

Salem School Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
Monday, August 22, 2016

A regular meeting of the Salem School Committee was held on Monday, August 22, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. in the School Committee Chambers at Collins Middle School, 29 Highland Avenue, Salem, MA.

**Members Present:** Dr. Brendan Walsh, Mr. James Fleming, Deborah Amaral, Ms. Mary Manning, Patrick Schultz and Kristine Wilson.

**Members Absent:** Mayor Kimberley Driscoll

**Others Present:** Ms. Margarita Ruiz, Superintendent, Kate Carbone, Assistant Superintendent, Margaret Marotta, Assistant Superintendent, Chief of Communications Kelley Rice.

**Call to Order**

Dr. Walsh called the Regular Meeting of the Salem School Committee to order at 7:00 p.m.

**Approval of the Agenda**

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

**Approval of Minutes**

Ms. Wilson moved to approve the minutes of the July 25, 2016 Regular School Committee meeting as amended. Mr. Schultz seconded the motion. The motion carried.

**Questions and Comments from the Audience**

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

**Action Items**

- a. Deliberation and Vote on the acceptance of a donation in the amount of \$4,000 from Patrick Schultz for the Farm Programs at Salem High School (\$3,500) and Witchcraft Heights (\$500)

Mr. Fleming moved approval of the acceptance of the donation with the appreciation of the School Committee. Ms. Wilson seconded the motion. The motion carried.

- b. Deliberation on the Resolution to Not Raise the Existing Cap on Charter Schools in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Dr. Walsh reported that Mayor Driscoll is not present this evening and she has asked that this agenda item be put off until the next meeting.

Mr. Fleming moved to table the matter. Ms. Amaral seconded the motion. The motion carried.

- c. Deliberation on the first reading of the revision to Policy 5219 Teaching About Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco

Ms. Amaral reported that as part of the new Mass Law regarding the

Took existing policy and the MASC policy and merged them and explained the changes. She also notes that they would like first reading this evening and give the Superintendent the authority to post it on the Salem Public Schools website and note that it is pending final approval of the School Committee.

Ms. Amaral moved approval. Mr. Schultz seconded the motion. The motion carried

### **Superintendent Report – Margarita Ruiz**

Ms. Ruiz welcomed new School Business Manager Kristen Shaver to her first School Committee meeting. She noted that she started her position full time today.

Ms. Ruiz reported that today was the first day of school for the Bentley Academy Charter School and the new head of school reported that they had a smooth day and the school year is off to a good start. She extended her best wishes to all of our teachers and staff as we approach the new school year.

Ms. Ruiz reported that over the summer the Salem Public Schools partnered with many organizations to provide summer programs for our students. She reported that she spent a day touring the programs and reported that programs from arts to civic engagement were offered during a five week period. She noted that Emily Ullman will make a full report on the programs to the School Committee at the next meeting.

Ms. Ruiz reported that the Salem Public Schools offered a Summer Meals program at 9 sites in conjunction with Project Bread and U S Department of Agriculture. She noted that 23,694 meals were served as part of our summer programs including lunch and breakfast over the summer.

Ms. Ruiz reported that this summer the district has been busy providing professional development programs in which more than 300 staff participated in. She noted that most of the training was provided by Salem Public Schools staff.

Ms. Ruiz reported that the district hosted a 4 day Leadership Institute for principals and administrators that was very successful. She explained that they focused on Family Engagement in our schools and many other topics. She also reported that she has spent some time with each leader in the district this summer to be sure that they are ready for the upcoming school and to provide support and guidance.

Ms. Ruiz reported that many teachers collaborated this summer to refine the curriculum maps for the district.

Ms. Ruiz reported that Ms. Westlake and Dr. Leith facilitated a three-day ESL Institute on the new ESL curriculum and other materials they will be rolling out this year to support ESL instruction. She explains that the three-part series for Principals focused on equitable structures for support of our ESL students.

Ms. Ruiz reported that the district successfully migrated from IPass to Aesop Follett which will allow the district to better manage student records and data in a secure environment. She notes that the changeover was a long three-month process that involved a lot of time and training by the staff. She explained that trainings have been held for staff and will continue this week. She notes that many teachers are being trained in the system and professional development day was held last June.

Ms. Carbone explained that a training module was done during the training that would give teachers and idea of what it is. She also noted that there will be training during the first week that teachers are back. She explained how teachers would use the system at various grade levels. She noted that they will be all using a standards based report card.

Mr. Fleming asked if this new system would allow communication between the teachers and parents. Ms. Carbone reported that there is a parent portal and they do not have a time line for the launch of that explaining that they want staff to get used to the system.

Ms. Ruiz reported that she has experience with the change over from IPass to Aesop when she was in Boston. She noted that from that experience she feels that that they wanted to have teachers get used to the system before rolling out the parent portal. Mr. Fleming stated that he thinks that is an important feature of the program and he would like to see that up and running as soon as possible.

Mr. Schultz asked if the parents would access to more than just see the grades, noting that he would like to close the gap so that the students will be held more accountable.

Ms. Carbone agreed noting that they need to meet with the STU to establish guidelines on how often the information will be uploaded etc.

Ms. Ruiz reported that the Horace Mann Principal received information that a teacher in the school has become ill because of parasites and mold that may be connected to the school building. She notes that Mr. Leith has been in contract with SSU who ordered an air quality test for the building and reported on repairs and improvements that they have made to the building over the summer. She notes that they have been very proactive on this and she will keep the SC informed on this.

Mr. Fleming stated that he is concerned that the drop off and pick up at HMLS has not been improved. Ms. Ruiz reported that they have made some changes and it is much better than it was.

Mr. Fleming stated that he would like see a presentation from the Principal on the drop off and pick up procedures at the Horace Mann Lab School.

### **Presentations and Reports**

There were no presentations or reports this evening.

### **Finance Report**

#### **a. Approval of Warrants**

The following warrant totals were presented for approval this evening.

July 21, 2016 in the amount of \$785,840.75  
July 28, 2016 in the amount of \$268,621.09  
August 4, 2016 in the amount of \$273,418.98  
August 11, 2016 in the amount of \$480,456.12  
August 18, 2016 in the amount of \$65,055.70

Mr. Fleming moved to approve the warrants as stated. Ms. Manning seconded the motion. The motion carried.

**Budget Transfer** There were no budget transfer requests this evening.

### **Subcommittee Reports**

Ms. Amaral reported that the Policy Subcommittee met this evening and have scheduled two more meetings. She noted that on September 6, 2016 the Policy Subcommittee will be meeting at 6:00 p.m. to review the 6000 policy series. She noted that members will review the policies and bring their comments to the meeting and they will proceed from there on revising policies if needed. She also reported that on September 15, 2016 the Policy Subcommittee will meet at 4:30 p.m. to review policy 3703 Students in Arrears on School Lunch and Breakfast.

### **Personnel Subcommittee**

Mr. Fleming reported that the Personnel Subcommittee met on August 11, 2016 to review three matters.

He reported that the Personnel Subcommittee met in Executive Session to discuss the McFarland litigation case and without violating and confidential information he could inform the School Committee that the litigation is progressing.

Mr. Fleming reported that he had requested a full report of the matter of the Bentley School investigation and it was on the agenda for the meeting on August 11, 2016. He reported that there was no second made to go into Executive Session and therefore was no discussion held.

Ms. Manning asked Mr. Fleming if he plans to revisit the Bentley matter and Mr. Fleming stated that he did not see how he could if he could not get a second from his own committee. Dr. Walsh asked Mr. Fleming if this was something that he would discuss at a regular School Committee meeting. Mr. Fleming stated that he did not think it could be at this time.

Mr. Fleming reported that the Personnel Subcommittee discussed the posting of the School Committee Secretary position. He noted that they reviewed and made minor changes to the job description and voted 3-0 to post the position. He explained that the Personnel Subcommittee will interview candidates and the School Committee will vote on the final recommendation.

Mr. Fleming reported that the Personnel Subcommittee also met on August 18, 2016 with the AFSCME Union regarding impact bargaining to remove the position Clerk Typist at the New Liberty Innovation School. He explained that this request is the result of the changeover of the school from a Horace Mann Charter School to an Innovation School. He reported that over the course of two meetings they reached an agreement for the position to stay in the union and an agreement was signed.

### **School Committee Concerns and Resolutions**

Mr. Schultz requested that a Curriculum Subcommittee meeting be scheduled to review the standards based report cards. Dr. Walsh stated that he would schedule a meeting in the near future. Mr. Fleming requested that the meeting be co-posted with the Committee of the Whole so that other members of the School Committee who wish to attend may do so.

Mr. Fleming reported that 22 scholars received Kernwood Day Scholarships this year and congratulated them. He reported that this year's tournament is full and thanked all of the golfers who participate in this annual event.

Dr. Walsh report that the Salem Children's Charity held a harbor cruise last night. He reported that it was a sold out event and estimated that they raised between \$3,000-\$4,000 to benefit the Salem Children's Charity.

Mr. Fleming suggested that the School Committee meeting scheduled for Tuesday, September 6, 2016 start at 7:00 p.m. rather than 7:30 p.m. Dr. Walsh suggested that a vote was in order.

Mr. Fleming moved to start the September 6, 2016 meeting at 7:00 p.m. Ms. Manning seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Ms. Manning noted that the Policy Subcommittee is scheduled to meet that night at 6:00 p.m. Ms. Amaral stated that they would change the time of the meeting to 5:30 p.m.

### **Questions and Comments from the Audience Regarding the August 22, 2016 Agenda**

Fawaz Abusharkh addressed the School Committee and expressed his thoughts on Charter Schools. He stated that there is a misconception about Charter Schools and what they do. He noted that many of the School Committee members do not support them and noted that the Massachusetts Charter Schools are the best in the country.

Mr. Abusharkh stated that parents have a right to choose what they feel is best for their children and we need to protect parent's rights. He further noted that there are waiting lists for Charter Schools so that more students can attend them.

Mr. Abusharkh stated that people are afraid that if the charter cap is raised, Charter Schools will start popping up all over the place and stated that they will only open where they are needed.

Mr. Abusharkh concluded noting that we need to educate the community on Charter Schools and suggested that a forum be held so that people can come and give their opinions.

### **Adjournment**

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

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Eileen M. Sacco, Secretary  
Salem School Committee

**Meeting Materials and Reports**

Minutes of School Committee of the Whole Meeting July 25, 2016

School Committee Agenda August 22, 2016

MASC Resolution on Charter School Cap