

Minutes of September 17, 2014 School Committee Meeting

In attendance: Mr. Paul Ognibene
Dr. Paul Schubert
Mrs. Jeanne Astino
Dr. Helene Lieb
Mrs. Mary McGoldrick

Also in attendance: Mrs. Barbara Cataldo, Superintendent
Mr. Dave DeGennaro, Business Manager

Mr. Ognibene called the meeting to order at 6:40PM. ROLL CALL: All present. MOVED by Dr. Schubert to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation because the Chair has deemed that discussing in Open Meeting would have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position. SECONDED by Mrs. Astino. ROLL CALL VOTE: All Aye in favor of going into Executive Session. MOVED by Dr. Schubert to reconvene in Open Session. SECONDED by Mrs. Astino. VOTE: 5-0 in favor of reconvening in Open Session.

Open session was reconvened by Mr. Ognibene at 7:25 PM. Roll Call Vote: All aye and present.

Mr. Ognibene invited the audience to address the Committee, but there was no response.

Approve Minutes of May 21, 2014: MOVED by Dr. Schubert to approve the Minutes of May 21, 2014. SECONDED by Dr. Lieb, Mrs. Astino asked why the May 7th minutes had not been included in the packet. Mrs. Cataldo indicated that they would be on the agenda for the next meeting. Changes to regular meeting minutes: on page two it should be noted that Dr. Lieb requested that the Destination Imagination discussion should be added. The section Fingerprinting requirements: Change “has to be” to “must”. Include: “Mrs. Astino requested that there be a moment of silence for a Middle School teacher’s spouse.” MOVED by Dr. Lieb to accept the May 21, 2014 minutes as revised. SECONDED by Mrs. McGoldrick. VOTE: 5-0 in favor of accepting the minutes as revised.

Approve May 21, 2014 School Choice Minutes: MOVED by Dr. Lieb to approve the School Choice Meeting minutes. SECONDED by Dr. Schubert. VOTE: 5-0 in favor of approving the minutes.

Gift from Shaw's Supermarket: Paul Sciliano, Manager of the Cohasset Shaw’s Supermarket was present with his wife to present a gift of \$400 to the Schools as part of Shaw’s “We love schools” program. Mr. Sciliano indicated that Shaw’s is the second oldest supermarket chain in the country. In addition to the check which will be mailed directly to the Business Office, he brought a cake and a case of cold water for everyone in attendance to enjoy. MOVED by Mrs. Astino to accept the gift of \$400 from the Shaw’s We Love Schools program. SECONDED by Dr. Schubert. ROLL CALL VOTE: All aye.

Gift from Rostand Movie Production Company: Rostand contacted Mrs. Cataldo with a request to use the Middle-High School auditorium for two hours to do some filming in it. In return they are presenting us with a gift of \$500 which Mrs. Cataldo thought should be put towards the renovations taking place in the Auditorium. MOVED by Mrs. Astino to accept the gift of \$500 from Rostand. SECONDED by Dr. Lieb. ROLL CALL VOTE: All Aye.

Belize Trip: Dr. Ann Thomae and Mrs. Laura Humphrey as well as three High School students were here to discuss the proposed trip to Belize during April vacation. They started with a short history of this trip which was begun many years ago by Mr. David Magnussen. Dr. Thomae and Mrs. Humphrey had met with the School Committee a few years ago to see whether it might be feasible to revive the trip, and they did make a trip to Costa Rica over April vacation in 2013. Since there is such high interest in Marine Biology as represented by the number of students (45) who are currently enrolled in the class, they want to go forward with a trip to Belize in April. IZE in Sherburn specializes in expeditions to Belize to study both the Rain Forest and Coral Reefs. They have a program that matches with our Marin Biology curriculum. IZE recommends a maximum of 30 students; so upper class students will be given priority because they have the background and experience in the science component. For 30 students they would need a total of four chaperones, and the proposal is for Dr. Thomae's and Mrs. Humphrey's spouses to travel with them to bring the chaperone total to four. A lengthy discussion on whether these trips automatically exclude student athletes ensued. The three students who were in attendance are all athletes in a spring sport but feel it's a personal decision for the student and his/her family to make. MOVED by Dr. Lieb to approve the proposed trip to Belize. SECONDED by Mrs. McGoldrick. VOTE: 4 aye, 1 abstention.

Guatemala Trip: Mrs. Jordan, who obtained permission for this trip previously feels that a change in destination needs to take place in light of an incident that occurred with a church group traveling in Guatemala that was violently attacked and robbed. While the State Department has not issued a formal ban on travel to Guatemala, Mrs. Jordan feels it is not a prudent choice for a destination at this time. She contacted ACIS, the group that was organizing the trip, and they can arrange a similar trip for the 9 registered students to go to Costa Rica instead. It will be a very similar program in terms of language immersion and experience. If the change is approved, she will contact parents to get their approval. There will be about a \$300 increase per student in the price of the Costa Rica trip. They will also open it up again to see if additional students would be interested. Jill Kelley will also be a chaperone. If the change in venue becomes a problem for some families Mrs. Jordan will get back to the Committee. MOVED by Dr. Lieb to approve the change to Costa Rica for a maximum of 14 students. SECONDED by Mrs. McGoldrick. VOTE: 5-0 in favor of making the change in venue.

MCAS vs PARCC: Boston Public Schools are leaning toward going with the PARCC test. Mrs. Cataldo and Mrs. Demas have been to several meetings where this issue has been discussed. Since a number of states have dropped out of using PARCC, with Rhode Island and Massachusetts as the only New England states still considering PARCC, they both feel it's risky to change over to PARCC at this point. Staying with MCAS will enable us to have another year to evaluate changes made to curriculum in math and reading. Mrs. Demas mentioned that

Smarter Balance is the current favored test in many states, although it is not available as an option for Massachusetts. Even though it is not an option for Massachusetts, Dr. Lieb requested more information on this test since it had never been mentioned previously. MCAS is not a high stake test until the 10th grade, and everyone in the state will take MCAS in 10th grade until 2018. MOVED by Dr. Schubert to keep MCAS as our testing platform. SECONDED by Mrs. Astino. VOTE: 3-2 in favor of staying with the MCAS testing platform..

Graduation Date: At the last meeting Mrs. Cataldo had been asked to discuss what it would cost us to use the Music Circus to hold graduation on the first Saturday in June. Their response was that they would let us use the facility for no charge on June 6, 2014. They very much want to continue being a part of graduation. Mrs. Cataldo has already sent a thank you to Vince Longo and the Music Circus Board of Directors. The consensus was that this is great news. Another community institution helping the schools. MOVED by Dr. Schubert to accept the generous offer of the Music Circus. SECONDED by Dr. Lieb. ROLL CALL VOTE: All aye.

Private School Presentation: Mrs. Connolly along with Mr. Scott and the High School Guidance Counselors compiled data on why students consider and/or choose to attend private schools for Middle/High School education. All such families are invited to meet with school personnel to discuss what Cohasset has to offer versus the private school experience. They feel they did a comprehensive job of reaching out to families and giving them every opportunity to make an informed decision. They will continue to keep this data going forward.

College Process for Seniors: The two High School Guidance Counselors, Mrs. Struzziery and Mr. McGowan, were in attendance to outline the process. Guidance Goals for 2012-2015 were distributed. Students are allowed to meet with college representatives at the High School during non-class time. The average number of schools that seniors apply to has increased over the years. All students in grade 9 meet with Mr. Scott; following that meeting every student meets individually with their counselor. More students are now taking the ACT test. Cohasset Recreation Dept. is offering an SAT prep course. vide opportunities for mock interviews between staff and students. Good learning experience for college and work interviews. Could we have collaboration with other high schools on South Shore to have regional college fairs? Guidance will have a regular update in the monthly newsletter and have set up a Twitter account to distribute information. A suggestion was made to consider the idea of holding a career fair for students to help them understand "what's out there" in terms of jobs, which might help students focus on what they want to study in college. The viability of a community based career fair should be on the next agenda.

Boston Magazine: Mrs. Cataldo handed out an article announcing that Boston Magazine had retracted their school rankings because of flawed and erroneous data. Since we don't know the methodology of how they calculate their numbers, and the formula used to calculate them, the numbers vary from year to year and don't reflect a consistent picture of the schools that are being rated. We keep data on year-to-year comparisons for different test scores for our own students. The School Committee may develop a sub-committee to asses who and how we measure Cohasset against. Mrs. McGoldrick and Mr. Ognibene would be interested in serving on that sub-committee.

Superintendent Goals: Mrs. Cataldo sent her goals to School Committee members. They follow DESE recommendations for S.M.A.R.T goals. Dr. Lieb suggested that she add emotional and physical health of the students in the District as a goal. She felt this is particularly important given increased focus the school and community are putting on drug issues and how to combat them. She thought stress related issues are another important component to focus on. Mrs. Astino would like to see more goals and how they match up with the strategic plan. Mrs. Cataldo feels she has more benchmarks than she ever has before. The Committee agreed to move the vote on the goals to the Oct. 1st meeting.

Warrant 15-04S: MOVED by Mrs. Astino to approve Warrant 15-04S. SECONDED by Dr. Schubert. ROLL CALL VOTE: All aye.

Monthly Update as of August 31, 2014: Since school has just begun, there is not much going on right now. Mr. DeGennaro did make an adjustment on Circuit Breaker opening balance however.

FY 2016 School Committee Budget Calendar: The budget process and calendar are similar to what we've done in the past and match up with the Towns' calendar and process. Town Meeting has already been scheduled, so that gives us a goal to meet. MOVED by Dr. Lieb to approve the budget calendar as presented. SECONDED by Mrs. Astino. VOTE: 5-0.

Mrs. McGoldrick attended the coffee for SEPAC was very impressed by the new staff that are supporting that group.

Dr. Schubert attended the Advisory Committee meeting and indicated that there are 16 articles currently on the warrant for Town Meeting. According to Mr. Altholtz John Smith Day was a great success, and students who put together displays and reports did really great job and contributed quite a bit to the overall celebration.

MOVED by Mrs. Astino to adjourn the meeting at 10:30 PM. SECONDED by Dr. Lieb. ROLL CALL VOTE: All aye to adjourn the meeting at 10:30 PM.

List of All Documents Used at Meeting

E-1	May 21, 2014 Minutes
E-2	May 21, 2014 School Choice Minutes
F-1	Belize Trip
F-2	Guatemala Trip
F-3	MCAS vs PARCC
F-4	Private School Presentations
F-5	Superintendent Goals
G-1	Monthly Update
G-2	FY 16 School Committee Budget Calendar