

GATEWAY REGIONAL DISTRICT SCHOOL COMMITTEE

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2013

**Montgomery Town Hall
7:30 P.M.**

(A PORTION OF THIS MEETING MAY BE HELD IN EXECUTIVE SESSION)

I. OPENING OF MEETING

BLANDFORD
Michele Crane

CHESTER
Scott Warner
Martha Otterbeck

HUNTINGTON
Ron Damon
William Hathaway
Jeff Wyand

MIDDLEFIELD
Sarah Foley

MONTGOMERY
Anne Marie Buikus
Sandra Haas

RUSSELL
Ellen Hirtle
Ruth Kennedy
Mary Ann Laurie

WORTHINGTON
Sue Levreault
Gretchen Eliason

SECRETARY
Stacy Stewart

CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION
Dr. David B. Hopson, Superintendent
Stephanie Fisk, Business & Finance

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL
Amy Fouracre, Chs, Lit, MS Assistant Principal
Joanne Blocker, Director of Academics
Megan Coburn, Chs, Lit, MS Principal
Jason Finnie, High, Jr. High School Principal
Wendy Long, District Grant Writer

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

OTHERS: _____

7:35 p.m. II. PUBLIC INPUT FOR ITEMS NOT LISTED ON AGENDA

- Ms. McVeigh, Chair of Huntington Finance had some concerns about signing and returning the consent order. Has the DEP ever notified the schools in the past about the well and if so when.
- Mrs. Eliason said it has been a long standing issue not critically important but there were actions the DEP wanted the district to take. We had a flooding incident, which required us to start to make the upgrades. We can make a copy of the consent order if you'd like to see it.
- Mrs. Kennedy said this started in 2004. She has all the paperwork and she would be happy to share it.
- Ms. McVeigh asked if this could have been considered as part of the building refurbishments.
- Dr. Hopson said there were a number of minor issues we've been working on with DEP. Long term we may need to drill another well or connect to Huntington. It was too late to include in the building project. We have been working with DEP because of the flooding due to the broken pipe. DEP wants us to move the wellhead above flood plain. We've installed a bulk head. Variable speed pump or pressure tanks in the buildings may be used instead of the tank.
- Mrs. McVeigh asked for the approximate cost to comply.
- Dr. Hopson said the bulk head is about \$5,000. We are using extraordinary maintenance. It should be about \$20,000 over two years.
- Mrs. McVeigh asked how long we have to complete the consent order.
- Dr. Hopson said two years. There are no fees incurred and it will not interrupt services.
- Mrs. Thielan said she receives emails about grants and is wondering if she should send them to Mrs. Long. She's received a CIC community innovations challenge grant and thermal renewable energy projects. She will forward them to Mrs. Long.
- Peter Francis from the Westfield Evening news announced he would be recording the meeting.

III. STUDENT COUNCIL INPUT - None

IV. CONSENT ITEMS 9/25/13 (Enc.)

Mrs. Kennedy made a motion seconded by Mrs. Levreault to accept the minutes of 9/25/13.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 9 Nays Abstain 4 Absent

V. PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS/RECOGNITIONS

A. Pupil Services Update –Postponed to a later date.

VI. COMMUNICATIONS

A. Student Representative - None

B. School Committee

- Mrs. Buikus thanked Dr. Hopson and Mrs. Stewart for putting the administrative contracts on the website. She asked if the benefits attachment “A” could be added.

C. Chairperson - None

D. Superintendent – Central Office Update (Enc.)

- Dr. Hopson asked if anyone had any questions about the Iris scan project. The Sheriff’s office will do both Hampden and Hampshire. Dr. Hopson is going to move forward with this because it is voluntary. It will only take a couple of minutes if the sheriff’s department has the information ahead of time.
- Mrs. Kennedy asked if they could have a presentation
- Dr. Hopson said the iris is the only thing that does not change. The information goes to one location the National Missing Children Organization.

Mrs. Buikus made a motion seconded by Mrs. Levreault to go into executive session at or before 9:00 for the purpose of negotiations preparation, not to return to open session.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 14 Nays Abstain Absent (Roll Call Vote)

Yeas: Scott, Mary Ann, Martha, Sue, Sandi, Ruth, Sarah, Anne-Marie, Ellen, Michele, Ron, Jeff, Bill, Gretchen

E. Business Manager

- Ms. Fisk is going to apply for a grant opportunity, up to \$5,000 for risk management. It will supply a step stool for every classroom. It will be about \$4,700 for all classrooms. She will let school committee know if we get the grant.

F. Administration

- Wendy Long said October 24 is the kickoff event to 50th with a visit from Ed Webster who was part of an international team who climbed Mt. Everest. He will be speaking to students and giving a presentation to the public.
 - Mrs. Eliason said Mrs. Winer handed out a form to help sponsor the event. They should email Mrs. Long soon. Mrs. Long said there has been wonderful support.
 - Mrs. Blocker said next Tuesday, October 15 is the big professional development day. It is the first full day of professional development. There are twenty-six sessions. A lot of in-house staff members are presenting. Members of the school committee are more than welcome to attend.
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VII. AD HOC COMMITTEE REPORTING

A. Superintendent’s Evaluation Subcommittee

- They met tonight. At the last meeting they had a management review. This year management review questions will be sent out with the answers, goals and the meeting minutes so everyone can see the discussion that happened. Last year we did surveys on the computer. This year we are going to do a presentation on the survey and then we get to take the survey.

B. Finance Subcommittee

- Next meeting is scheduled for October 23rd. Mrs. Kennedy is requesting to have a sub finance committee meeting earlier at the Russell town hall because they should be looking at the budget. There is time as we are in the 30 days. We rushed last time and we got three no votes. She doesn't want us voting on this tonight; not till we have an opportunity to digest this. She feels from now on anything that comes out budget wise should go to the subcommittee first. So they can do their job and when they get their part done, take it to the full committee.

C. Policy Subcommittee

- On the agenda

D. School Committee Goals Subcommittee

- Student Performance Goals

VIII. OLD BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS**A. FY '14 Budget (Version 5.0) Update (Enc.)**

- Mrs. Eliason thanked Dr. Hopson and Ms. Fisk for preparing these. She feels this is a very good overture for the towns, and she hopes they will be happy with it.

Mrs. Crane made a motion seconded by Mrs. Hirtle to approve version 5.0.

- Mrs. Levreault is just wondering what if we are cutting the gymnastic's team due to low numbers.
- Dr. Hopson said the athletic director and principal met with everyone who was interested in the team and there wasn't enough interest to have one.
- Mrs. Levreault asked if they could you still participate in individuals. When we look at our school district and our offerings we've eliminated something. There are a lot of gymnasts that come out of the dance center.
- Dr. Hopson said it didn't really make sense. He said we've talked about E & D and we still have the rest of the year. If we take this out of the budget and it is not filled we reduce E & D. These are all things we wouldn't know we wouldn't know if we weren't in this situation. Taking it out now, doesn't prohibit a gymnastics team next year.
- Mrs. Levreault asked how many kids.
- Dr. Hopson thinks Mrs. Garriepy, a long term coach said 4 or 5.
- Mrs. Otterbeck thinks a student went to compete on a different team.
- Mrs. McVeigh thought in the past if you didn't have a team you could participate on another team.
- Mrs. Thielan said when the other 5 towns voted the budget, they voted 2.1. Since then the minimum has been changed by the state. That changed all the figures to the towns. Why are we voting on something that changes?
- Mrs. Eliason said we have a schedule to follow.
- Mrs. Thielan feels the fact that the government/legislature take so long is disturbing.
- Dr. Hopson said the House and Senate can set a resolution to set Chapter 70 funds. If you find extra money you are going to want it.
- Mrs. Thielan said it's too confusing as to what the school is going to receive. How can we cut \$106,000. Why didn't we know that before.
- Dr. Hopson said you have to know in August. We can only do this now because of the situation we are in right now. We never know this until a student either shows up or doesn't show up.
- Mrs. Thielan said you can't plan unless you vote for more than you think.
- Ms. Fisk said one of the things we spoke to the legislature about is setting tuition especially setting deadlines.
- Dr. Hopson said it is no different than having a student that is in district and needs to go out.
- Mrs. Thielan feels education should be paid by tax money not reserves.
- Ms. Fisk said we have a deadline for vocational, but we don't find out until August if they've been accepted.
- Mr. Wyand said \$379,000 is next years' E & D. What is the percentage we used this year to offset the budget, what will it be like next year, and how much will we have left for next year.
- Ms. Fisk, we haven't been certified yet because we have no budget. This year we used \$650,000 for next year about (4% from his past year's budget) and you will use it to offset the budget the following year.

- Dr. Hopson said when you certify this year's budget next fall, then we will know, but it will be applied to the FY16 budget.
- Ms. Fisk said we used roughly 85% of our E & D to offset the budget.
- Mr. Wyand said next year if there is no increase in the total budget, the towns will still have to contribute more.
- Mr. Damon hopes we don't lose sight of the primary reason for E & D. It is the only thing to fall back on without having to go to the towns and ask for more money if there is a problem like mold.
- Mrs. Eliason said we do have a limit and any money over that has to be turned back to the towns.
- Dr. Hopson said the school has to go to the towns to use the E & D.
- Mrs. Eliason said it comes off the next year's bill.
- Mrs. Eliason understands Mrs. Kennedy's comments. Maybe in subsequent years after September then that is a good time to start thinking about how we look at the budget.
- Mrs. Kennedy confirmed that the when a town votes down the minimum, it is a no vote.
- Mrs. Hirtle thanked Dr. Hopson for putting the revised budget together. She hopes the three towns appreciate what the district is doing to lower the budget, but they need to know that school committee is here for the kids of the district.
- Mr. Wyand said a few line items changed, but there was no change to the bottom line
- Ms. Fisk said it is just a time allocation for the adjustment counselor.
- Mr. Wyand asked if we are keeping the technology director in the budget because we are not sure what we are doing with it right now.
- Dr. Hopson said yes.
- Mrs. Kennedy thanked Ms. Fisk for putting together the comparisons.
- Mrs. McVeigh asked if that is the anticipated salary for director of technology.
- Dr. Hopson said yes.

Mrs. Crane made a motion seconded by Mrs. Hirtle to approve version 5.0.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 12 Nays Abstain 2 Absent

B. Approval of Policy BDA - School Committee Organizational Meeting

- Mrs. Eliason said this came up when we expected to have our reorganization at a certain time and we didn't. We found out there was a pre-existing policy. This is the revision of the existing policy. The change is we are waiting for officers to be seated, but re-organization will take place no later than the first meeting in July.
- Mr. Wyand clarified the pre-existing policy said the meeting was in June, but that was before all towns have new members seated.

Mrs. Kennedy made a motion seconded by Mrs. Levreault to accept the Reorganization Policy as written.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 14 Nays Abstain Absent

C. Supervision/Evaluation Update

- Meeting with the association Friday.
- Negotiations subcommittee has not met – Needs to be posted. Meet after meeting to organize a time.

IX. NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS - None

X. OTHER BUSINESS/ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

Future Agenda Items

MCAS Update – October 23

Technology Update– October 23

Auditor's Report – November 13

XI. INFORMATION

Information

Superintendent's Corner September 30, 2013

October School Committee Meetings
No School October 14 and 15
Custodian reflects on changes at Gateway
Chester PTO Heating Oil Raffle

Warrants

AP# 1026 \$163,141.76 PR# 06 \$360,328.19
AP# 1028 \$29,032.615 PR# 07 \$364,274.47

XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mrs. Buikus made a motion seconded by Mrs. Levreault to go into executive session at or before 9:00 for the purpose of negotiations preparation, not to return to open session.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 14 Nays Abstain Absent (Roll Call Vote)

Yeas: Scott, Mary Ann, Martha, Sue, Sandi, Ruth, Sarah, Anne-Marie, Ellen, Michele, Ron, Jeff, Bill, Gretchen

XIII. ADJOURNMENT at 10 p.m. unless extended by majority vote.

Mr. Damon made a motion seconded by Mrs. Crane to adjourn at 8:37 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Stacy L. Stewart,
School Committee Secretary