

**SHUTESBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
THURSDAY June 12, 2014  
FINAL Minutes**

**Present: Dan Hayes, Mare Fox, Fred Steinberg, Stephen Sullivan, members; Mike Kociela, Business Director; Maureen Ryan, Principal; Bob Mahler, Superintendent; Public Guests**

**A. Meeting Called to Order - Mare called the meeting to order at 7:05 P.M.**

**B. Review of Agenda and Perpetual Calendar**

Mare will remind Sean to write something for the next issue of the school newsletter.

**C. Warrants and Gifts**

61214: \$1,889.71

**D. Approval of Minutes from May 15, 2014**

**DAN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES. MARE SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.**

**E. Public Comments and Announcements**

Dan noted that he was disappointed to learn Mike Kociela is resigning his position, as he is moving to another one in August. He thanked Mike for his three and a half years of excellent service. Mike assured the committee he would be available to help guide his replacement with particular questions.

**F. New Business / Discussion Items**

1. FY14 Budget Adjustments

**DAN MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE FOLLOWING TRANSFERS WITHIN THE SCHOOL BUDGET CATEGORIES:**

**FROM**

**Administration: \$1,498**

**Instruction: \$8,545**

**Student Services: \$11,250**

**Programs with Other Schools: \$7,225**

**TO**

**Plant and Operations: \$28,518**

**MARE SECONDED.**

Mike explained that the large overage is due in part to regulatory issues for the electricity providers as well as switching providers. Going forward, the school will have a more steady rate through a deal with HRCOG. The school received extraordinary relief in the amount of \$34,000 to reduce expenses, which has already been reflected in the budget. If there is any regular relief left over at the end of the fiscal year, it will be held over until next year for other expenses; the extraordinary relief, on the other hand, must be used for this fiscal year. Mike confirmed for Dan that the school should end the year with a surplus. He will make transfers among accounts as appropriate to cover deficits for the rest of the year. Dan complimented both Mike and Maureen for balancing expenses in order to end the year in strong financial shape.

**VOTE CALLED: UNANIMOUS.**

2. School Improvement Plan Review

Maureen distributed copies of the SIP. After the committee reviewed the plan, Dan noted that Shutesbury received a grant this year to restore the hearse house in Shutesbury Cemetery. He raised the possibility that the school might do something in conjunction with this restoration and introduced the committee to an organization devoted to preserving cemeteries and creating educational events related to them.

**DAN MOVED TO ENDORSE THE 2014-2015 SIP. MARE SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.**

3. Superintendent Search Discussion

Bob reported he has been busy with the principal searches and assured the committee the superintendent search will pick up again this fall.

**G. Unfinished Business / Updates**

1. PARCC/MCAS

Bob was advised that deciding on MCAS or PARCC for next year is a school committee decision. He explained the consequences of both choices: if the school uses MCAS, the test would be the same as this year and the data would be used to evaluate the school; if the school uses PARCC, either a paper or electronic version may be used, and the data for the coming year would not be used to evaluate the school. Content-wise, the curriculum at SES is already aligned with Common Core. Bob recommended the committee opt for the paper-based PARCC because students already know how to take a paper-based test, and there will be four years of the paper version of PARCC. Furthermore, the typing and computer-based math tools involved in the electronic version of PARCC present an additional and, at present, unnecessary

challenge for students. Dan asked how the staff felt about it, and Maureen responded that staff didn't have detailed enough information at their last discussion to be able to arrive at a position. Dan agreed with Bob's recommendation. The fifth grade science test will be MCAS, however.

**DAN MOVED THAT THE COMMITTEE SUPPORT THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE SUPERINTENDENT AND OPT FOR THE PAPER-BASED PARCC TEST. FRED SECONDED.**

Mare noted that her daughter was stressed out to learn that the test format might be switched; she was also stressed out about MCAS in general, and Bob agreed that many students felt test anxiety in response to MCAS. Steve noted that the last section of math, in May, would be multiple choice.

**VOTE CALLED: UNANIMOUS.**

## **H. Policy Review**

### **JH – Student Absences and Excuses**

Bob requested that this policy be sent back to the Policy Committee because of additional information about state law that needs to be considered. The definition of excused versus unexcused absences can result in very different outcomes for students as well as restrict the principal's latitude in making decisions.

## **I. Reports**

### **1. Principal's Report**

Maureen distributed the Principal's Report. A female student has joined the school, bringing enrollment to 161. Two new staff members have been hired: Rachel Vitello is an occupational therapist that has been working since May 19, and Jasmine Sicotte is a school psychologist starting with the 2014-2015 school year. The report included information on professional development and staff training as well as classroom snapshots of end-of-year activities.

### **2. Superintendent's Report**

Bob said he needed a representative from the committee to sit on the search committee for the next Business Manager. Mare volunteered. The search closes June 18. Bob also reported that the school submitted necessary paperwork related to school positions that require certification. A new electronic system has been created that allows staff to upload evidence for Educator Evaluation which Bob thinks is a helpful option. Bob was also a guest speaker to a group of Pakistani educators at UMass. Bob said he would walk the committee through the new superintendent evaluation forms.

### 3. Regional School District Planning Board Report

Open house events will be organized in the fall so that citizens can get an accurate sense of what regionalization would mean for the town.

### 4. Amherst-Pelham Representative's Report

Steve distributed a timeline for the Regional Agreement Working Group's upcoming plans as well as a proposed voter representation breakdown. RAWG members will walk the Regional School Committee through draft materials and answer questions on June 24. He also brought the committee up to date on other issues the board discussed, including demographic challenges in the future (a shrinking high school population) and concerns about high-stakes testing of any kind, such as MCAS and PARCC. The committee thanked Steve for attending the board meeting.

### 5. Review of Expenditure Report

Bob noted that extraordinary relief funds came in, taking care of a substantial deficit for the school.

5. Union #28 Report - including Budget and Personnel: Nothing to report.

6. CES Report: Nothing to report.

## **J. Future Business**

### 1. SSC Summer Meeting

Mare invited questions, comments, and concerns about summer meetings. Dan said that the committee normally meets during the summer, usually to brainstorm about ways they can support the school in the upcoming year. The committee decided that if there are enough agenda items to warrant a meeting, they could meet on August 21. They tentatively scheduled that date for the next meeting. Dan expressed concern that the use of safety-related terms ("shelter in place" versus "lockdown," for example) might be confusingly inconsistent across school districts.

## **K. Adjournment into Executive Session at 8:32 P.M.**

**MARE MOVED TO ADJOURN INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS. DAN SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.**

## **Public Session Reopened 8:47 P.M.**

**DAN MOVED TO ACCEPT THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE SHUTESBURY ELEMENTARY EDUCATORS AND SHUTESBURY AFFILIATED WORKERS AND THE SHUTESBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE FOR JULY 1, 2014 - JUNE 30, 2017 AS**

**AMENDED (REMOVING THE WORDING IN ARTICLE 7, SECTION E THAT STATES "PROVIDING NO INDIVIDUAL WILL SUFFER A LOSS OF PAY TO WHICH HE/SHE WOULD HAVE BEEN ENTITLED ABSENT THIS CHANGE."). MARE SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.**

**DAN MOVED TO ADJOURN. FRED SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.**

Respectfully submitted,

Trevor Kearns