

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE
MELROSE SCHOOL COMMITTEE
November 1, 2011**

A meeting of the Melrose School Committee was held this date in the Aldermanic Chamber of Melrose City Hall with the following members present: Ms. Driscoll, Ms. Thorp, Mr. Lehman, Ms. Kourkouvelis, and Mr. Constantine.

Also in attendance were Superintendent Joe Casey and Business Manager Greg Zammuto.

Ms. Driscoll called the meeting to order at 7pm. Ms. Driscoll noted that this meeting is being tape-recorded.

Ms. Thorp moved, Ms. Casatelli seconded and with six (6) votes in the affirmative (Ms. Driscoll, Ms. Thorp, Mr. Lehman, Mr. Constantine, Ms. Kourkouvelis and Ms. Casatelli), none (0) in the negative, and one (1) absent (Mayor Dolan), it was

VOTED: To open the Public Comment period

Public Comment

With no members of the public coming forward, Ms. Thorp moved, Ms. Casatelli seconded with six (6) votes in the affirmative (Ms. Driscoll, Ms. Thorp, Mr. Lehman, Mr. Constantine, Ms. Kourkouvelis and Ms. Casatelli), none (0) in the negative, and one (1) absent (Mayor Dolan), it was

VOTED: To close the Public Comment period

(Mayor Dolan entered the meeting at 7:03pm)

Report of Student Representatives

MHS Student Representatives Emily Conn and Jared Gardiner reported as follows: A successful Grade 8 Parent Information Night was held on October 27 with information available on the MHS website; Grade 7 Parent Information Night is scheduled for Thursday, December 1; new Spring Week activity of creating a float for the Pep Rally will replace hall decorating for each class; important dates – Quarter 1 closes November 3, Parent Portal opens November 14, report cards available November 15, Parent Conferences on November 17 (website sign-up), football field officially opens November 4, MCAS re-test November 9-16, and schedule for tournament bound teams is pending.

Announcements – Superintendent of Schools

Superintendent's Academic Excellence Award Presentation - Mr. Casey introduced MHS students Emily Conn and Charles Brickley who were recognized with Academic Awards of Excellence this year by the MA Association of School Superintendents. The Superintendent also noted that the Governor has issued a proclamation that November is Family Literacy Month and noted our programs and efforts to help our students become literacy lifelong leaders.

Announcements - School Committee Chair

Superintendent's Search Update - Ms. Driscoll presented meeting minutes from last week's public forum and asked that any Member changes be sent to her for inclusion in a revised document to be reviewed at our next meeting

(Mayor Dolan left the meeting at 7:18pm)

Ms. Thorp moved, Mr. Constantine seconded that the Melrose Superintendent Search Committee, made up of members listed in the Proposal detailed in the October 26, 2011 draft Superintendent Search packet document, is charged with reviewing submitted materials and interviewing candidates based upon the School Committee's approved selection criteria and qualifications to ideally recommend no less than three and no more than five qualified finalists for the position of Superintendent of Schools to the School Committee.

Ms. Kourkoumelis questioned the appropriateness of PTOs selecting parent representatives on the Search Committee. It was decided that these parent representatives will be chosen from the Site Councils instead. Following discussion, Ms. Driscoll will add revision "expert in the field of Education" as a friendly amendment.

(Mayor Dolan returned at 7:24pm)

Members further discussed need for inclusion and representation of all groups, and retaining privacy of candidates employed in present jobs.

Mayor Dolan amended, Ms. Thorp seconded and it was unanimously

VOTED: To change "PTO" in the parent area of document to "Site Council"

Return to original motion –

With seven (7) votes in the affirmative, the motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Thorp moved, Mayor Dolan seconded and with six (6) votes in the affirmative (Ms. Driscoll, Ms. Thorp, Mr. Lehman, Mr. Constantine, Ms. Casatelli and Mayor Dolan), and one (1) in the negative (Ms. Kourkoumelis), it was

VOTED: To form a 3-member Search Committee Selection Panel of Subcommittee Chairs to put forward a recommended list of Search Committee candidates

Process of selecting two Committee Members to serve on the Search Committee was questioned. Ms. Kourkoumelis moved that two School Committee members be chosen by random lottery rather than being chosen by the Selection Panel, no second

Members suggested that the bargaining unit, Principals, and staff should have the opportunity to come before us and share their feelings in this process.

Mr. Lehman moved, Ms. Thorp seconded and it was unanimously

VOTED: To request information from the bargaining unit

Consent Agenda

Consent Agenda items include October 2011 Maintenance Report, October 2011 Personnel Report, October 2011 Budget Summary, MHS Field Trip Requests (Attachments #6 and 7 per Agenda), and November 1, 2011 Warrants (*Attachment #8 per Agenda*).

Ms. Thorp moved, Mr. Lehman seconded and it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve Consent Agenda

Subcommittees (Committee of the Whole

Finance and Facilities – Christine Casatelli/ Carrie Kourkoumelis

Energy Update – City Energy Efficiency Manager Martha Grover and consultant Steve Weisman presented potential energy investment plan for the City and district. Currently they are sharing information and laying the groundwork for plan which involves a single contractor to complete projects in multiple buildings under a single contract which would reduce consumption and costs.

Budget Process/ Timeline - Mr. Zammuto presented a revised budget document offering more transparency and improved timeline (*Attachment #9 per Agenda*)

Policy and Planning – Kristin Thorp and Mayor Dolan

Self Evaluation Timeline – Ms. Thorp referenced this document (*Attachment #10 per Agenda*) which contains the instrument Members voted on, and noted that Committee will perform the evaluation at our next meeting.

Communications Plan Update – Mr. Casey reported on our plan (*Attachment #11 per Agenda*) to update our present website instead of building a new one, including new student and parent portals, inclusion of class calendars, update of district calendars, and a general de-cluttering of information, with additional web initiatives planned. Mr. Casey also noted that we are working on improved signage, and our parent survey slated for October has been postponed until a later date. He also noted that Jorge Pazos may bring a proposal to hire a part-time webmaster to help us accomplish improvements on the website

Activities Fund Policy #3201 – Ms. Thorp noted that this policy directs what we do with class funds after the class has graduated, and is taken from MASC. Mr. Zammuto endorsed that the Committee approve this policy.

Mayor Dolan moved, Mr. Lehman seconded and it was unanimously

VOTED: To approved the Activities Fund Policy #3201

Authority and Organization of the Committee Policy #6401 – This was an informational item only.

School Committee Member Ethics Policy #6206 – Ms. Thorp noted that this revised policy represents an opportunity to be explicit about the different responsibilities between the Superintendent, Superintendent’s staff, and Committee members.

Mr. Lehman moved to approve, Ms. Driscoll seconded.

Member discussion included adherence to confidentiality, addressing potential conflicts, and possible perception of retribution if matters are not handled correctly, and policy structure was clarified. Suggested change in wording from “Chief Administrator” to “Superintendent” was agreed to which Mr. Lehman and Ms. Driscoll agreed to.

With six (6) votes in the affirmative (Ms. Thorp, Mr. Lehman, Mr. Constantine, Ms. Driscoll, Mayor Dolan and Ms. Casatelli) and one (1) in the negative (Ms. Kourkoumelis), the motion passed.

Electronic Communications/Social Media Policy - Ms. Thorp welcomed broad discussion on this policy. Policy has not yet been reviewed by legal counsel, but we have had some feedback from the public.

Mr. Lehman endorsed the policy, and Ms. Casatelli noted need to include no expectation of privacy as website is district property.

2012-2013 School Year Calendar – Ms. Thorp referenced proposed district calendar for next year noting it is similar to this year.

Mayor Dolan moved, Ms. Driscoll seconded and it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve 2012-2013 School Calendar

Minutes of School Committee Meeting Policy #6510 - Ms. Thorp reported that our legal counsel advises that Executive Session minutes be vetted through her before they are posted on the district website. Ms. Thorp also endorsed, as does Jorge Pazos and the Communications Working Group that we post documents online for two years and save older information on C D for reference and safekeeping. Ms. Kourkoumelis advocated for retaining archives beyond two years in the interests of making information accessible without a cumbersome process for requesting information from the superintendent's office, as is the case currently.

Mr. Lehman moved, Ms. Casatelli seconded to keep original document, add Ms. Kourkoumelis’ Executive Session minutes piece, but not keep items older than two years on the website.

Ms. Kourkoumelis noted that currently we charge the public too much for information requested, and many district retain older information online.

With seven (7) votes in the affirmative, the motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Dolan moved, Ms. Thorp seconded and it was unanimously

VOTED: To open the Public Comment period

With no members of the public coming forward, Ms. Casatelli moved, Ms. Thorp seconded and it was unanimously

VOTED: To close the Public Comment period

Ms. Thorp moved, Mr. Lehman seconded and it was unanimously

VOTED: To adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 9:20pm.