

# MINUTES OF THE REGULAR WOODBRIDGE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

Monday, December 16, 2019

Stella Library Media Center

**CALL TO ORDER:** Dr. Fleischman, Chair called the meeting to order (7:00 PM).

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Dr. Steven Fleischman, Chair; Mr. Dan Cowan, Ms. Maegan Genovese, Secretary; Ms. Lynn Piascyk, Vice Chair; Dr. David Ross, Ms. Joyce Shavers, Dr. Michael Strambler (7:05 PM) and Dr. Jeffrey Townsend.

**STAFF:** Mr. Robert Gilbert, Superintendent; Cheryl Mammen, Special Services Director; Al Pullo, Director of Business Operations/Services; Analisa Sherman, Principal; Doreen Merrill, Assistant Principal; and Marsha DeGennaro, Clerk of the Board.

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:** Mary Broderick, CABA Search Consultant, Sandy Stein, BOS Liaison; Larissa Crocco, Kristin DeManche, Kim Franklin, Emily Jacober, Monique MacDonald, Lori Patrick, Elisa Rosner, Nancy Smerekanicz, Ashley Wagner, Shannon Wyman, Cathy Zdrowski, Teachers; Lauren Esposito, PTO and Pua Ford, Jennifer Gelbrand, Bettina Thiel, community.

**CORRESPONDENCE** – None

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Ms. DeManche expressed concern regarding the elimination of her position in the 2020/21 Superintendent Budget Proposal, a position which she has held for 19 years. A detailed overview of her position responsibilities was provided inclusive of her direct counseling support and crisis intervention to students throughout the entire district in both regular and special education, community outreach liaison with various public agencies locally as well as state-wide, development and implementation of IEP goals for students, PPT and 504 consultation, sexual harassment training for Grade 6 students, family referrals for rental and fuel assistance. Disappointment was expressed for not being provided advanced notification of the elimination nor was an opportunity provided to brainstorm with various PLC groups to develop a different outcome for position retention and/or realignment of responsibilities. The Board was urged to consider alternative reductions instead of elimination of this position.

Ms. Franklin stated her displeasure with consistency in the behavior protocol system currently in place. It is her belief that students are physically aggressive to other students as well as staff. There is also a lack of consequence and clarity on use of the conduct referral form by staff.

Ms. Gelbrand described a bullying incident that her child endured on Bus 31. Bus safety is the responsibility of the school and there is a level of frustration that exists for the lack of cameras on buses, the lack of adult supervision on a 40 minute unstructured bus ride and for protecting all students. It is hoped that in the future funding for bus cameras will be taken into consideration to ensure this type of situation does not happen again.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

### **MOTION #1 – CONSENT AGENDA**

Move that we approve the consent agenda as presented.

Ms. Piascyk

Second by Mr. Cowan

**UNANIMOUS**

## **REPORTS**

*PTO Update* – No Report

*Principal Search Profile* – Ms. Broderick from CABA reviewed the Leadership Profile, position posting and provided an overview for how the profile and posting were developed in consult with the committee. The application deadline will be January 24 with the posting published on Tuesday, December 17. A suggestion was made to alter the Leadership Profile on Page 11, under *Has Broad Base of Knowledge of Educational Issues*, third sentence after “*inspire*” add “*all students*”.

**MOTION #2 – LEADERSHIP PROFILE**

Move that we approve the Beecher Road School Principal Leadership Profile presented by CABA as modified by the friendly amendment.

Ms. Piascyk  
Second by Ms. Genovese  
**UNANIMOUS**

Superintendent Report – Superintendent Gilbert highlighted the town-wide LED initiative, school closing decisions, implementation of the HVAC Phase II work over the holiday break, green team initiatives, numerous holiday programs and the 2020/21 Capital Budget presentation to the joint Boards of Selectmen and Finance, which contains funding for technology infrastructure only.

BRS Update – Ms. Sherman apprised the Board of two visiting authors on November 21, the November 27 professional development half-day session which focused on Math instruction/differentiation, the successful Artic Book Fair, the winter concert and the donation to the BRS Library from Representative Themis Klarides of *Grace Goes to Washington*.

2020/21 Calendar – Superintendent Gilbert noted that the calendar was developed in collaboration with other BOWA districts, is quite similar to the current calendar and mirrors the Amity calendar whenever possible. Each of the BOWA districts adopted their calendars at their respective December board meetings. It was suggested that a survey be conducted with all of BOWA to ascertain parent preference for vacation schedules. As the calendar for the 2020/21 was already developed it was suggested that the survey be designed for informational purposes and conducted prior to development of the 2021/22 school year calendar.

**MOTION #3 – 2020/21 CALENDAR**

Move that we approve 2020/21 Calendar as presented by administration.

Ms. Piascyk  
Second by Ms. Genovese  
**UNANIMOUS**

2020/21 Budget – Superintendent Gilbert outlined his proposed budget for the 2020/21 school year. The budget eliminates the 0.5 Social Work position, adds a school psychologist as well as a 0.5 Speech Language Pathologist and a teacher in Special Education. The proposed budget is \$15,317,523 which is an overall budget increase of 0.76% from the current year allocation. The budget is predicated on current student and staffing needs. Discussion ensued for addressing student behaviors, classroom safety for both students and staff and allocation of available resources for student programming. Administration was urged to exhaust other cost saving measures such as consolidation of grounds maintenance, finance/business office functions etc., to avoid the identified staff elimination in Social Work. It was also noted that it is unrealistic to expect the education budget to come in at a zero percent increase as our student population continues to rise, teacher arbitration awarded a contractual increase of 4.9%, special education services change throughout the year and vendor services have annual increases. Regardless of the Town’s position, educational programming has mandated requirements and contractual obligations that must be adhered to and zero percent is not feasible.

**MOTION #4 – 2020/21 BUDGET**

Move that we approve the Superintendent’s 2020/21 Budget as presented.

Ms. Piascyk  
Second by Mr. Cowan  
Dr. Fleischman, Mr. Cowan, Ms. Piascyk, Dr. Ross, Dr. Strambler and Dr. Townsend  
Ms. Genovese, Ms. Shavers

**IN FAVOR:**  
**ABSTAIN:**

***MOTION PASSES 6-0-2***

Upcoming Meeting Topics – the Strategic Plan update should be similar to prior years, although this plan will be slightly different as it starts to move us into the next three years. Mid-Year Evaluation of the Superintendent – it was noted that the 2019/20 Superintendent’s contract stipulates the evaluation format and if the Board prefers a different format that would not occur until the 2020/21 contract. Desire was expressed for inclusion of a 360 degree review/performance process.

Facilities Committee – Ms. Piascyk reviewed the December 13 meeting which discussed the town LED lighting project, completion of asbestos surveillance and fire alarm/radon testing, replacement of the heat value in the Assistant Principal’s office, building-wide filter replacements and commencement of the HVAC Phase II work during the December break.

Finance Committee – Ms. Shavers reviewed the December 9 meeting which reviewed the monthly financials and a draft of the 2020/21 Superintendent’s proposed budget.

Curriculum Committee – Ms. Piascyk noted this committee will meet on December 19 with a presentation on TAG. The January 16 meeting will focus on the math curriculum inclusive of enrichment and differentiation.

CABE Liaison – Ms. Genovese indicated the next legislative breakfast will be held after the start of the year and noted recent policy highlights.

**PUBLIC COMMENT** – None

**MOTION TO ADJOURN:** (9:32 PM)  
Dr. Fleischman  
Second by Mr. Cowan  
**UNANIMOUS**

Recorded by Marsha DeGennaro, Clerk of the Board