Salem School Committee

Meeting Minutes

Monday, June 6, 2016

A regular meeting of the Salem School Committee was held on Monday, June 6, 2016 at 7:30 p.m. in the School Committee Chambers at Collins Middle School, 29 Highland Avenue, Salem, MA.

**Members Present**: Dr. Brendan Walsh, Ms. Rachel Hunt, Ms. Mary Manning, Mr. Patrick Schultz, and Kristine Wilson.

**Members Absent:**  Mayor Kimberley Driscoll, Mr. James Fleming

**Others Present**: Ms. Margarita Ruiz, Superintendent, Kate Carbone, Assistant Superintendent, Margaret Marotta, Assistant Superintendent, Philip Littlehale, School Business Manager, Dr. Jill Conrad, Chief of Operations Strategy, Chief of Communications Kelley Rice.

This meeting was televised on SATV and these minutes were transcribed by Eileen Sacco

**Call to Order**

Mayor Driscoll called the Regular Meeting of the Salem School Committee to order at 7:30 p.m.

**Approval of the Agenda**

Dr. Walsh moved to approve the agenda as presented. Ms. Wilson seconded the motion. The motion carried.

**Recognition of Retirees**

Dr. Walsh read the list of employees retiring from the Salem Public Schools this year and presented them with City Seals in appreciation of their service to the Salem Public Schools. He congratulated them on their accomplishments and wished them well in their retirement.

**Questions and Comments from the Audience**

There were no questions or comments from the audience at this time.

**Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the Regular School Committee Meeting held on May 2, 2016 were presented for approval.

Ms. Hunt moved approval, Ms. Wilson seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Dr. Walsh moved to approve the minutes of the May 2, 2016 Regular School Committee meeting. Ms. Wilson seconds the motion. The motion carried.

Ms. Hunt moved approval, Ms. Wilson seconded the motion. The motion carried.

**Action Items**

1. Deliberation and Vote of the approval of the JROTC Trip to Camp Edwards in Bourne, Ma., June 27-July 1, 2016

Ms. Hunt moved approval. Ms. Wilson seconded the motion. The motion carried (3-2) with Ms. Manning and Mr. Schultz opposed.

1. Deliberation and Vote to approve the Memorandum of Understanding with Salem State University regarding the Principal position at the Horace Mann Lab School

Ms. Manning moved approval. Ms. Hunt seconded the motion.

Discussion:

Ms. Ruiz addresses the School Committee explains that we have always had a great partnership with Salem State University and explains that the Memorandum of Agreement before the School Committee this evening lays out an agreement with Salem State University regarding the principal position at Horace Mann Lab school. She explains that the principal of the Horace Mann will have a dual role that being the principle of the Horace Mann in the Executive Vice President of the partnership with Salem State in the film’s public schools. She explains that the principle of Horace Mann will remain an employee of Salem State University and the salary will be paid in full by Salem State University.

Ms. Ruiz explains the principal hiring process under this agreement and notes that there is a maximum of three two-year terms for the position of principal under this agreement. She stated that she feels that this is an incredible opportunity for our district to really think of Horace Mann as really one of the areas where a partnership with Salem State University is focused, and she is sure that she speaks for the University and the district that this is going be a win-win situation for all. She also stated that this will be an amazing opportunity for the students and the staff at Horace Mann who will benefit from the incredible resources at the University.

Mr. Schultz asked how much influence over practices at the lab school will the University will have and will the practice differ from the district noting instruction. Ms. Ruiz stated that the school leader will ensure that the priorities of the district are being met at the school and in conjunction with that, being the Executive Vice President of the partnership the Principal will be the dual keeper of the interest of both the University in the district. She explained that the Principal will be reporting to the superintendent and will be evaluated by the superintendent so that if there are questions concerning practices that are being established in the school that are not in line with the district she would have the opportunity to address those matters. She noted that she and her team would be supervising the position.

Ms. Hunt stated that this is a really exciting opportunity to really bring the university back into the school and she was happy to see the provision that if there is not a right fit that there is a process to address noting that it is a really important provision because when it is the right fit it’s a tremendous benefit.

Ms. Ruiz stated that she agreed and states that there was a lot of discussion about that during discussions on the MOA. Ms. Hunt stated that in the MOA she didn’t really see how they would bridge the gap if there is not a leader from Salem State questioning whether Horace Mann would still be considered a lab school if the principle is not affiliated with the college. Ms. Ruiz explains that it would and that along with the principle there will be other programs and collaborations that would continue to exist. She noted that Dr. Chad Leith Lewis agreed to stay on board and is working with staff at Salem State on how the partnership is going to benefit both sides so there would be a blueprint in place, should that situation occur. She noted that Emily Ullman is involved in those discussions and in that work.

Dr. Walsh stated that he thinks this requires a world call vote

Dr. Walsh called the role as follows:

Ms. Wilson Yes

Ms. Hunt Yes

Mr. Schultz Yes

Ms. Manning Yes

Dr. Walsh Yes

The motion carried (5-0).

1. Deliberation and Vote on the Superintendent’s request for $40,000 from the Dominion Fund to cover additional costs for the build out of the space at the New Liberty Innovation School to be occupied by the Salem Prep School at the Museum Place Mall

Ms. Hunt moved approval. Ms. Wilson seconded the motion.

Discussion:

Ms. Manning asked for a description of the location of the proposed location of the of the Salem prep at the new liberty school. Ms. Ruiz explained the location noting that New Liberty is not getting smaller, and Salem Prep will be expanding into additional space at the site.

Ms. Marotta explained that New Liberty was supposed to grow to 125 students and in planning for that when leasing the space, they did not build out all of the space that was leased. She explained that this space that Salem Prep is moving into is the additional space that was intended for New Liberty to expand.

There being no further questions or comments regarding this matter, Dr. Walsh called for a vote on the motion. A vote was taken on the motion made by Ms. Hunt and seconded by Ms. Wilson to approve the use of $40,000 of Dominion Funds for the build out of Salem Prep at the New Liberty Innovation School. The motion carried (5-0).

**Superintendent Report – Margarita Ruiz**

Ms. Ruiz reported that she is pleased to introduce Ms. Jennifer Windsor who has been appointed to be the new Principal of the New Liberty Innovation School.

Mr. Ruiz reported that on May 25, 2016 she had the opportunity to attend her very first Arts in the Evening event at Salem high school. She stated when she first came to the district she heard repeatedly about the great pride that Salem has in their art and music programs and she has had the opportunity to observe some of our teachers teaching lessons throughout the year. She noted that this was the first opportunity that she had to see some of the artwork and the amazing performances of bands that we have in our district. She stated that it was pretty powerful for somebody who had never been there before and noted that it is something we need to protect and make sure that it grows in Salem. She congratulated all of our teachers especially Cynthia Napierkowski for all of the good work that they do with our students.

Ms. Ruiz reported that on June 2 she attended the Salem Prep Graduation at the House of Seven Gables and notes that it was amazing to celebrate with these graduates who have overcome some pretty difficult social and emotional challenges to get to that milestone. She congratulated Director of Salem Prep Carol Donnelly and the staff at for the amazing work that they do with our students.

Ms. Ruiz reported that on Friday evening June 3 she attended her very first Salem High School Graduation. She stated that she was impressed by the amazing accomplishments of our students. She also noted that she appreciated the representation of the School Committee and all the staff that attended the graduation and stated that she was very proud. Ms. Ruiz congratulated the graduates again for all of their accomplishments as well as their parents and teachers for all their work over the years to get them to this point.

Ms. Ruiz reported that School Committee members Patrick Schultz and Mary Manning will be serving on the Strategic Planning Steering Committee and explained that the School Committee members will have opportunities to participate in workgroups and she hopes that they will do so.

Ms. Ruiz reported that the implementation of a new student information systems is an opportunity to implement My School Box which is an online portal for parents to pay for school lunch. She also noted that while updating the student information system she wants to take this opportunity to review our policies and procedures regarding school lunch and requested that the Policy Subcommittee review the policies relative to the implementation of My School Box.

Ms. Ruiz reported that they are continuing with the implementation of the A.L.I.C.E program and stated that this week the first evacuation drill will be held at the Witchcraft Heights elementary school. She explained this will be a simple drill and the students and staff have been informed about it.

Ms. Ruiz reported that next week the district will be participating in a tabletop exercise with other city departments that focuses on a drill that will effectively help us roll out our emergency plans. She stated that this will be an opportunity for us to run through scenarios and have the opportunity to make sure that our safety protocols are in place. She stated that this will be an opportunity to talk about simulated situations and it will be no evacuations.

Ms. Ruiz reported that the safety of drinking water has been in the news recently and reported that Northeast Environmental Labs tested all water fountains in all Salem Public Schools for lead and mineral levels in our water. She reported that the and the tests found no reportable levels of lead or minerals in our water. She also noted that they tested sinks and student bathrooms and based on the testing results they reported one drinking fountain at the Witchcraft Heights School that had a reportable level of copper, however upon a second test the copper level was found to be below a reportable level. She noted that the drinking fountain has been taken out of service. Ms. Ruiz noted that all in all there was very good news about the drinking water we are serving our kids and precautions were taken regarding the few concerns that we had with the level of copper.

Ms. Ruiz reported this month a new district newsletter was published stated that it will be created with Constant Contact and eventually will be available for subscribers through email.

Ms. Ruiz reported that there are over 500 spots available for summer programs in the Salem public schools this summer and there are lots of opportunities for students to be engaged in summer learning. She noted that staff are actively recruiting students for these programs and noted that Emily Ullman will be making a presentation this evening.

Mr. Ruiz requested that the School Committee consider a policy that would give her the autonomy to grant raises for exempt employees in the district in the range of 1% - 3%. She stated that any for any amount greater than three percent she understands she would have to come to the School Committee for approval.

Mr. Schultz stated that he feels that Mr. Ruiz should have autonomy to incentivize give her leadership team raises at her discretion. He asked if this should go to the personnel of finance subcommittees or for discussion work in the school committee.

Ms. Hunt stated that she did not think there was a policy that required Mr. Ruiz to come to the School Committee to get approval of raises for exempt employees and noted that in the past it has been a courtesy discussion with the Finance and Personal subcommittees.

Dr. Walsh stated that he felt that as long as the money is in the budget and the Superintendent was sticking to the 1% to 3% range there would not be a need to come to the School Committee.

Mr. Shultz stated that he would support the request of the Superintendent to have the autonomy to grant raises in a range of 1-3% to exempt employees.

Dr. Walsh stated that he feels that as long as the money is in the budget and it is within that range School Committee approval would not be required. He noted that if it involved a budget transfer that would need approval.

**Presentations and Reports**

Ms. Ruiz called on Emily Ullman, Director of Extended Learning Time to make a presentation on Partners in Action – Making the Most of Expanded Learning Time.

Ms. Ullman addressed the School Committee and explained that the Community Partnerships in our schools provide:

* Whole child support and student voice
* Innovation and expertise
* Hands-on application of learning
* Community Engagement
* Sustainability for diversified programming

Ms. Ullman reported that in the last two years we have secured over $1.4 million dollars from state, federal and local resources to support Extended Learning Time (ELT) and Out of School Time (OST) opportunities in our schools for both after school and in the summer. She also notes that we have built a partnership collaborative including approximately 40 partners. She further noted that we have leveraged partners to support arts integration, family engagement and cultural proficiency.

Ms. Ullman introduced Carolyn Rosco Navokonis to review the Citizen Schools program at Collins Middle School.

Ms. Navikonis addresses the School Committee and explains the Citizen Schools:

* Runs electives for all 6th graders
* Electives take place during 9th and 10th period on Wednesdays and Fridays
* 160 students are served
* Electives are taught by volunteers from the greater Salem community
* Volunteers are paired with Collins Middle School staff
* A showcase event is held in December and May where students “teach back” what they have learned.

Ms. Navikonis related some of the experiences that Collins Middle School students have had with the program noting the Mock Trial Apprenticeship, Social Entrepreneurship, Secrets of a Millionaire, and Solar Cars.

Collins Middle School Principal Glen Burns addressed the School Committee and gave the “Principals Point of View” noting that this program has introduced the Greater Salem Community into the classroom. He reviewed the following points with the School Committee:

* Provided high quality elective curriculum linked to 21st Century skills (innovation, collaboration, communication, problem solving)
* Engaged families in Fall and Spring student showcases
* Created time for collaborative planning for the full 6th grade team
* Supported CMS leadership team through SC onsite coordinator
* Provided professional development opportunities for paraprofessionals
* Generated positive student focused stories in traditional and social media

Mr. Burns explained that for the 2016-17 school year the Citizens School will be:

* Serving 6th and 7th grade students
* Increased program support
  + Citizen School on-site coordinator
  + Full time Endicott College Intern
  + Part Time Salem State University and North Shore Community College Interns
  + Student showcase will grow to include electives outside of Citizen Schools programming and family transportation will be incorporated to increase engagement

Ms. Ullman introduced Charity Lezama, Executive Director of the Salem YMCA to make a presentation on their partnership with the Nathaniel Bowditch School.

Ms. Lezama addressed the School Committee and explained the Mindfulness Programming and the Enrichment Choice classes for students in grades K-5 at the Nathaniel Bowditch School. She explained that some of the classes offered at Yoga, Jedi Training, Drumming, Girls Today, Dance, Theater and Swimming classes.

Ms. Lezama noted that 100 Nathaniel Bowditch scholars learned new swim skills and improved their water safety and awareness. She also reported that the students gave positive feedback on their experiences

Dr. Walsh thanked Ms. Ullman for the very thorough presentation.

Ms. Hunt stated that it was a very informative presentation.

**Finance Report**

1. **Approval of Warrants**

The following warrant totals were presented for approval this evening.

May 12, 2016 in the amount of $554,802.05

May 19, 2016 in the amount of $319,611.35

May 26, 2016 in the amount of $452,345.99

June 2, 2016 in the amount of $504,235.61

Ms. Hunt moved to approve the warrant as stated. Ms. Wilson seconded the motion. The motion carried.

**Budget Transfer Request #20– Human Resources**

Dr. Walsh reported that Interim Business Manager Toni Mertz has requested budget transfers be approved to facilitate the year end process by consolidating available funds spread across multiple lines to a one or more line items in the amount of $355,742.31.

Ms.. Manning moved to approve the budget transfer requests. Ms. Hunt seconded the motion. The motion was approved (5-0).

**Budget Transfer Request – Bentley Academy Charter School**

Dr. Walsh reported that the School Committee has received a request form the City Finance Director Sarah Stanton to transfer One Hundred and Seventy-One Thousand Dollars ($171,000) from the “Transfers Out: Bentley Academy Charter School,” to the Salem Public Schools “Collective Bargaining Reserve”

Dr. Walsh explained that this transfer request, covers the difference in per pupil costs and projected enrollment for the Bentley Academy Charter School.

Ms. Manning moved approval. Ms. Wilson seconded the motion. The motion carried.

**Subcommittee Reports**

There were no subcommittee reports this evening.

**School Committee Concerns and Resolutions**

Dr. Walsh reported that the adult recipient of this year’s Giving Tree Award at Salem High School is Joanne Scott, Executive Director of the Salem Boys and Girls Club. He also reported that the student recipient this year is Kaitlin Copelas who will be attending UMASS in the fall.

**Questions and Comments from the Audience Regarding the June 6, 2016 Agenda**

**Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the School Committee this evening, Ms. Manning moved that the School Committee adjourn the meeting. Ms. Hunt seconded the motion. The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

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Eileen M. Sacco, Secretary

Salem School Committee

**Meeting Materials and Reports**

Minutes of Regular School Committee Meeting May 16, 2016

School Committee Agenda June 6, 2016

Budget Transfer Request #20

Budget Transfer Request from City Finance Director

Presentation on Community Partnerships

**Approved by the School Committee on June 20, 2016**