move to advertise in the Lowell Sun and Boston Globe for resumes for position of superintendent for anyone to apply and the committee to look at a range of qualified personnel.

Dr. McNamara asked Attorney Murphy if advisory.

Attorney Murphy – policy decision, whatever normal advertising is.

Mr. Mercier under discussion – agree with Dr. McNamara, should advertise

Mr. Miles replied his motion was to speak not offer the job to find somebody knowledgeable in event need person who can do it, don't know when stimulus money is coming and feels we are in crisis mode.

Mr. Mercier agreed with Mr. Miles about budget, only concern we shouldn't go out contacting certain individuals, at some point have to advertise, rather post and be legal.

Attorney Murphy – interim doesn't have to be posted. Advertisements should include publications that go to other superintendents, MASC.

Discussions continued regarding posting for the interim position and cost to advertise.

Roll Call Vote: Dr. McNamara – yes, Ms. Elie – yes, Mr. Mercier –yes, Mr. Miles – no, Mr. Sheehan – yes

First motion died.

Mr. Sheehan thanked Ms. Curtis for getting information for the board and contacted several companies.

Mr. Sheehan wanted to make a point of clarification and to stop some rumors that have been circulating about two companies that do not want to come to Dracut. There are two companies that have been contacted and they are JA Roy Associates and Future Management Systems. Both companies have declined to forward information on the search because they are currently assisting other districts with administrative searches.

Mr. Sheehan received the following information that the committee received.

- MASC - \$12,300 – paid \$4,725 due for a year
- NESDSC - \$13,252 plus \$3,960 - \$17,212
- Received call from MEC - \$14K, but still working on paperwork

Mr. Miles – MEC would have our best interest in mind – would have to spend money either way.

Mr. Sheehan – should set up a screening committee. Personal opinion – 3 choices, either way a lot of money, will support boards decision, feel committee could do it on television.

Mr. Miles – came with a search for superintendent, there was a committee of capable people who have shown interest, don't want to look outside district – feel made mistake going out before.

Dr. McNamara – honestly think we have to approach with a systematic viewpoint – agree with Mr.

Miles – 5 capable people on board, would appreciate expertise out there to guide committee. When filling a top leadership position, have to include community and teachers, shouldn't be taken lightly.

MASC could give guidance at no charge into process.

The committee discussed further options with open forums and have committee come up with finalists and have MASC there. It is an important decision.

6. Motion by Ms. Elie, seconded by Mr. Mercier, under discussion, to have MASC assist us with free services.

Dr. McNamara - under discussion – will need plan and direct search, don't know if it is fully thought out. Would like to table to next meeting on 12/14.

Mr. Mercier – agree and withdrew second on the motion

Vote: Unanimously approved

Mr. Sheehan will contact MEC and MASC to have something in writing.  
Committee agreed they don't need a sub-committee, they should do all the hiring and do in open sessions at live meetings.

Mr. Miles – had the opportunity to read to second graders at Greenmont and received letter from all the students. He thanked Mr. Hill, Ms. Dorant and the students.

7. Motion by Mr. Sheehan to suspend the by-laws to cancel the December 28, 2009 meeting.  
Mr. Mercier – with everything going on, doesn't feel we should cancel.  
Mr. Sheehan agreed, will see progress at next meeting.

8. Motion by Mr. Mercier, seconded by Ms. Elie to suspend to the by-laws to take the December 14, 2009 meeting and change the start time to 6:00 P.M. at the Lakeview Junior High School.

Roll Call Vote: Dr. McNamara - yes, Ms. Elie – yes, Mr. Mercier – yes, Mr. Miles – yes, Mr. Sheehan – yes

Mr. Stone gave an update on the flu, the numbers are dropping, last week met with principals and Ron Mote from the board of health.

Mr. Mercier reminded the community of the Parker Avenue School meeting on 12/2 at 7:00 pm in the DHS library.

**XI. Adjournment:**

12. Motion by Mr. Mercier, seconded by Dr. McNamara to adjourn the Regular Session Meeting.

Roll Call Vote: Dr. McNamara – yes, Ms. Elie – yes, Mr. Mercier – yes, Mr. Miles – yes, Mr. Sheehan – yes

Mr. Sheehan adjourned the Regular Session at 8:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynne LaFerriere, Recording Secretary