

**EASTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
EASTON, MA**

Minutes of School Committee meeting, May 21, 2009, Moreau Hall Library, convened at 6:35 p.m. Present Caroline O'Neill, Colleen Less, Jane Martin, Rebecca Turley, Dr. Michael Green and Dr. William Simmons. Dawn Boynton was absent.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

None.

MINUTES:

On a motion by Mrs. Martin, seconded by Mrs. Turley, and with a 4-0 vote, the Minutes of 4/29/09 were approved.

**OLD BUSINESS:
Schedule of Payments:**

Circulated for signatures.

Municipal Building Committee Update:

Dr. Green stated that the Certificate of Substantial Completion for the high school has been received. As he had mentioned at a previous meeting, all areas have been reinspected and monetized. There is a small number of items that still remain on the punch list, and these items are being addressed.

Update on the Stadium and Fields Project:

Dr. Green was happy to report that the bleachers and press box are up. The top stone has been spread, graded and rolled. In addition, the binder course of pavement has been completed for the track and all the walkways. In closing, Dr. Green said that the project is moving along very well.

**NEW BUSINESS:
Resignations:**

None.

NEW BUSINESS(continued):

Appointments:

None.

Retirements:

World Language Teacher, EMS:

Chair O'Neill read the letter from Ann Marie Barry of her intent to retire on June 30, 2009, from her position as World Language Teacher at the Easton Middle School. Chair O'Neill remarked that Ann Marie was a wonderful language teacher.

On a motion by Mrs. Martin, seconded by Mrs. Turley, and with a 4-0 vote, the Committee accepted with regret the retirement of Ann Marie Barry as World Language Teacher.

PUBLIC HEARING: School Choice for 2009-2010:

Dr. Simmons stated that the Public Hearing for School Choice is a two-step process. A date needs to be established by June 1st for the Committee to vote whether to participate in School Choice or not to participate. If no hearing is held, then the school system automatically becomes a participant of School Choice.

Dr. Simmons recommended to the Committee not to participate in School Choice for the 2009-2010 school year with the caveat that, with the two buildings finished and the state of the economy, the Committee might start in November to begin researching and gathering information. He said it would be deserving of a discussion as there might possibly be space to accommodate School Choice for the following school year. Dr. Simmons pointed out that the Committee can determine if one school or a particular grade be involved in School Choice.

The Chair entertained any input from the audience to which there was none.

Mountain Bike Club Proposal:

Dr. Simmons remarked that the proposal for the Mountain Bike Club is being brought forth tonight by Joyce O'Connor and George Allen as the result of interest expressed on the part of some students.

Mountain Bike Club Proposal(continued):

Joyce stated that mountain biking is a popular sport throughout districts. Research shows that students active in this sport do better in school. This is a very physical activity, so the students get plenty of exercise. It promotes team building and is great for those students who don't become athletes or take part in extra-curricular activities but enjoy the exercise, etc.

George stated that he is a certified bike patrol officer. He added that this is a great opportunity for those who don't fit into other sports. The students feel good about themselves. George said that this type of activity creates a team atmosphere. Students will be taught simple maintenance on bikes, riding techniques and safety. Classroom work will be involved.

Dr. Simmons said that in anticipation of any questions about liability, Dr. Green worked with Town Counsel on the liability coverage and developed a Voluntary Release Form for participants, as General Liability insurance only applies to third party claims.

Mrs. Martin asked when the activity would take place to which Joyce replied after school while the daylight is longer and on weekends contingent upon dry conditions.

Joyce said this club will be open to students in Grades 9-12. She went on to say that there are trails at Borderland State Park that they will be going on.

George added that there are several other great spots in town too, i.e. NRT. He said that this area is especially good for training and checking skill level.

Mrs. Turley asked how the training will take place to which George replied that the kids will meet in groups. The kids need to sit down with us in a classroom atmosphere and review all the necessary factors.

On a motion by Mrs. Martin, seconded by Mrs. Less, and with a 4-0 vote, the Committee approved the Mountain Bike Club.

The Committee thanked Joyce and George for bringing this proposal before them.

Food Service Bid/Contract:

Dr. Simmons included in the Committee's packet the comparison of the three respondents to the Food Service Bid. Year two and Year three of the Food Service Contract is brought before the Committee for re-approval. RFPs were sent out according to the state guidelines and three responded. This was different from other years when we've only had one respondent. Dr. Simmons continued that Marilyn Gordon has the oversight for the food service program.

On a motion by Mrs. Martin, seconded by Mrs. Turley, and with a 4-0 vote, the Committee recommended that the food service contract be awarded to the current vendor, Chartwells, for \$130,637 and to return to the Board for approval for the following two years.

Chair O'Neill inserted that Penny Spellberg of Chartwells has done an outstanding job.

Mrs. Martin asked if costs will change.

Dr. Simmons replied "no", as we are locked in based on the performance of the vendor.

National History Day Trip Request:

John Giuggio and Bryan McSheffrey are requesting permission for four students and one teacher, that being Bryan, to attend the National History Competition in Washington, DC in June.

John said that he is very proud of the 8th graders. The entire class takes part in the National History Day competition by creating a variety of historical projects. The 8th grade team teachers select the best projects to compete in a grade-wide competition. Those winners move on to the South Shore District Competition, then to the State competition and, lastly, to the National level which is held in Washington, DC.

National History Day Trip Request(continued):

This year there are four students and three projects moving to the National Competition. The students being Olivia Marcus, Keara Benton and Gwen Kozak, and Denali Bennett.

John stated the competition is held at the University of Maryland campus at College Park. The students would leave on Sunday, June 14, and return on Thursday, June 18th. John commented that this is a great tribute to our Social Studies Department and Department Chair Debbie Salisbury.

Bryan added that this competition has taken off the last two years. The projects reflect hard work by these students. Bryan also stated that the students will be transported by a coach bus which will be picking up additional students along the way.

Dr. Simmons is recommending that the costs for the teacher be taken out of the activity fees or a comparable source.

On a motion Mrs. Less, seconded by Mrs. Martin, and with a 4-0 vote, the Committee approved the National History Day Trip to Washington, DC from June 14 -18 with the costs to be paid from the activity fee account or a comparable source.

BICO Collaborative Inclusion Motion:

Dr. Simmons stated that Easton became a member of BICO and represent 1 of 13 member communities. There is a requirement that each of the member School Committees need to include Walpole Public Schools and Walpole School Committee in BICO.

On a motion by Mrs. Martin, seconded by Mrs. Less, and with a 4-0 vote, the Committee voted to "amend the preamble of the existing agreement of the Bi-County Collaborative to include the School Committee of the Town of Walpole, MA. "

2009-2010 Budget Update:

Dr. Simmons gave a brief update on the 2009-2010 budget. He stated that most towns have done what Easton has done, to postpone Town Meeting and deal with non-money articles and then will reconvene June 8th.

2009-2010 Budget Update(continued):

Dr. Simmons said that he is moving forward with local negotiations, even though he is awaiting the Senate vote.

Mrs. Less asked if the budget numbers are not agreed upon what will happen.

Dr. Simmons replied that the Town will have an option to vote to reconvene to June 15th. or to reconvene in September.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS:

Town Meeting Update:

Remarks under Budget section.

NEAS&C Five-Year Progress Report of OAHS:

Dr. Simmons said that the high school had to submit a Five-Year Progress Report and remarked on the outstanding evaluation that was received from NEAS&C. Some things that had to be addressed, i.e. renovations and expansion of the high school, the staffing and the curricula. Dr. Simmons remarked that the report highlights excellence at the high school and the ability of the building projects to meet the demands of the accreditation report.

SCHOOL COUNCIL PLANS – PRESENTATIONS:

This is always an exciting time of year for the Committee to listen to the School Council Plans and see the enthusiasm displayed by the principals as they present their plans. The principals reflect on goals that were achieved for the previous year, those set for the upcoming year, and highlights activities that took place throughout the year via powerpoint. This evening also affords the Committee the opportunity to interact with the Principals as to the operation of each of the buildings. A question and answer period followed each of the presentations.

F. L. Olmsted:

On a motion by Mrs. Martin, seconded by Mrs. Less, and with a 4-0 vote, the Committee approved the F. L. Olmsted School Council Plans for 2009-2010.

Moreau Hall:

On a motion by Mrs. Less, seconded by Mrs. Martin, and with a 4-0 vote, the Committee approved the Moreau Hall School Council Plans for 2009-2010.

SCHOOL COUNCIL PLANS – PRESENTATIONS(continued):

Parkview School:

On a motion by Mrs. Less, seconded by Mrs. Martin, and with a 4-0 vote, the Committee approved the Parkview School Council Plans for 2009-2010.

Unanticipated Expenses:

None.

SUPERINTENDENT’S NOTES:

Dr. Simmons spoke of the DOE Chapter 70 State Aid shortfall. He referred to a memo dated 5/13/09 requesting an application for the FY09 SFSF grant be submitted by 5/22/09, and we met the deadline.

Dr. Simmons brought to the Committee the partnership with the Town regarding the health insurance and transportation expenses which the grant money will be applied to.

The downside of all of this, Dr. Simmons pointed out that the government and legislators are using the stimulus money to fill the gap.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE ISSUES:

Mrs. Martin thanked Mike Green for attending the K-8 PAC Meetings which was well received by the PAC members and a nice start to Mike’s new position as Superintendent.

Chair O’Neill thanked Mrs. Martin for initiating this.

Mrs. Less talked about the TEMPO Awards clearly denotes a connection with the music students and their instructors. Mrs. Less thanked TEMPO for their continued support during the year.

Chair O’Neill stated that Monogram Night was held at which athletes are recognized by their coaches. She commented on the enthusiasm displayed by the parents.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

On a motion by Mrs. Less, seconded by Mrs. Martin, and with a 4-0 vote, the Committee entered into Executive Session at 9:12 p.m. for the purpose of reviewing the Minutes of 4/1/09 and to discuss contract negotiations through collective bargaining.

OPEN SESSION:

The Committee returned to Open Session at 9:15 p.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES:

On a motion by Mrs. Martin, seconded by Mrs. Less, and with a 4-0 vote, the Executive Session Minutes of 4/1/09 were approved.

ADJOURNMENT:

On a motion by Mrs. Martin, seconded by Mrs. Turley, and with all members in agreement, the meeting was adjourned at 9:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

William J. Simmons, Ed.D., J.D.
Recording Secretary