

MEDFIELD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Session
May 19, 2022

PRESENT: Jessica Reilly - Chair
Leo Brehm - Vice Chair
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 Operation

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 pm after the Executive Session to discuss issues related to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body. (Medfield Teachers' Association Units A & B) and to discuss the reputation, character, physical condition or mental health, rather than professional competence, of an individual, or to discuss the discipline or dismissal of, or complaints or charges brought against, a public officer, employee, staff member or individual. The individual to be discussed in such executive session shall be notified in writing by the public body at least 48 hours prior to the proposed executive session; provided, however, that notification may be waived upon written agreement of the parties (Complaint against School Committee and Superintendent).

The Chair asked for Roll Call to begin the meeting:

- Leo Brehm - present
- Timothy Knight - present
- Anna Mae O'Shea Brooke - present
- Michelle Kirkby - present
- Jessica Reilly -present

PUBLIC INPUT (on matters not on the agenda)

Chris McCue Potts, 7 Curve Street, shared her thoughts with the School Committee about listening and taking the advice of the school attorney when given. She referenced a previous recommendation made by attorney, Andy Waugh, a few years prior when the Public Records and Open Meeting Laws changed, to put documents and the Public Records Officer name on the school website She also stated that at a previous School Committee Communication Workshop it was mentioned by a Committee member that the School Attorney advised the Committee to stay off social media because what is posted becomes public record. She stated that in the last determination by the Public Records Division confirmed that and that the Committee has a duty to make sure that records are maintained throughout the records life cycle including social media posts that have to do with business. These records need to be preserved and not deleted. Ms. Potts stated that she wanted to remind the Committee to take the advice they are paying for from the school attorney.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Regular Meeting 5/2/2022: The Committee only held an Executive Session on May 5, 2022 and did not return to an open session after the Executive Session was adjourned.

A motion was made by Ms Anna Mae O'Shea Brooke, seconded by Ms. Michelle Kirkby to approve the minutes from 3/8/2022, 4/7/2022, 4/14/2022, 4/29/2022, and 5/6/2022. It was noted that the minutes from 3/8/2022 and 4/7/2022 School Committee and School Committee Joint Meetings were provided by the Town's minute service.

There were 4 yes votes and 1 abstention.

The motion passed.

Executive Session 4/14/2022, 5/2/2022 - (Tabled)

NEW BUSINESS

School Choice Public Hearing - presented by Dr. Jeffrey Marsden

A Roll Call was taken to open the School Choice Public Hearing:

- Leo Brehm - present
- Timothy Knight - present
- Anna Mae O'Shea Brooke - present
- Michelle Kirkby - present
- Jessica Reilly -present

Dr. Marsden shared the following with the Committee that each year school districts are required to take a vote not to participate in School Choice. This is a statutory requirement to hold a hearing and either vote not to participate or do nothing and become a school choice district. Dr. Marsden shared the following with the Committee regarding School Choice and made his recommendation for the District not to participate in the School Choice.

- The Department of Education has grouped districts together for comparison and Medfield has been grouped with Duxbury, Hingham, Groton-Dunstable, Norwell, Pembroke, Situate, Westwood, Westboro and Willmington. All of these districts but one has voted not to participate in School Choice.
- The surrounding towns that have also voted not to participate in School Choice are Dover, Walpole, Wellesley, Needham, Sherborn, Dover-Sherborn, Norfolk, Wrentham, King Philip, Norwood, Canton, Foxborough, Hopkinton, Sharon and Weston.
- Dr. Marsden explained that districts who participate in School Choice open up seats and students from other communities are selected for those seats by lottery. Districts are reimbursed \$5,000 per student by the state.
- He explained that Medfield would only be able to allocate seats in grades 8, 9 and 10. Dr. Marsden does not recommend participating in the School Choice program given the District's budget situation and current enrollment but participation is up to the School Committee.
- The state reimbursement of \$5,000 is much lower than the current per pupil expenditure which is over \$16,000.
- He explained that many Districts are struggling with students leaving their district to attend other schools which impacts the school budget. For example, Bellingham is currently losing approximately \$300,000 to \$400,000 per year and losing more students than they are bringing in. Holliston has been participating in School Choice since 1996 and at that time had over 270 kids

from other districts which equals 10% of their enrollment and has built that into their operating budget.

- Space availability also needs to be considered, especially with the new development happening in the Town now and in the future.

Ms. Jessica Reilly asked for public comment during the the School Choice Public Hearing:

Chris McCue Potts, 7 Curve Street, stated that she discovered data on the DESE website that shows how much Medfield has actually paid out to School Choice districts. She continued by stating that between 2015 and 2021 the District has paid \$316,829.00 in tuition for Medfield students to take advantage of school choice and go elsewhere. Ms. Potts expressed her disappointment that the School Committee does not request specific data to better understand School Choice and gave examples of the type of data that she would like to have presented at meetings when the Committee is discussing participation in School Choice.

A motion was made by Mr. Leo Brehm, seconded by Ms. Anna Mae O’Shea Brooke to close the School Choice Public Hearing for 2023.

The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Mr. Leo Brehm, seconded by Ms. Anna Mae O’Shea not to participate in School Choice for the 2022-2023 school year.

The motion passed unanimously.

Student Advisory – presented by High School Representatives

The following students were in attendance and shared their class updates with the Committee:

- Katherine Waters - Class of 2022
- Elizabeth Panciocco - Class of 2023
- Catherine Bannister - Class of 2024
- Sophie Shield - Class of 2025

The School Committee thanked the student representatives for the feedback, enthusiasm, positivity and contributions that they brought to the School Committee meetings this year.

Eversource Electric Vehicle Charging Stations – presented by Mr. Michael LaFrancesca and Ms. Susan McPhee from Spark Energy Conservation.

Ms. Susan McPhee from Spark Energy Conservation was in attendance to inform the Committee about the plans to bring Electric Vehicle Charging Stations to the High/Middle Campus and Wheelock Schools. Ms. McPhee is an independent contractor who works with seven different municipalities including Medfield on energy conservation and sustainability.

Ms. McPhee explained that the charging stations would be paid for by the Green Communities Grant that has been awarded to the Town. The charging stations are the least expensive part of the project. Eversource has a program called Make Ready that comes to municipalities and does everything needed to create space for the equipment to be installed which can cost anywhere from fifty to one hundred thousand dollars. The Town of Medfield has money available to them from the Make Ready Program. Ms.

McPhee explained that a positive vote from the Committee would allow the Town to take advantage of the free money that is available to them for this project. This will close out the current grant and then once the legislature approves the next round of funding the Town can apply for additional grants for future projects. She explained that the Make Ready fund is available and set aside to support three locations in town for Electric Charging Stations. The Selectboard voted at their last meeting to approve the municipal location and Ms. McPhee asked the Committee for their vote to support the school locations. She explained that future conversations will need to be had to decide how people can access the Electric Stations once installed.

Ms. Jessica Reilly asked if there was any data on energy costs and if this was something that needed to be decided today. Dr. Marsden explained that the Select Board would be developing a policy about this and it would make sense for the District to follow the policy they develop.

Mr. Leo Brehm explained that Electric Vehicle Charging Stations were included in the Dale Street school plans. Mr. Brehm supports the initiative but would want to have a policy on the charging for fiscal reasons.

Mr. LaFrancesca informed the Committee that the schools have locked in their electricity costs for the next three years so the schools electricity costs will not fluctuate. He also explained that there will be options for canopies soon which will also help reduce costs.

Ms. Jessica Reilly asked how long term maintenance and repair is addressed. Ms. McPhee stated that there are simple service contracts available.

A motion was made by Mr. Leo Brehm, seconded by Mr. Timothy Knight to accept the grant money for Electric Charging Stations from Green Communities and the agreement with Make Ready to do the site work for the Electric Charging Stations at the Middle/High School Campus and the Wheelock School and to authorize the Chair and the Superintendent to sign the agreement with Eversource.

The motion passed unanimously.

Follow up to Annual Town Meeting (Agenda Out of Order) - School Committee Discussion

Ms. Anna Mae O'Shea Brooke shared that she was disappointed that at the Annual Town Meeting it was perceived that the School Committee did not want anyone with an educational background on the new School Building Committee (SBC) when in fact the Committee wanted the ability to select people who the Committee thought were best qualified to represent the schools, which wasn't the intent of removing the wording from the by-law. She felt that the Committee's reasoning was lost in translation.

Ms. Michelle Kirkby shared her concerns about fulfilling the Committee's obligations to form a new SBC. She feels that it is important for the Committee to begin having conversations about outlining the framework for the new SBC taking into consideration the lifespan of an SBC and the appointments of School Committee members who cannot be coterminous. Ms. Kirkby made the suggestion to rotate the five School Committee members through the SBC for continuity.

Mr. Leo Brehm suggested that Committee members who are not on the SBC would benefit from attending the SBC meetings. He suggested that one permanent member and then rotate other members through. He

also shared that from his experiences on other school building projects the time commitment increases as the project is being built, weekly meetings are typical during the construction phase of the project.

Ms. Jessica Reilly stated that it is important for the Committee to manage all their transitions because there is no guarantee that members will continue to be on the School Committee.

Mr. Timothy Knight stated that the Committee has the ability to cycle members to help with workload but feels that continuity may be more important.

Ms. Anna Mae O'Shea Brooke was intrigued by the idea of cycling members but also stated that from her experience and the amount of work required of SBC members would make it difficult to onboard new members to bring them up to speed. The person who would transition would need to be up to speed prior to the transition. Her preference would be to have someone who wants to do it and is committed to see the project through to the end. Ms. O'Shea Brooke also suggested soliciting feedback from Mike Quinlan and Tim Bonfatii who work with SBC's on a regular basis.

Ms. Jessica Reilly pointed out that the Committee members who served on the SBC did not have time for other School Committee business due to the time commitment and the enormous amount of work required of the SBC.

Ms. Anna Mae O'Shea Brooke asked Mr. LaFrancesca his opinion on cycling members through an SBC. Mr. LaFrancesca explained that in his experience there have always been two School Committee members on the SBC and instances when a Committee member is not re-elected the School Committee has kept that person as a School Committee appointment to keep continuity for the duration of the project.

Ms. Michelle Kirkby wanted the Committee to think about a process for appointing SBC members and a timeline for selecting those members in conjunction with the Selectboard and Town Moderator to make sure that all twelve of the voting members are very well rounded and representative of the Town.

Ms. Jessica Reilly stated that it is important for the Selectboard, Town Moderator and the School Committee to have better communication between them.

Mr. Leo Brehm expressed his concerns about the current space issues at Dale Street and waiting six years for a new building will be problematic and the Committee should be thinking about this as well.

Ms. Anna Mae O'Shea Brooke made the suggestion that the application form should be universal and people who apply would select which group they are representing and the School Committee, Selectboard and Town Moderator could work together on the SBC appointments. The Committee agreed to let the Chair reach out to the Town Moderator and the Selectboard to start the ball rolling and Ms. O'Shea Brooke offered to take the lead on facilitating the groups to work together to create the new SBC.

Ms. Jessica Reilly opening the meeting to public comment on the follow-up to Annual Town Meeting

Chris McCue Potts, 7 Curve Street, stated that MSBA will typically informally notify the District several months prior to the official letter being received.

Dr. Marsden stated that the District did hear earlier last time and November/December is generally when the official letter would be received.

Reschedule June 2nd Meeting (Agenda Out of Order) – presented by Dr. Jeffrey Marsden

Dr. Marsden asked the Committee to reschedule the June 2, 2022 School Committee Meeting because it is scheduled for the same date and time as the MHS Senior Recognition Night.

A motion was made by Mr. Leo Brehm, seconded by Ms. Michelle Kirkby to reschedule the June 2, 2022 School Committee Meeting to Wednesday June 8, 2022.

The motion passed unanimously.

School Committee Meeting Dates 2022-2023 (Agenda Out of Order) – presented by Dr. Jeffrey Marsden

Dr. Marsden asked the Committee to approve the 2022-2023 School Meeting Dates as presented.

A motion was made by Mr. Leo Brehm, seconded by Mr. Timothy Knight to approve the School Committee Meeting Dates for 2022-2023 as presented.

The motion passed unanimously.

Summer Workshops/Retreat –Potential Vote (Agenda Out of Order) - presented by Ms. Jessica Reilly

The Committee discussed the following:

- Scheduling a School Committee Retreat
- Topics to be discussed at the retreat
 - Strategic Plan (Fall 2022)
 - School Building Project
- Scheduling Workshop for August
- Potential strategies for the MASC Policy Project
- Operating protocols/Meeting agendas

Mr. Timothy Knight made the suggestion to schedule a meeting with the Committee's MASC representative before assigning tasks related to the policies. Ms. Jessica Reilly felt it important to have a workshop to discuss the roles and responsibilities of the School Committee to help the Committee be more effective and to ensure equitable distribution of tasks. The Committee will reach out to the Chair with their vacation schedules and dates available.

MHS Student Learning Trip Approval – Italy 2023 – presented by Dr. Jeffrey Marsden

Dr. Marsden asked the Committee to approve the MHS Student Learning Trip to Italy in the Spring of 2023 as presented. This ten day trip to Italy is a joint effort between the Art and Latin Department.

A motion was made by Mr. Leo Brehm, seconded by Ms. Anna Mae O'Shea Brooke to approve the spring MHS Student Learning Trip.

The motion passed unanimously.

Other items since posting on May 17, 2022 - None

OLD BUSINESS

FY23 Budget Update – presented by Dr. Jeffrey Marsden

Dr. Marsden reported that at the Annual Town Meeting the operating budget and the capital budgets were approved for fiscal year 2023. There was no additional information to report.

School Committee Subcommittees and Roles - Potential Vote – presented by Ms. Jessica Reilly

The Chair made the suggestion to dissolve the Budget Subcommittee since the work of the Committee is complete.

A motion was made by Mr. Leo Brehm, seconded by Ms. Michelle Kirkby to dissolve the Budget Subcommittee for fiscal year 2023.

The motion passed unanimously.

The Committee decided not to dissolve the Policy Subcommittee at this time.

The Chair informed the Committee that a treasurer needs to be designated.

A motion was made by Mr. Leo Brehm, seconded by Ms. Anna Mae O'Shea Brooke to appoint Ms. Michelle Kirkby as the School Committee Treasurer.

The motion passed unanimously.

Donations – There was none at this time.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

Dr. Jeffrey Marsden shared that there is no updated DESE COVID-19 Guidance at this time. He informed the Committee that he participated in a meeting with the Commissioner in early April and he was informed to expect a spike in cases in mid/late April which would trail off for the summer and to expect another spike in October/November. He explained that the District has had an increase in cases and the District continues to use mitigation measures. Pooled testing is still offered even though participation has dropped and the state will continue to pay for it for the remainder of the school year and they will not support testing next school year. He also informed the Committee that Kathy Thompsen will be coordinating another vaccine clinic before the end of the school year.

Updated guidance on holding meetings pursuant to the Act Extending Certain COVID -19 Measures – presented by Ms. Jessica Reilly

Ms. Reilly wanted the committee to be aware of the expiring COVID19 emergency remote measures and wanted to make the Committee aware of changes that may be made. The Committee was in agreement

that having the remote option to maximize participation. Ms. Reilly explained that the Committee may need to have a future discussion about updating procedures to align.

Dr. Marsden gave a brief description of the Superintendent Parent Coffee that was held on May 18, 2022.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEM (anticipated schedule)

- 2022 Retirements (June 8)
- MASC School Committee Roles Responsibilities Workshop with Jim Harkins (June 8)
- End of Year Updates PTO/MCPE/SEPAC/MMA (June 8)
- Luisa Brooke/Deeya Yadapadithaya Senior Project (June 8)
- Future Meeting Agenda Organization - Mr. Timothy Knight (June 8)

Next Meeting – June 8, 2022

A motion was made by Ms. Anna Mae O’Shea Brooke, seconded by Mr. Timothy Knight to adjourn the meeting.

The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:31 pm.

EXHIBITS AND DOCUMENTS

- Meeting Narrative 5/19/2022
- Eversource Electric Charging Station Documents
- DRAFT Board of Selectmen/School Committee Minutes 3/8/2022
- DRAFT Board of Selectmen/School Committee Listening Session Minutes 4/7/2022
- DRAFT 4/14/2022 Regular Meeting Minutes
- DRAFT 4/29/2022 Regular Meeting Minutes
- DRAFT 5/6/2022 Workshop Minutes
- MHS Trip to Italy
- DRAFT School Committee Dates 2022-2023
- Guidance on COVID-19 Remote Meeting Measures
- 940 CMR 29.10 Remote Participation
- School Committee Meeting Video:  School Committee (05/19/2022)

Respectfully submitted,
Andrea Moores
Secretary

Minutes Approved by School Committee: June 8, 2022