Chairman Thomas F. Murphy, Jr. called this meeting of the School Committee to order at 7:00 p.m. in the School Committee Room, Administration Offices, 123 Cambridge Street, Burlington, Massachusetts. Present: Mrs. Kristin Russo, Mr. Stephen Nelson, Mrs. Christine Monaco, and Ms. Martha Simon. Superintendent Eric Conti, Assistant Superintendent Patrick Larkin, Director of Operations Bob Cunha and Finance Manager Nichole Coscia also present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by Mr. Nelson and seconded by Mrs. Monaco to approve minutes of 3/20/18; motion carried 5-0-0.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

INFORMATION/REPORTS

Student Representative

Absent.

Subcommittee Reports

Nothing to report.

Ways & Means

Nothing new to report.

INSTRUCTION/TECHNOLOGY

BHS DECA Club Student Travel - Approval

BHS DECA students and their advisor BHS teacher Krista Anderson provided a brief description of their participation in the recent Massachusetts state competition, which qualified them to compete at the international competition and career development conference in Atlanta, GA on April 21-26. The School Committee congratulated students on their accomplishments and wished them luck at the international competition. The Committee also thanked Ms. Anderson for her efforts and offering this program on leadership. Moved by Mr. Nelson and seconded by Mrs. Monaco to approve out-of-state travel for DECA students and chaperones to Atlanta, GA on April 21-26; motion carried 5-0-0.

COMMUNICATION

Introduction of New MSMS Principal

Dr. Conti introduced new middle school principal Cari Perchase, who will start on July 1. The School Committee welcomed and congratulated Ms. Perchase.

OLD BUSINESS

Elementary Planning for Success Second Reading

The four elementary principals were in attendance at the March 20 meeting to review their updated Planning for Success document. Moved by Mr. Nelson and seconded by Mrs. Russo to approve the elementary planning for success school improvement plan; motion carried 5-0-0.

NEW BUSINESS

FY19 School Budget Wrap Up

Dr. Conti summarized the FY19 Budget process explaining, it is a rebuilt process from scratch and distributed four pages of financials outlining: local education budget and percentage, and per pupil cost identified by student enrollment in each school. The original FY19 budget request was $4 million over the recommended guideline of a 3.35% increase. Administration prioritized people and program to make cuts some of which included: contraction of staff, utilizing retirements, applying a $150K offset from the Before & Afterschool program, reducing purchase of Chromebooks by $10K, and identifying only three new positions (a nurse, teacher for Fox Hill, and Special Education teacher for Pine Glen).

The School Committee commented: it will be a challenging budget year with increasing student enrollment and a decreasing budget allocation, expressed concern that the budget guideline is decreasing each year, but noted that overall the town supports schools very generously. They further commended Ms. Coscia, Dr. Conti and Mr. Cunha for their work in putting together a new budget process for the school department. Ways & Means member Sue Harrigan commented that FY19 is a difficult, very tight budget year and was happy how Ms. Coscia identified a per pupil cost based on school enrollment and how the budget was put together.

The Superintendent explained that the scope of the Accommodated account was expanded beyond the initial agreement with the Board of Selectman; there was a growing group of students needing services and an in-district program was created without communication to town government. This program saved the town approximately $600 - $700K in out-of-district tuitions. Mrs. Monaco explained that the DSC program was built as an extension of

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1 Local Education, Per Pupil Cost, Categorized Budgets
the preschool to allow students to remain in district schools and thus avoid out-of-district tuition costs. Dr. Conti suggested that the School Committee meet with the Board of Selectman to discuss the expansion of the accommodated account agreement to include the DSC program at Pine Glen, which the School Committee was in favor of.

Dr. Conti reviewed two pages of financials for Accommodated account expenditures and offset costs. The guideline for this account was an 8.5% increase and the FY19 budget request is for a 14.6% increase of $1,399,307 for a total of $10,975,670. The School Committee commented: the accommodated account agreement was put in place because of the volatility and lack of control of expenses for students requiring specialized services and programming, the uncertainty of students moving into town needing required services, expressed regret at not being able to meet guideline but by law the school district has to provide and pay for special education services and placements for students. Dr. Conti replied to an inquiry that any Medicaid reimbursement funds go directly to town accounts. Ways & Means member Diane Creedon also explained that the town is responsible for services to special education students from the age of three through 22.

Public Hearing FY19 School Budget

Moved by Mrs. Monaco and seconded by Mr. Nelson to open a public hearing for the FY19 School Budget; motion carried 5-0-0. No one from the public spoke during the public hearing. Moved by Mrs. Monaco and seconded by Mr. Nelson to close the public hearing for the FY19 school budget; motion carried 5-0-0. Moved by Mrs. Russo and seconded by Mrs. Monaco to approve a FY19 School Budget Salary Account of $44,098,918; motion carried 3-0-2 Mr. Murphy and Mr. Nelson abstained. Moved by Mrs. Russo and seconded by Mrs. Monaco to approve a FY19 School Budget Non-Salary Account of $7,268,738; motion carried 5-0-0. Moved by Mrs. Russo and seconded by Mrs. Monaco to approve a FY19 School Budget Total Operating Budget of $51,367,656; motion carried 5-0-0. Moved by Mrs. Russo and seconded by Mrs. Monaco to approve a FY19 School Budget Special Education Accommodated of $10,975,670; motion carried 5-0-0.

The Superintendent explained that town government has requested the school committee vote to submit a FY18 omnibus article, as there is not enough remaining funds in the accommodated account to meet expenses including: preschool health care, change in student placement services, student move ins, and a reduction in circuit breaker reimbursements. Moved by Mr. Nelson and seconded by Mrs. Russo to submit a FY18 omnibus article of $870,000 to fund the shortfall in the accommodated account; motion carried 5-0-0. The School Committee commented: there is no practical way to budget for unexpected expenses, this account was budgeted conservatively, and they don’t recall ever submitting an omnibus article.

Mr. Cunha informed the Committee that the town had requested that the schools submit a reduced amount of projects and warrant article funding requests in order to enable the town to purchase a sidewalk plow, which will also benefit the schools. He distributed and reviewed a chart identifying options to spend the proposed reduced warrant article funds and recommended option 2, which would reduce the Francis Wyman air conditioning project by $200,000 and request the additional funding next year. In response to the Committee, Mr. Cunha explained that 10 classrooms would be air conditioned, it would leave 10 remaining classrooms to be air conditioned next year, and he anticipates that interconnecting doors would be left open in order to share air conditioning. Moved by Mr. Nelson and seconded by Mrs. Monaco to reduce warrant article 19-03 Francis Wyman air conditioning by $200,000 to an amended amount of $170,000; motion carried 5-0-0.

BHS Statement of Interest - Approval

Dr. Conti explained that a seventh statement of interest is being submitted for the renovation of Burlington High School. Dr. Conti read the following:

Resolved: Having convened in an open meeting on March 27, 2018 prior to the SOI submission closing date, the School Committee of Burlington, in accordance with its charter, by-laws, and ordinances, has voted to authorize the Superintendent to submit to the Massachusetts School Building Authority the Statement of Interest Form dated April 3, 2018 for the Burlington High School located at 123 Cambridge Street, Burlington, MA which describes and explains the following deficiencies and the priority categories for which an

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2 Accommodated Account Costs
3 Warrant Article Expenditure Options
application may be submitted to the Massachusetts School Building Authority in the future. Priority #3, Prevention of the loss of accreditation; Priority #5, Replacement, renovation or modernization of school facility systems, such as roofs, windows, boilers, heating and ventilation systems, to increase energy conservation and decrease energy related costs in a school facility; and Priority #7, Replacement of or addition to obsolete buildings in order to provide for a full range of programs consistent with state and approved local requirements. The specific project will update classrooms and replace science labs to be a more effective learning environment, replace aged out heating and ventilation/cooling equipment that is original construction (1971), replace interior building components (Lockers, Lighting, Fire Alarm, etc.) and provide updated security improvements which will extend the life of the existing facility; and hereby further specifically acknowledges that by submitting this Statement of Interest Form, the Massachusetts School Building Authority in no way guarantees the acceptance or the approval of an application, the awarding of a grant or any other funding commitment from the Massachusetts School Building Authority or commits the City/Town/Regional School District to filing an application for funding with the Massachusetts School Building Authority. Moved by Mrs. Russo and seconded by Mr. Nelson to authorize the Superintendent to submit a statement of interest for Burlington High School; motion carried 5-0-0.

Mid-Year Review of Business Office Procedures

Superintendent Conti provided an overview of new procedures implemented in the Business office including, the minimizing of cash procedures and completion of two audits to address concerns. He proposed to the Committee; an expenditure for a deeper dive audit on a three-year rotational basis for five revolving accounts: Before & Afterschool, Cafeteria, Rentals, Athletics and Music. The School Committee commented: it’s a good idea as it takes away the uncertainty about these accounts, and there has not been enough oversight in the past. In response to the Committee: Dr. Conti replied that by July 1, warrants for School Committee approval will be separated by being identified as either an operating or revolving account expense. He further noted that student activity accounts for: the high school are in order, accounts at the middle school need to be addressed, and at the elementary level account funds are relatively low, but will need to be closed out and new accounts set up. He stated one of the goals is to bring back the auditing firm one year prior to the scheduled review. Ms. Coscia noted that bond applications have been filled out for administrators and Tony Roselli has been contacted to provide training on new accounts to principals and secretaries in April.

Dr. Conti explained it has been suggested that the school department eliminate the acceptance of cash. The School Committee discussed the possibility of eliminating cash or severely limiting the acceptance of cash by the school district. Ms. Coscia explained that currently any cash collected is being turned over and locked up daily by each school secretory. School Committee comments included: some parents don’t have access to checking accounts or a credit card, potential for an online system to collect funds for example of field trip funds, expressed concern of more login and password set ups for parents, the difficulty of totally eliminating the acceptance of cash, the school department has taken identified findings and made needed corrections and the new systems put in place show good protections and reconciliation of funds including cash. Dr. Conti recommended bringing in auditors Powers & Sullivan early to review the music revolving account for 2018 (outside of the three year rotation). Mrs. Monaco commented that on social media it has been reported that there is $14,000 missing over three years in the music revolving account, she clarified this mis-statement by stating that this amount was accounted for by $8,000 paid in wages to ticket booth personnel and $6,000 in receipts. Ms. Creedon explained that one Ways & Means member had suggested the elimination of cash collection by the school department, and it wasn’t a recommendation by the Ways & Means committee or sub-committee.

Out-of-State Travel - Approval

Moved by Mr. Nelson and seconded by Mrs. Russo to approve out-of-state travel to Philadelphia, PA for Brighid Boyle on June 26-27, 2018; motion carried 5-0-0. Moved by Mr. Nelson and seconded by Mrs. Russo to approve out-of-state travel for Kerri Lamprey and Diana Marcus to Provo, Utah on April 11-13, 2018; motion carried 5-0-0. Moved by Mr. Nelson and seconded by Mrs. Russo to approve out-of-state travel for Principal Sullivan, Rick Sheehan and Deb Deacon to Chicago, IL on July 10-13, 2018; motion carried 5-0-0.

Dr. Conti informed the Committee that he will schedule an agenda item for the April 10 School Committee meeting for a vote on the date of BHS graduation in June due to the 6 snow days used this school year.
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chairman Murphy announced that the Committee had a need for executive session to discuss contract negotiations and the approval of executive minutes and MGL Ch. 30A, Section 21 (a) to comply with or act under the authority of any general or special law – specifically GL. c 214, §1B – Privacy because holding it in an open session would have a detrimental effect on the position of the public body. The School Committee will only return to public session for the purpose of adjournment. Moved by Mrs. Russo and seconded by Mrs. Monaco at 9:45 p.m. to go into executive session to discuss contract negotiations and review executive minutes. Mrs. Monaco, aye; Mrs. Russo, aye; Mr. Murphy, aye; Mr. Nelson, aye; Ms. Simon, aye. Motion carried 5-0-0.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Mr. Nelson and seconded by Mrs. Russo at 10:45 p.m. to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried 5-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Gilbert          Date submitted: 4/10/18
Recording Secretary         Date approved: 4/10/18