

**MEDFIELD SCHOOL COMMITTEE**  
**Workshop**  
**May 6, 2022**

**PRESENT:** Jessica Reilly - Chair  
Leo Brehm - Vice Chair (remote)  
Timothy Knight - Recording Secretary  
Anna Mae O'Shea Brooke - Member at Large  
Michelle Kirkby - Member at Large

**ALSO PRESENT:** Dr. Jeffrey Marsden - Superintendent of Schools  
Michael LaFrancesca - Director of Finance and Operations  
Andrea Moores - Secretary  
Steve Callahan - Warrant Committee  
Carolyn Casey- By-Law Committee

The Chair called the Workshop to order and asked for a Roll Call:

- Timothy Knight - present
- Michelle Kirkby - present
- Jessica Reilly -present
- Leo Brehm - present

The Workshop began at 9:36 am.

Ms. Anna Mae O'Shea Brooke joined the workshop after the Roll Call was taken at approximately 9:41 am.

**Discussion - ATM Warrant Article 14, Article 18, and FY23 Budget**

The School Committee deliberated and discussed the potential impact of the Warrant Article 14 by-law language could have on a current or future committee's ability to make the selections for a future School Building Committee.

Ms. Reilly's initial reaction to the rewritten article in comparison to the current article seems to be less inclusive and prevents people from joining the Committee. Ms. Kirkby be asked for clarification on what By- laws intent was when writing Article 14.

Ms. Carolyn Casey shared the thought process on how Article 14 was written and shared that there was a short turnaround time to write the By-Law and the Committee and due to schedules they were only able to meet once a week. If the Committee had more time they would have brought the Article to each of the Town Committees to vet. The goal of the By-law Committee was to have as many people involved as possible from different perspectives to have a successful school building project. In order to do that three appointing committees were established, Board of Selectmen, Town Moderator and the School Committee and gave each an equal number of appointments. The Committee then made appointment recommendations and suggested criteria for the appointments to help build a well rounded School Building Committee with 12 voting members. Committees also have the ability to bring additional non-voting members as their expertise as needed for the project.

Mr. LaFrancesca explained that if the Town is accepted into the MSBA program it will be required to have one member who is MCPPO certified and suggested that language be added to the Article to reflect this. This certification is required for individuals who procure for the Town. This person would be responsible for procurement prior to the hiring of a project manager.

Ms. Casey stated that a paragraph was added into the Article to address Mr. LaFrancesca's concern. Mr. Steve Callahan stated that a fail safe paragraph was added so that the Board of Selectmen would have the ability to appoint someone to meet that criteria. The goal was to have as many people as possible on the SBC as possible with equal representation from each of the boards which is why each board will have 3 appointments at their discretion for a total of 12 voting members.

Ms. Anna Mae O'Shea Brooke shared with the Committee that she had planned to read a statement at the ATM and request to table this Article 14 so that more collaboration on the article would be beneficial based on what has been learned from the last experience. She feels that there is a wealth of knowledge between the Town Committees to be shared so that everyone has a full understanding of what the goals are for bringing a successful new school building project to the Town. Ms. Anna Mae O'Shea Brooke expressed that she would prefer Article 14 to be deferred to the June Special Town Meeting warrant to allow all parties to work through one last draft of the Article together and make sure all perspectives were taken into account.

Mr. Callahan shared that the Warrant Committee had a lengthy meeting last week to discuss their concerns regarding Article 14. The goal of the Warrant Committee was to come to a consensus for a positive motion on the floor of ATM for Article 14. The two main issues that the Warrant Committee debated was the age 65 requirement and the desire to have a Permanent Building Committee member be required on the new SBC. The Warrant Committee did come to consensus and voted to accept the By-law as written with specific edits. The Warrant Committee will provide those edits at ATM as part of the positive motion.

Ms. Casey pointed out that the By-law Committee did discuss potentially holding off the Article to the June Special Town Meeting but were specifically told that the Special Town Meeting may not happen. If the Special Town doesn't happen then the Article would be pushed to a future meeting.

Ms. O'Shea Brooke did point out that a SBC could still be formed without this Article. She reiterated her earlier point that it is important for all parties to come together and come to a consensus in order to move forward with the spirit of collaboration.

Ms. Reilly asked the Committee to consider what is important to have in Article 14 that is in the best interest of the schools and parents so that they are protected and included.

Mr. Timothy Knight asked if there was enough time for the School Committee to make changes to the Article. Ms. Reilly and Mr. Callahan explained that any amendments made to the Article would need to come from the floor at the ATM.

Ms. Reilly stated that she would like to work with the current Article since it's been approved by two committee's and a board in efforts not to delay the process.

Ms. Michelle Kirkby stated that the current language stating that School Committee members whose terms are coterminous could not be appointed to the Committee which seems to prohibit the School Committee to appoint the most suited candidates if their terms were coterminous. Ms. Casey shared that the By-law Committee was concerned about the length of most school building projects and didn't want two new Committee members to join in the middle of the project. Ms. Jessica Reilly felt that requirement may be too prescribed and the School Committee does plan for transition of projects and new members are elected.

Ms. Reilly also stated that the statement with “pertinent experience in education, if possible” as it relates to a Committee appointment removed the School Committee’s judgment and opened the School Committee appointment to be challenged. Ms. Kirkby stated there should be trust that elected School Committee members would appoint SBC Committee members who will have knowledge of our schools and education.

Mr. Timothy Knight felt strongly that the pertinent experience in education, if possible language be removed from the By-law. Ms. Casey stated that the intent education requirement was so Committees wouldn't duplicate appointments with the same background to facilitate diversity within the SBC.

Mr. Leo Brehm stated that it is important that the SBC has a variety of experiences that allows appropriate input into the process and the learning through the process. He also stated that even though someone may not have any experience with the building or even in the schools but are invested in the schools should be considered. Mr. Brehm suggested that it would be important within any version of the by-law to make sure there were no missing perspectives that could cause costly omissions as had been seen in other district building projects.

Mr. Leo Brehm left the workshop at 10:30 am.

Ms. Anna Mae O’Shea Brooke asked if this By-law was the first of its kind in the state. Ms. Reilly didn’t think so but would need to research for a definitive answer. Ms. Casey explained that the By-law Committee did research on how to develop a SBC and offered opportunities for the public to give input.

The Committee agreed on the concerns about the wording of the section that defined who the Committee could appoint to the SBC, as well as concerns about the exclusion of the School Committee and the Permanent Planning and Building Committee in the construction of the By-law.

The Committee was in agreement that the following phrases be struck from Article 14, Section 1.b.1:

- "whose terms are not coterminous"
- "with pertinent experience in education, if possible"

The Committee felt that the first restriction outlining who could be appointed from the School Committee to the School Building Committee was too restrictive and legislated a solution to a problem that doesn't exist. The Committee frequently makes decisions about how to overlap responsibilities to maintain continuity through turnover.

The second phrase was felt to give too much leeway for challenges to the appointments: the qualifier "pertinent" allowed for a wide range of interpretation as to what would constitute that level of experience, while the phrase "if possible" could potentially mandate that the Committee place a lesser qualified candidate with a traditional education credential over a candidate who could better represent the diverse voices of the community.

Mr. Callahan stated that he would support the suggested edits and could bring it to the Warrant Committee meeting for a vote to support these edits prior to the to the ATM. The By-law Committee does not have a meeting scheduled prior to the ATM so would not be able to vote to support the edits.

Mr. Leo Brehm left the meeting at 10:30 am and Mr. Timothy Knight left the meeting at 10:44 am.

The Committee also discussed its specific scope of responsibility regarding the potential burden that a 2/3 vote for all business of the SBC could potentially place on the efficient conduct of business. While the

quorum needed to run a meeting is 7, there must be a minimum of 8 voting members present to pass a motion and that would require that the vote be unanimous. The Committee thought to suggest that the by-law might want to outline certain actions of regular business that could require a lower bar to pass, i.e. approval of minutes. But, again, that is the SBC's responsibility and not one in which the Committee would have a specific stake.

Dr. Jeffrey Marsden thanked the By-law Committee for the work that they accomplished in a very short period of time. Dr. Marsden asked Ms. Casey where the Committee obtained MSBA data analysis the make up of SBC's in public schools. Dr. Marsden stated he was not looking to be a voting member of the SBC but the data presented by the By-Law Committee indicated that out of the 41 districts listed 30 allowed the Superintendent to be a voting member of their SBC's. Ms. Casey agreed that there are a lot of SBC's that do have Superintendents as a voting member.

Ms. Anna Mae O'Shea Brooke that she would vote to support the suggested edits to the By-law however she does not support the entire article.

A motion was made by Ms. Anna Mae O'Shea Brooke, seconded by Ms. Michelle Kirkby to strike the following phases be struck from Article 14, Section 1.b.1:

- "whose terms are not coterminous"
- "with pertinent experience in education, if possible"

and that the Committee's vote to request to amend the language within Article 14 1.b.1 did not imply the Committee's endorsement of Article 14..

**The motion passed unanimously by 3 yes votes.**

The Chair also took a Roll Call Vote for the motion:

- Michelle Kirkby -yes
- Jessica Reilly -yes
- Anna Mae O'Shea Broole - yes

**Additional Workshop Dates** - This was not discussed during the workshop.

**Next Meeting** – Before Annual Town Meeting May 9, 2022 at 6:15 pm

A motion was made by Ms. Anna Mae O'Shea Brooke, seconded by Ms. Michelle Kirkby to adjourn the workshop.

A Roll Call Vote was taken to adjourn the workshop.

- Michelle Kirkby -yes
- Jessica Reilly -yes
- Anna Mae O'Shea Broole - yes

The workshop was adjourned at 10:59 am.

## **EXHIBITS AND DOCUMENTS**

- Redlined Draft Warrant Article 14
- Final Warrant Article 14

Respectfully submitted,  
Andrea Moores  
Secretary

**Minutes Approved By School Committee: May 19, 2022**