

**Millbury Public Schools  
School Committee**

*Regular Session*  
**Meeting Minutes**

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2022 MAY 16 PM 12:58  
MILLBURY, MASS.

Date: February 9, 2022

Members Mrs. Jennifer Nietupski, Chairperson  
Present: Mr. Christopher Wilbur, Vice Chairperson  
Mr. Nicholas Lazzaro, Member  
Ms. Jessica Bristol, Member  
Michelle Cherfils, Student Advisory Council Representative

Administrators Mr. Richard Bedard, Jr., Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations  
Present: Ms. Kate Ryan, Director of Pupil Services  
Ms. Elizabeth Boutiette, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment  
Mr. Gregory Myers, Superintendent of Schools

Location: Millbury Memorial Jr./Sr. High School Media Center

Time: 7:00pm

Mrs. Nietupski called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM and led the Committee in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

**1. Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes**

- a. Mr. Wilbur motioned to accept the Executive Session minutes of January 24, 2022, seconded by Mr. Lazzaro. The motion was approved (4-0).
- b. Ms. Bristol motioned to accept the Regular Session minutes of January 26, 2022, seconded by Mr. Lazzaro. The motion was approved (4-0).
- c. Mr. Wilbur motioned to accept the Executive Session minutes of January 26, 2022, seconded by Mr. Lazzaro. The motion was approved (4-0).
- d. Ms. Bristol motioned to accept the Executive Session minutes of January 31, 2022, seconded by Mr. Lazzaro. The motion was approved (4-0).
- e. Mr. Wilbur motioned to accept the Executive Session minutes of February 1, 2022, seconded by Ms. Bristol. The motion was approved (4-0).

## **2. Report of the Administration**

### **a. Report of the Director of Pupil Services**

Ms. Kate Ryan, Director Pupil Services, informed the Committee about the upcoming Choose Love presentation scheduled for February 14 from 6-8 PM via Zoom. Scarlett Lewis founded the nonprofit Jesse Lewis Choose Love Movement in honor of her son, Jesse, who was murdered during the Sandy Hook Elementary School tragedy in December 2012. Scarlett became an advocate for social and emotional learning (SEL) and character development to help children manage their emotions, feel connected, and have healthy, meaningful relationships.

In addition, Ms. Ryan also announced the retirement of Mrs. Mary O'Brien, Pupil Services Department Secretary after 25 years of service in the District.

### **b. Review of Current COVID-19 Infection Data, Vaccination Rates, and At-Home Testing Option**

Ms. Kate Ryan provided the Committee with an updated overview of COVID-19 infection rates and trends for students and staff in the district stating as of February 2nd there were an additional 18 cases reported to DESE. Currently, we have 90% of our staff vaccinated. Our student vaccinated total is increasing but at a slower rate. The district along with DESE is providing at-home test kits for families who have signed up for the program. The link for this program can be found on the Millbury Public Schools website under the COVID link. Tests are distributed on Fridays for families to test prior to returning to school. Only positive cases should be reported to the school nurses.

## **3. Finance and Operations**

### **a. Review and Discussion of the Proposed Fiscal Year 2023 Budget**

Mr. Bedard addressed questions and clarifications regarding the FY'23 proposed school budget and warrant articles. The upcoming hearing on the budget proposal will be advertised in the Millbury Sutton Chronicle and the warrant articles have been sent to Town Hall.

### **b. Review of the District's Fiscal Year 2022 Legal Fees by Category**

Mr. Bedard reviewed legal expenses incurred by the District to date. The total legal services expenditures for special education related costs through October 26, 2021 were \$563.50. The total legal services expenditures for non special education related costs through December 30, 2021 were \$5,865.50. The non-special education related categories include: Copyright Infringement, Freedom of Information requests and Private School Criteria (One School Global). Under employment issues we asked advice on Title IX investigations, impact bargaining for COVID-19 and other employee issues.

We receive invoices on a quarterly basis from Murphy, Hesse, Toomey & Lehane, LLP, our legal counsel. We are currently tracking below budget for legal fees.

c. Jr./Sr. High School Hot Water Tank Replacement Plan

Mr. Bedard informed the Committee of the need to replace the hot water tank at the Jr./Sr. High School. We are currently utilizing a temporary hot water tank at the school since the current tank is in disrepair and inoperable. We have received a repair cost proposal of \$54,000. As an alternative, we are working with an engineer, Seaman Engineering, to determine the cost of a replacement, much like we did at Elmwood. We are hoping to have some information on the scope and total cost within the next two weeks. A warrant article will be submitted to Town Hall informing them of the updates and total amount the project will cost.

d. Green Communities Grant Application Status

Mr. Bedard provided an update on the District's Green Communities Grant Application, which has been denied. The Committee approved the purchase of a propane-powered Type-A, 29-passenger school bus to replace our existing gas-powered, 2012 Type-A school bus at its September 8, 2021 meeting. The gas-powered unit costs \$92,000 through the Anderson Bus Company (Massachusetts State bid). We were appropriated \$65,000 for this purchase at the May 2021 Annual Town Meeting. Costs beyond the appropriation (\$27,000) represents the incremental cost to purchase propane vs. gas-fueled.

The Town, through the Energy Advisory Committee, included the additional \$27,000 cost as part of the Fall Green Communities Grant application. The Town has never before been refused a Green Communities Grant. To date, we have received five grants totalling over \$1 million dollars.

Mrs. Nietupski asked if we might be able to pull the funds from another line item to pay for this. Mr. Bedard will seek alternate financing options for the excess cost as the bus has already been ordered.

Mr. Bedard also shared information about MHS synthetic field rental fees receipts. To date, \$8,695.00 has been billed for the use of our athletic facilities (turf football field, softball and soccer fields, windle field)

#### **4. Unfinished Business**

a. Report on the Shaw School Building Project

Mr. Myers updated the Committee on the new project. The exterior brickwork installation continues with an estimated completion of this by late February. US Drywall continued

installing gypsum board and interior wall insulation, taping, and mudding; they have also added a primer coat in the inside of the building. Mechanicals, plumbing, and electric work are still on schedule. The electrical transformer pad has been completed and the transformer is in place. Overall, the project is tracking on budget, technology is over budget and will be reconciled. The project is slightly behind schedule but still projected to open for school in August.

The Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment (FF&E) bids and remaining Technology bids will be awarded at next week's Building Committee meeting. The move services contract will be awarded at next week's Building Committee meeting. There will be an update to the public with a virtual event letting folks see what has happened from start to the current time.

b. Report of the Policy Subcommittee - *Votes Requested*

Mr. Lazzaro provided the Committee with an update to the changes made to Policy KFC-R: and Field Use Policy - Fees and Available Fields.

Because the link in the agenda was not valid, Mr. Lazzaro motioned to table Policy KFC-R, so that the committee could receive a hard copy of the updates. Seconded by Ms. Bristol. The motion was approved (4-0).

**5. New Business**

a. Superintendent's Annual Goals: Mid-Year Update

Mr. Myers provided an update on his progress in meeting six goals ( Fiscal Year 2023 Budget Development, R. E. Shaw School Construction Project, Supervision and Evaluation, Equitable Practices, Graduate Coursework, and Student & Staff Safety).

Mrs. Nietupski requested that the topic of mask wearing be added to the next meeting agenda since DESE will be changing its guidance / requirements as of February 28, 2022.

b. School Committee's Annual Goals: Mid-Year Update

Mr. Myers provided an update on the Committee's progress in meeting its goals for the school year (Raymond E. Shaw Building Project, Assessment, Safety, Equity). Mr. Hall will present on the equity goal for the School Committee at a future meeting.

c. Changes to MCAS Science Assessment

Ms. Boutiette, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment, provided an overview of changes to the upcoming MCAS Science Assessment. The biology frameworks were

created in 2006 and teachers made necessary changes in 2016, but the assessment was not changed. Students will now have an assessment in line with the rigor of the new standards.

Mr. Lazzaro asked if students will have to take an engineering class in order to align with the new standards. Ms. Boutiette said that this will be embedded into the curriculum. This is also taking place at lower grades with our STEAM teachers and STEAM based projects.

A public hearing on the proposed FY '23 budget will start the next meeting.

## **6. Executive Session**

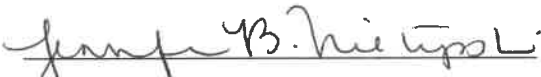
At 7:43PM, The Committee considered moving into Executive Session in accordance with MGL Chapter 30A, §21(a)3 to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining with the Millbury Teachers Association because an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the Committee's bargaining position and the Chair so declares.

Mrs. Nietupski held a roll call vote: Mrs. Bristol - YES, Mr. Lazzaro - YES, Mr. Wilbur - YES, Mrs. Nietupski - YES. The motion was approved (4-0).

## **7. Adjourn**

At 9:03 p.m., the Committee returned to the regular session meeting. Without further discussion, Mr. Wilbur motioned to adjourn the regular session, seconded by Mrs. Bristol. The motion passed, 4-0.

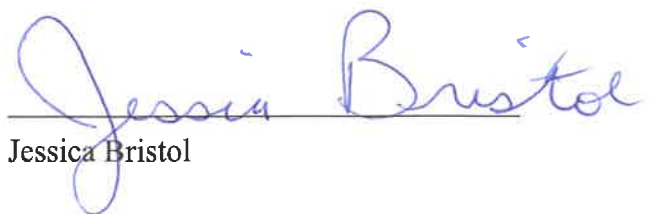
Approved:

  
Jennifer B. Nietupski, Chairperson

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Christopher J. Wilbur, Vice Chairperson

  
Julia Lagerholm

  
Nicholas Lazzaro

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Jessica Bristol". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line drawn through the middle of the text.

Jessica Bristol