

Salem School Committee
Meeting Minutes
Monday, January 16, 2018

A regular meeting of the Salem School Committee was held on Tuesday, January 16, 2018 at 7:05 p.m. in the School Committee Chambers at Collins Middle School, 29 Highland Avenue, Salem, MA.

Members Present: Ms. Mary Manning, Mr. James Fleming, Ms. Kristine Wilson, Ms. Ana Nuncio, Mr. Manny Cruz, Ms. Amanda Campbell, and Mayor Kimberley Driscoll

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Margarita Ruiz, Superintendent, Kate Carbone, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, Margaret Marotta, Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Personnel Services, Jill Conrad, Chief of Systems Strategy, and Kelley Rice, Chief of Communications

Call to Order

Ms. Manning called the regular meeting of the Salem School Committee to order at 7:05 p.m.

Approval of the Agenda

Mr. Fleming moved to approve the Agenda as presented. Ms. Wilson seconded the motion. The Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes

Deliberation and Vote on the Minutes of the Committee of the Whole (COW) meeting held December 18, 2017

Discussion

Members agreed with Ms. Nuncio that there is a typo on the month shown in 2nd paragraph of Page 2 of the Minutes. The January 11, 2017 month should read December 11, 2017.

Mr. Fleming motioned to approve the Minutes of the Regular School Committee meeting held December 18, 2017 as amended. Ms. Wilson seconded the Motion. The Motion carried.

Questions and Comments From the Audience

Ruth Ann Hatt, 8 Nursery Street, Salem, shared that the mission of the Salem Schools is to prepare students for the future and fail students when ignoring their disruptive behavior. Students who have no respect for authority and are unable to follow rules do not make good employees, responsible citizens, or nurturing parents. Students need structures, setting, and positive role models to grow into successful happy adults. Students need to know that there are consequences for negative behavior and are not learning the skills they need to succeed in life by ignoring disruptive behavior at Salem High School. Ms. Hatt continued that student behavior is more important than attendance and state funding and asked School Committee members and Superintendent Ruiz for the reinstatement of Colonel Michael Hunter.

Edward Morse, 35 Attitash Avenue, Merrimac, MA, Teacher at Salem High School for 37 years, spoke in support of Colonel Hunter and asked members to give Mr. Hunter a second chance.

Michelle O'Shea, 12 1st Street, Apt. N308, Salem, read a letter addressed to Mayor Driscoll, Superintendent Ruiz, and School Committee from a student who, for legal reasons, was not able to appear on school property unless during school hours. Mrs. O'Shea read the student's letter aloud. The letter described concerns of Lieutenant Colonel Hunter's termination as the instructor of the ROTC program at Salem High School. Mrs. O'Shea continued reading the student's letter expressing that Mr. Hunter should be reinstated as head of the ROTC program to continue helping cadets of the ROTC program and students like him. Mr. Hunter helped by using his own time to talk with students when they felt they had no one else to go to. The student's letter stated that he intends to add his name to the petition for the reinstatement of Mr. Hunter and asks the School Committee to please allow Mr. Hunter to return to the Salem High School.

Michael Hunter, Previous Head of the ROTC program, Salem shared that he is a Salem State Graduate, 22 years as an active duty marine who served as a marine instructor for the last 9 years, and last 3 years at the Salem High School, was designated a Naval Honor school last year. He hopes everyone has been informed of the incident leading to his termination. He holds no animosity towards the administration, the student, or anyone. Mr. Hunter explained what happened: he observed a student in violation of the dress code - wearing a hood. He reminded him of the rule. The student responded by using profanity and acting in a very erratic fashion. Mr. Hunter approached the student because he thought he would be a danger to himself and others remembering the Salem procedure not to escalate a situation when it happens. He was going to let it pass but the student did not seem to be heading to class. He was standing in an awkward posture. Mr. Hunter continued that he disengaged after determining that the student was not a danger. He was not armed or under the influence of any drugs (he checked his pupils). Mr. Hunter went to report that the student was out of class, had a hood on, phone at hand, and using profanity. He later explained the incident to an administrator. This is not the first incident between the student and him. The student reminded Mr. Hunter of himself in many ways when he was younger, trying to find himself. Mr. Hunter continued that he inappropriately raised his voice in frustration after explaining the incident to the administrator. Mr. Hunter continued that he is only human and sincerely apologized for his role in this matter. He asks everyone to understand that there are no good or bad guys here, just people trying to do the best they can with the information they have. He has no animosity towards anyone. He is here in support of the students, cadets, schools, programs, teachers, parents, veterans, Salem leaders, and residents who requested his stay. He has been asked to stay, to continue to pursue resolution and reinstatement, by others and constituents except by administration. Mr. Hunter commented that he is just a marine, a simple man and asked what could he do to be reinstated.

Ms. Kimberley Driscoll, Mayor of Salem, thanked Lieutenant Colonel Hunter and all students, parents and staff who came forward to express support for Lieutenant Colonel Hunter and/or for the ROTC program. The program continues to operate. Ms. Driscoll continued that she feels they are in a very awkward position, as School Committee members, in that they do not have the power or authority to override the decisions of the administrative staff. She does know that the administrative staff has taken measures to try to figure out a way to have this end differently. They still have not been able to come to that kind of a resolution. She hopes and appreciates the frustration this can cause to people who are not able to get more information. There are personnel and privacy laws that do not allow members of the School Committee to have this much information and certainly does not allow Superintendent Ruiz or Principal Angeramo to share more of the rationale for their decision-making. It is hard on School Committee members as they sit and listen to some very compelling statements. They certainly have their hands tied. Mayor Driscoll continued that they trust and value the administrators at Salem High School and Superintendent in terms of the work they do and want to make sure that all students recognize that the program is going to be supported.

Mr. Fleming, Salem School Committee member, shared that he did not have any information of what had occurred. He personally sought information. He spent 3 hours with Lieutenant Colonel Hunter and asked

as many questions as he could. He believes that Mr. Hunter answered them truthfully. He spoke with Mr. Dawson once over the telephone and read all of the emails provided to him. He spoke with an individual anonymously. Mr. Fleming continued that they would at least have the ability to weigh both sides of the situation were it not for the lack of communication from administration to School Committee members. He would not be doing his job if he walked away with Colonel Hunter's side of the story alone. Mr. Fleming continued that he had not spoken with Mr. Angeramo. He spoke with a very good source that filled some blanks in for him. He now understands that there is another side to this situation. Mr. Fleming said that he still thinks that outright dismissal is not the right way and that the Colonel could be put on a suspension (whether it be for the rest of the year) without pay but have the right and dignity to maintain his certification and to return for the continuing year to a program that loves him. Mr. Fleming continued that he hopes for a resolution and does not believe Mr. Hunter should lose his certification over this matter. Mr. Fleming asked for some form of medium ground and for Mr. Hunter to return next year or at least be able to resign with dignity.

Superintendent Report – Margarita Ruiz

Superintendent Ruiz congratulated the four New Liberty Innovation School students who successfully completed their requirements and graduated last week. The occasion marked the first time that the New Liberty Innovation School has had students complete the requirements for graduation ahead of schedule. Superintendent Ruiz announced that Dr. Chad Leith of the Horace Mann School has notified Superintendent Ruiz and the Dean of the School of Education at Salem State Dr. Joseph Cambone that he will be returning to the SSU faculty at the end of the school year. Dr. Leith noted that it has become increasingly difficult, with two small children of his own, for him to be an active and engaged father in Cambridge while serving as Principal in Salem. He will stay through the end of the school year. Ms. Kate Carbone and Superintendent Ruiz will be seeking a new principal for the school for next year.

Superintendent Ruiz reported that the United Way, one of their Our Salem Our Kids partners, received a grant from Nellie Mae Foundation for \$75,000 to directly support Our Salem Our Kids movement. This movement is designed to engage the entire city to ensure that all students are challenged and have what they need to succeed. They are very excited for the grant that the Nellie Mae Foundation has made for the movement. Ms. Ruiz thanked the operational staff, Paul L'Heureux and the entire staff of Buildings and Grounds for keeping their sidewalks and parking lots clear and warm. Their operations staffs have been extremely busy since their last School Committee meeting in December. They have dealt with record low temperatures and snow at the beginning of January. The staff worked around the clock that weekend of January 6th to clear the snow in sub-zero temperatures. Ms. Ruiz thanked their new transportation Director, staff members, and drivers of their bus transportation for their efforts in effectively challenging the weather upon their return from the holidays. Superintendent Ruiz continued that Pillar 3 of the Strategic Plan focuses on nurturing and developing their staff leadership and empowerment. Students had a day off last Friday, because of Professional Development Day. The day featured 50 teacher-led workshops for Salem teachers. This day was reflective to two of their four main goals of this pillar: to engage the staff in shaping their own professional growth and development and to build a leadership pipeline from within Salem schools.

Discussion on Procedure for Selection of Successor of Dr. Chad Leith

Mr. Fleming asked Superintendent Ruiz of the procedure for selecting a successor in place of Dr. Chad Leith. Superintendent Ruiz responded that they have outlined the principal of the school would be a professor in the Department of Education at Salem State University for the MOU. They engage in conversations with Dr. Cambone if there is a viable candidate in his faculty that is interested in doing the work, able, and qualified. If not, they have the opportunity to begin an outside search.

Presentations and Reports

Pillar #1: Create a Vibrant K-12 Teaching and Learning Ecosystem

Aligning the Salem High School (SHS) Program of Studies With the Priorities of the High School Redesign Process

Superintendent Ruiz asked Ms. Carbone to provide School Committee members with a quick update on Pillar 2: Reimagine the High School Experience. Ms. Carbone shared that they have a redesign team that includes parents, teachers, a student, variety of district leaders, and community partners. They have been meeting since the summer to take the recommendations from the Strategic Plan to start to think about ways they can put some of that into action. The goals of the team are to engage more teacher ownership for the redesign process, to engage the community, and end the year with more of an action plan. They had one community convening and will have another one in the spring. Ms. Carbone continued that she sees the first phase of the redesign as a runway for a full redesign process. They would not have a full redesign plan to deliver to the School Committee but rather early sort-of quick wins to pave the way for a broader redesign process. This will be a lengthy process and will take some time to build the trust and buy-in to move this work.

Mr. Angeramo gave a presentation on aligning the Salem High School program of studies with the priorities of the High School redesign process. The Strategic Planning and Redesign process is a great opportunity for the Salem High School. There is much excitement around it. Mr. Angeramo recalled last year, the district ran several plans of the planning process and there were several pillars. One of the pillars was the future of the High School education. They engaged the entire community around brainstorming, one being the Vision of the Salem Public Schools. The community came up with the Vision for the schools: All students will be locally engaged, globally connected, and fully prepared to thrive in a diverse and changing world. Mr. Angeramo read the High School's College and Career Vision aloud and continued walking the members through the presentation. The presentation talked about the top six 21st Century skills and qualities of a Salem Public School (SPS) Graduate, Pillar 2: Reimagine the High School Experience, School-Based Planning, Examples of Work Underway, Lens for the Program of Studies, College and Career Center Highlights, Career Technical Education, Social Justice, Science (environmental), and Newcomer Program (for students that are new to the country).

Discussion

Ms. Campbell asked Mr. Angeramo if the content courses are taught by SEI endorsed content teachers or by fully licensed and certified ESL teachers. Mr. Angeramo responded that currently they are co-taught; they have content certified teacher and ESL certified teacher. They have a co-teaching model. Ms. Manning asked about the role of the advisory committee who meet twice a year. Mr. Angeramo responded that each of the CTE programs have an advisory committee, it is a requirement. They play a vital role on informing their program as to what is currently happening in that field and what some of the future needs are. They have students, staff, and people who currently work in the field are on those committees. They can inform on current needs and what employees are looking for, etc. Those would remain in tact and are very valuable. They actually have members of some of the advisory on the Career Technical Education (CTE) committee. They have a business owner and teachers. The steering committee would look at CTE as a whole. The advisory would still be very important to the individual. Ms. Nuncio asked Mr. Angeramo that she heard there was a pre-nursing course at the High School and wondered if that is folded in to the medical life sciences given that there will be such a labor shortage in that specific area of nursing. Mr. Angeramo responded that there was a Nursing program when they had Plumbing as well some time ago. They have Medical Assisting. There are other fields they would explore with the Career Technical Education (CTE) steering committee. They know that locally there is a labor market for healthcare and is something they would explore.

Action Item

Deliberation and Vote on the Proposed Amendment to Articles of Agreement by Northshore Education Consortium – Tabled from 1/16/18

Discussion

Superintendent Ruiz informed members that Ipswich Public Schools send students and staffs to Northshore Education Consortium (NEC) program for their training for many years but have never been a member of the Northshore Education Consortium (NEC), despite their close proximity to them. What they have before them is a collective agreement that specifies the process for new members to join and names Ipswich as one of the member district. Superintendent Ryan Blake initiated this process by sending Frank Rosenberg, the Executive Director of NEC a letter requesting to join the consortium. The NEC Board of Directors voted to approve this request. Ms. Rosenberg discussed the obligation of the member districts with Dr. Blake. The School Committee in Ipswich approved going forward with this process. They need a majority of the current member districts to approve the necessary changes to the articles of agreement. The commissioner must approve the revised agreement by April 2018 so that Ipswich could become a member effective July 2018. School Committee members would be voting to approve the articles that state the approval as part of the Northshore Education Consortium (NEC).

Mr. Fleming asked if there was a comparison to the existing articles: would they be adding cost, duties, or responsibilities by adopting these new articles. Superintendent Ruiz responded that to her knowledge, they would not. It is more the approval of process of the district to join the consortium. Members shared concerns of the details. Superintendent Ruiz said she would be happy to provide information with the track changes to the School Committee. Members agreed.

Ms. Manning sought clarification and asked Superintendent Ruiz if they are asking for the School Committee to vote to amend the articles of agreement to change the process for a city to become a member or to vote on accepting Ipswich; is the vote on the new member or the process on how someone gets to be a new member. Superintendent Ruiz responded that her understanding is to approve the articles that admit a new member but the new member in question would be Ipswich. Ms. Ruiz offered to seek more clarification.

Mr. Fleming motioned to table the proposed amendments to the Articles of Agreement by Northshore Education Consortium pending additional information. Mr. Cruz seconded the motion. The Deliberation and Vote on the Proposed Amendment to Articles of Agreement by Northshore Education Consortium remains tabled for the next regular School Committee meeting on February 5, 2018.

Finance Report

a. Approval of Warrants

December 28, 2017 in the amount of \$245,541.51

January 11, 2018 in the amount of \$597,082.18

January 18, 2018 in the amount of \$37,595.93

Mr. Fleming motioned to approve the three warrants in the amounts listed on the Agenda. Ms. Wilson seconded the motion. The Motion was approved.

b. Budget Transfer Requests

The School Committee approved the following budget transfers FY18-17 and FY18-18 recommended by the School Administrator, Kristin Shaver. She explained that Central Office (Teaching and Learning) has requested that the fund be transferred in order to align the funds with the intended expense as follows:

Account Description/Use	Acct. Number	Amount From	Amount To
Pupil Personnel Services			
Medical Contractual	13640161-5302	\$ 47,500	
Instructional Supplies	13640161-5114		\$ 47,500

Mr. Fleming moved to approve Budget Transfer request FY18-17 as listed. Ms. Manning seconded the motion. The Motion was approved.

Human Capital Office requesting to cover the cost of temporary office assistance due to a staffing change shift from Salaries to Contract Services

Human Capital Office			
Salaries	13482020-5160	\$ 11,373	
Contract Services	13482021-5320		\$ 11,373

Discussion

Mr. Fleming asked Ms. Shaver if this is an addition to the office of Human Capital. Ms. Shaver responded that it is not, it is just a shift they had to staffing changes at the beginning of the school year and had a temporary employee from a staffing agency in that position. They had to shift funds from a vacated position into Contract Services to pay the agency. Mr. Fleming clarified that they had a Director, Assistant Director, and now that other temporary assistance. Ms. Shaver responded that the Special Project Assistance position has been there all along as part of the budget but the person got a different job. Mr. Fleming said he hopes they do not have to face this problem again with Contract Services. Ms. Manning responded to Ms. Shaver's comment of the position having always been there, Ms. Manning said it is actually a fairly new position. Ms. Manning asked why are they going through a temporary agency and not just hire a Salem Public School employee, if they are going to keep that position. Members shared concerns, feedback, and discussion on the topic of having a permanent Salem Public School employee to fill that seat.

Mr. Fleming moved to approve Budget Transfer request FY18-18 as listed. Ms. Wilson seconded the motion. The Motion was approved.

Subcommittee Reports

Discussion

Mayor Driscoll reported that she would be emailing School Committee members the Subcommittee assignments by the end of the week.

Policy Subcommittee

There were no Subcommittee reports

School Committee Concerns and Resolutions

Mayor Driscoll shared that she had the opportunity to visit the Kindergarten Expo Information night and commended the staff for the work they did putting that together. They had individual principals on stage last year go through their fields. They had an Expo setup in the cafeteria downstairs. It was a great improvement to have the videos this year, which allowed the principals to be out in the Expo area talking to parents meeting with staff, and giving people opportunities to learn more about their school. The videos were great, easy to follow, and posed the same questions to each leader. There were many families smiling, much enthusiasm from existing parents who were signing up, and new families learning to better understand the process. Mayor Driscoll continued that she is happy and excited about the array of choices they have.

Mr. Fleming shared that principals used to attend School Committee meetings, at least for the first 12 years he attended, although not applicable to the last 3 years. He does not understand why principals are not required to attend School Committee meetings. Mr. Fleming continued that he would like the School Committee to look into mandating the attendance of some principals at School Committee meetings where they can listen to issues presented before the School Committee, as principals are a very big part of the leadership team.

Questions and Comments From the Audience

There were no questions or comments from the audience.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the School Committee this evening, Mr. Fleming entertained the motion to adjourn. Ms. Wilson seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by:

Angelica Alayon, Secretary
Salem School Committee

Meeting Materials and Reports

School Committee Agenda January 16, 2018

Minutes of the December 18, 2017 Regular School Committee Meeting

Presentation: Aligning the SHS Program of Studies With the Priorities of the High School Redesign Process by David Angeramo, Salem High School Principal

Northshore Education Consortium Articles of Agreement Packet

Budget Transfers FY-18-17 & FY18-18