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SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

DATE: Tuesday, September 12, 2023

TIME: 7:00 pm

LOCATION: 123 Cambridge Street, Burlington, MA 01803
Administrative Offices, School Committee Room

ATTENDEES

MEMBER(S) PRESENT: Chair, Ms. Martha Simon, Vice Chair Ms. Melissa Massardo, Ms. Chris Monaco, Ms. Katherine Bond, Mr. Jeremy Brooks, Superintendent Dr. Eric Conti, Assistant Superintendent Dr. Lisa Chen, Finance Director, Ms. Nichole Coscia, Director of Operations Mr. Bob Cunha and BHS Student Representative Mr. Matt Shannon

MEMBER(S) REMOTE: None

MEMBER(S) ABSENT: None

GUEST(S) PRESENT: DiNisco Design Ms. Donna DiNisco, Dore & Whittier Mr. Steve Brown

GUEST(S) REMOTE: Mr. Steve Morin from Ways and Means and Mr. Mohammad Hassan from Thought Exchange

PUBLIC PRESENT: Parent Mr. Ben Agati and Pine Glen/BEA Ms. Christine Sheppard

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Parent Mr. Ben Agati

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Simon called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., and read the following statement: The public can also access this meeting via WebEx Technology. The Burlington School Committee will hear public comment in person and virtually. Meetings are also broadcast live on Burlington Cable Access TV (BCAT) as usual. Chair Simon reminded participants that comments and statements are limited to 3 minutes each. Meeting Access Code: Meeting number (access code): 2346 354 9523 | Password: Tuesday.

EQUITY STATEMENT

Educational equity means **that every child belongs and receives whatever support he/she/they need to develop his/her/their full academic, emotional, and social potential to learn and thrive every day.** This begins with kindness and valuing the humanity of every child or individual.

APPROVAL of WARRANT

Ms. Bond made a motion to approve the warrant as submitted; seconded by Ms. Massardo.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Mr. Brooks - aye, Ms. Massardo - aye, Ms. Bond - aye, Ms. Simon - aye.

Motion Carried 5:0:0.

APPROVAL of MINUTES

Ms. Bond made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of 8/22/23; seconded by Ms. Massardo.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Mr. Brooks - aye, Ms. Massardo - aye, Ms. Bond - aye, Ms. Simon - aye.

Motion Carried 5:0:0 by Roll Call Vote.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr. Ben Agati asked about the results of the BEAM Study.

Dr. Conti stated the report was made public and he will send it to him.

INFORMATION / REPORTS

Student Report

BHS Student Representative, Mr. Matt Shannon, stated BHS held its Activities Fair and there were a lot of sign-ups.

Subcommittee Reports

Mr. Brooks reported that the Recreation Commission is adding increased soccer capacity for youth soccer. In addition, the Recreation Commission will be putting up portable lights on the field.

Ms. Simon updated the committee on the Youth and Family Services related to the SEL programs.

Ways and Means

Mr. Morin has no update at this time.

Other Announcements

Ms. Monaco stated that Dr. Ed Weiner and the Board of Health will be coordinating a program for the BPS students to get vaccinated.

TAKEN OUT OF ORDER

Fox Hill School Building Committee – Thought Exchange/Public Forum

Mr. Steve Brown from Dore & Whittier stated that the School committee has engaged Thought Exchange as a software service survey system in order for the public to provide feedback relative to building one school or combine the Fox Hill and Pine Glen schools.

Mr. Mohammad Hassan is the building committee's contact person for Thought Exchange.

Ms. Simon stated the question, "what are some important priorities and perspectives to consider as we plan for improvement(s) of our school buildings?" All committee members agreed to keep this question.

Ms. Simon then read the introduction of the survey by Mr. Brown:

As we look at our current school facilities' infrastructure, we are seeking input from the entire Burlington community. We are currently studying the possibility of:

- 1) a new standalone Fox Hill Elementary School, maintaining the existing Pine Glen E.S "as-is", AND*
- 2) a new elementary school to include both Fox Hill and Pine Glen schools, but maintaining them as independent schools under one roof.*

If the solution for the Fox Hill School project is to construct a new facility for Fox Hill School only, the Pine Glen School will remain "as is" until such time that a direction is determined to update the existing Pine Glen facility. A high school building committee has just been formed and the options to update the high school will not be known for some time [Based on rough estimates at this point of the feasibility study phase, the estimated impact on the residential tax rate for Option 1 is \$233, and \$335 for Option 2].

Discussion ensued.

Mr. Brooks make a motion to approve the initial question, as presented, "what are some important priorities and perspectives to consider as we plan for improvement(s) of our school buildings." This motion was seconded by Ms. Monaco.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Mr. Brooks – aye, Ms. Massardo – aye, Ms. Bond – aye, Ms. Simon – aye.

Motion Carried 5:0:0.

Discussion ensued relative to the wording "as is" relating to Pine Glen in the introduction.

Mr. Brooks made a motion to approve the introduction, as presented, with the inclusion of the optional statement addressing the tax rate and adding the language for the average residential tax payer; seconded by Ms. Massardo.

No vote taken.

Ms. Monaco motioned to amend the introduction and take out the word "as is" from both paragraphs where it appears; seconded by Ms. Bond.

No vote taken.

Ms. Massardo made a motion to amend the introduction to remove the "as is" in the number 1 and leave the sentence in the second paragraph, "Pine Glen School will remain "as is" until such time that a direction is determined to update the existing Pine Glen Facility" and the rest of the wording will remain the same; this motion was seconded by Ms. Monaco.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Mr. Brooks – aye, Ms. Massardo – aye, Ms. Bond – aye, Ms. Simon – aye.

Motion Carried 5:0:0.

Ms. Monaco withdrew her previous motion to "take out the word "as is" from both paragraphs where it appears."

Mr. Brooks made an amendment to his previous motion, to approve the introduction with the "as is" removed in number 1 and with the inclusion of the optional statement addressing the tax rate and adding the language for the average residential tax payer; seconded by Ms. Massardo.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Mr. Brooks – aye, Ms. Massardo – aye, Ms. Bond – aye, Ms. Simon – aye.

Motion Carried 5:0:0.

Ms. Donna DiNisco from DiNisco Design stated that after the introduction it will read, “as we look at our current school facilities infrastructure we are seeking input from the entire Burlington community. We are currently studying the possibility of: 1. A new standalone Fox Hill elementary school maintaining the existing Pine Glen elementary school and, 2. A new elementary school to include both Fox Hill and Pine Glen schools at the Fox Hill site, but maintaining them as independent schools under one roof. If the solution for the Fox Hill school project is to construct a new facility for the Fox Hill school only, the existing Pine Glen will remain “as is” until such time that a direction is determined to update the existing Pine Glen facility. A high school building committee has just been formed and the options to update the high school will not be known for some time. Based on rough estimates at this point of the feasibility study phase the existing impact on the average annual residential tax bill for option 1 is \$233 and \$335 for option 2.”

Ms. DiNisco suggested taking the quotation marks out of the “as is” so it does not stand out as much.

Ms. Monaco made a motion to remove the quotation marks on “as is.” This motion was seconded by Ms. Bond.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Mr. Brooks – nay, Ms. Massardo – nay, Ms. Bond – aye, Ms. Simon – nay.

Motion Not Passed 2:3:0 - Quotation marks will not be removed.

Discussion ensued regarding clarifying the introduction and questions for the Thought Exchange process.

Ms. Bond made a motion for an option to opt out of answering certain questions on the survey; seconded by Ms. Monaco.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Mr. Brooks – nay, Ms. Massardo – nay, Ms. Bond – aye, Ms. Simon – nay.

Motion Not Passed 2:3:0 – There will be no option for not answering certain questions on the survey.

Mr. Brooks made a motion to include the sentiment questions, as presented; seconded by Ms. Massardo.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Mr. Brooks – nay, Ms. Massardo – nay, Ms. Bond – aye, Ms. Simon – nay.

Motion Not Passed 2:3:0 – the sentiment questions will not be included.

LEARNING, EQUITY, THRIVING

Dr. Chen’s Report

Dr. Chen reported on two big things she is working on in the curriculum pre-K-12. In particular, she is working with the teachers and curriculum coordinators on math and how students are achieving math and she is also using the same process for science. Dr. Chen stated there is an event being hosted on Tuesday, October 10th from 6–7:30 p.m., at the Francis Wyman school to explain our new SEL curriculum and parents and guardians are invited. Another event being hosted for the social/emotional curriculum at the middle school on October 19th from 6-7 p.m.

MASC Policies Sections G – 2nd Reading

Dr. Conti stated that Policies Section G is a second reading and recommended approving this section.

Ms. Monaco made a motion to approve Policies Section G, with the changes discussed; seconded by Ms. Massardo.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Mr. Brooks – aye, Ms. Bond – aye, Ms. Simon – aye.

Motion Carried 5:0:0.

MASC Policies Sections H – 2nd Reading

Dr. Conti stated that Policies Section H is a second reading and recommended approving this section.

Motion was made by Ms. Monaco to approve Policies Section H, with the changes discussed; seconded by Mr. Brooks.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Mr. Brooks – aye, Ms. Bond – aye, Ms. Simon – aye.

Motion Carried 5:0:0.

MASC Policies Section J File #JIFB, only

Dr. Conti discussed Policies Section J File #JICFB Bullying Prevention and Dr. Conti recommended that the committee approve this one policy with a formal vote, as a second reading.

Motion was made by Ms. Monaco to approve Policy Section J File #JICFB Bullying Prevention, with the changes discussed; seconded by Mr. Massardo.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Mr. Brooks – aye, Ms. Bond – aye, Ms. Simon – aye.

Motion Carried 5:0:0.

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FACILITIES / FINANCE

Summer Projects – Update

Mr. Cunha reported on the summer projects as follows: The A/C at MSMS is complete; the stair treads at Francis Wyman is complete/ the grease trap at Francis Wyman is complete; the tree removal at Pine Glen is complete; the Pine Glen office renovation and the BHS lower library offices are on-going and should be completed next week; the Francis Wyman playground is under construction and the Francis Wyman intercom has gone out to bid. The MSMS scoreboard is installed but the Bluetooth is not yet operational.

Ms. Monaco asked about funding for A/C at Pine Glen.

Dr. Conti stated that Ms. Coscia wrote to Town Counsel. The answer is that the money approved last May by Town Meeting probably can be used for phase I and we can request the additional money for phase II, but it is recommended going back to Town Meeting.

Dr. Conti noted that the vote for school HVAC was the intent of town meeting. He will go to January Town Meeting to ask specifically for the change.

BHS - Update

Dr. Conti stated the first meeting of the BHS Building Committee will be held as a hybrid meeting at 123 Cambridge Street in the School Committee room on Thursday, September 14, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.

Pine Glen – Update

No updates at this time.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion was made by Ms. Bond to enter into Executive Session at 9:23 pm; seconded by Mr. Brooks.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Mr. Brooks – aye, Ms. Massardo – aye, Ms. Bond – aye, Ms. Simon – aye.

Motion Carried 5:0:1 by a Roll Call Vote.

Ms. Monaco made a motion to end Executive Session and return to Regular Session for the sole purpose of adjournment; seconded by Ms. Bond.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Mr. Brooks – aye, Ms. Massardo – aye, Ms. Bond – aye, Ms. Simon – aye.

Motion Carried 5:0:1 by Roll Call Vote.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Ms. Bond to adjourn at 9:51 p.m.; seconded by Ms. Monaco.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Mr. Brooks – aye, Ms. Massardo – aye, Ms. Bond – aye, Ms. Simon – aye.

Motion Carried 5:0:1.

SUBMITTED

Respectfully,
Marianne Fabbri
Recording Secretary

Date Submitted: 9/26/23

Date Approved: 9/26/23