

Salem School Committee
Meeting Minutes
Monday, September 18, 2017

A regular meeting of the Salem School Committee was held on Monday, September 18, 2017 at 7:10 p.m. in the School Committee Chambers at Collins Middle School, 29 Highland Avenue, Salem, MA.

Members Present: Mayor Kimberley Driscoll, Dr. Brendan Walsh, Ms. Mary Manning, Mr. James Fleming, Ms. Kristine Wilson, and Ms. Deborah Amaral

Members Absent: Mr. Patrick Schultz

Others Present: Margarita Ruiz, Superintendent, Kate Carbone, Assistant Superintendent, Margaret Marotta, Assistant Superintendent, Kristin Shaver, Business Manager, Kelley Rice, Chief of Communications, and Jill Conrad, Chief of Systems Strategy

Call to Order

Mayor Driscoll called the Regular Meeting of the Salem School Committee to order at 7:06 p.m.

Approval of the Agenda

Mr. Fleming moved to approve the agenda as presented. Dr. Walsh seconded the motion. The Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes

Deliberation and Vote of the Revised Minutes of the Regular School Committee meeting held December 5, 2016

Deliberation and Vote of the Revised Minutes of the Regular School Committee meeting held August 21, 2017

Deliberation and Vote of the Minutes of the Regular School Committee meeting held September 5, 2017

Discussion

Members clarified the year of the Regular School Committee meeting to be 2016 and not 2017 as shown on the Agenda. The year shall be corrected.

Dr. Walsh motioned to approve all three Minutes listed on the Agenda. Mr. Fleming seconded the Motion. The Motion carried.

Questions and Comments From the Audience

Andrea French, 7 Cleveland Road, announced that the Special Education Parent Advisory Council is hosting an open forum with Superintendent Margarita Ruiz on Tuesday, September

26, 2017 at 6:30pm at the Collins Middle School, in the School Committee Chambers. She mentioned that there is another upcoming event, Basic Rights Workshop facilitated by the Federation for Children With Special Needs on Monday, October 2nd, 2017 at 6:30pm in the Bowditch School Library. The Basic Rights is a comprehensive walk-through for anyone who is new to the Special Education process. Translation and childcare will be provided.

Discussion

Ms. Manning asked Ms. French if the forum has a focus? Ms. French said that the focus is on Special Education. It is an informal discussion. They are going to listen to the Superintendent's plans moving forward. Ms. Ruiz stated that the topic of discussion tends to be general. Parents are directed to resources as needed, nothing specific that would violate regulations.

Questions and Comments From the Audience continued

Beth Kontos, Salem Teacher's Union President, reminded everyone that they are having a fundraiser this Saturday at Tavern Square, for First Books. They are going to be distributing books later on this year. Students and siblings of Salem Public Schools can go and take books home. Teachers will also have an opportunity to keep some books in their classroom. They will have appetizers and a 50-50 raffle. Every school in Salem will be participating in the raffle. Everyone will be socializing. She invited the members to join them. It will be from 2 to 7pm. It will be family-friendly.

Superintendent Report – Margarita Ruiz

Ms. Ruiz reported that the start of the school year went smoothly. She had an opportunity to visit most of the Salem schools at opening day. There was high energy and excitement across the district. She visited the Bowditch and Witchcraft on September 7 2017, the first day of school and on the first day of Kindergarten at the Horace Mann School, which started last Monday. The Witchcraft Heights Elementary School was in partnership with the Food and Nutrition Services and was one of twelve schools selected to participate in a North East Farm to School Institute. This is a highly competitive opportunity. The institute is a yearlong helpful learning opportunity to help advance their food initiatives in farm and nutrition education with serving local products in the cafeteria. Superintendent Ruiz announced that Mass Mentoring will begin training community organizations on how to build healthy youth adult relationships beginning in October. These trainers will train business owners, residents, and others in the art of youth development across communities. Ms. Ruiz also announced that Paul Reville former Massachusetts Education Secretary and Director of the By All Means Initiative at Harvard University, will be visiting Salem on September 26, 2017. Mr. Reville will be speaking at the Salem Rotary. He will be highlighting the work in Salem as part of his visit. Ms. Ruiz stated they will be informing School Committee members on the implementation of City Connects later this fall for Pre-K to 8th Grade. Superintendent Ruiz reported there were bus issues at the start of the school year. This was the first year that the district implemented Versa Trans online routing software system, which links to the new student information system. The goal of the implementation of this online program is to create efficient bus routes based on student data to reduce the travel time for students and maximize the bus occupancy with an eye to helping reduce transportation cost. Due to technical glitches, bus routes were

generated extremely close to the opening of school on September 7, 2017 and did not provide a time for the district to properly communicate with families. Ms. Ruiz provided an example of a particular situation that happened. Bus stops have been revised and have been spread throughout Lafayette Street. This helped reduce a significant amount of students that wait at one particular stop. Ms. Ruiz further informed School Committee members on the topic.

Discussion

Mr. Fleming asked about practice rounds performed prior to the start of the school year on the new online routing system. Superintendent Ruiz responded that the certification of the data for state reporting had been delayed because there was a need for them to verify the data accuracy before the rollover took place. The student data rollover did not happen until mid August. They needed that rollover in order to accurately route the students and Versa Trans. They will be doing a complete review for better future efficiency. Members shared concerns and feedback and continued discussion on the topic. Ms. Manning asked if there were enough crossing guards. Ms. Shaver said they could use more crossing guards. There are crossing guard positions available and have been posted for those who may interested. Mr. Fleming suggested that experienced crossing guards be paired with new crossing guards for guidance and direction. Superintendent Ruiz announced that they have changed the hours of the Parent Information Center Office at the Collins Middle School, to better serve families. The Center will be open from Monday through Wednesdays from 8am to 4pm, Thursdays from 8am to 6pm, and Friday's from 8am to 1pm. Ms. Ruiz also updated the School Committee members on the High School redesign process.

Presentations and Reports

SPS Strategic Plan

Pillar 2: Re-imagine the High School Experience

Update on the High School Redesign Work at Salem High School

Mr. David Angeramo, Salem High School Principal, gave an informative presentation and updated members on the Strategic Planning Process. The presentation talked of the extensive work of the redesign at the Salem High School. Mr. Angeramo walked School Committee members through the strategic planning's new Vision statement, top six 21st century skills and qualities of an SPS Graduate, and highlight of the three recommendations in the district strategic plans. Mr. Angeramo talked in detail about the school-based planning process, which highlighted the steps that have been taken and of upcoming expectations. He invited everyone to the first **Community Convening** of the reimagining High School experience on November 2, 2017 from 6:00-8:30pm at the Salem High School Auditorium. Dinner will be served. Mr. Angeramo continued his presentation informing School Committee members of the work that is currently underway, provided other updates, and answered questions for School Committee members. Members and Mr. Angeramo continued discussion. Superintendent Ruiz and Mr. Angeramo informed members of a future request at the next School Committee meeting of some funds to help with the convening.

Discussion

Mayor Driscoll asked for an update on Salem High School's Child Care program. Superintendent Ruiz said it is in operation. Principal Angeramo reported that four students and nine staff members are currently using the service. The program is working well.

Action Item

Deliberation and Vote on the Overnight Field Trip Request for Saltonstall 7th and 8th Graders to the Nature Classroom in Ocean Park, ME on October 16-20, 2017

Mr. Fleming motioned to approve the request for Saltonstall 7th and 8th Graders to the Nature Classroom in Ocean Park, ME on October 16-20, 2017. Ms. Wilson seconded the motion. The Motion carried.

Finance Report

a. Approval of Warrants

September 14, 2017 in the amount of \$129,987.90

September 21, 2017 in the amount of \$164,380.54

Mr. Fleming motioned to approve the two warrants in the amounts stated. Ms. Amaral seconded the motion. The Motion was approved.

b. Budget Transfer Requests

There were no Budget Transfer requests

Subcommittee Reports

Policy Subcommittee

Deliberation and Vote on Policy 6406 Voting Method – Tabled from 9/5/17

Discussion

Mr. Fleming asked Mayor Driscoll or members of the committee if they would forward attorney Kulack's opinion relative to the necessity of 4 votes for review. Ms. Amaral said she would provide him with it.

Subcommittee members will be meeting tomorrow 9/19/17 for further discussion of Policy 6406. Policy 6406 remains tabled.

School Committee Concerns and Resolutions

Mr. Fleming thanked the 240 golfers who participated in the Salem Days Tournament last Monday, which raised over \$24,000. Twenty Two Thousand were given away in scholarships for existing Salem students. Dr. Walsh thanked his colleague, Mr. Fleming, and everyone else involved with that tournament. It is an extremely worthy endeavor.

Ms. Amaral briefly commented that warrants now require only one signature; School Committee members would still vote on the Budget at School Committee meetings but the Mayor can sign warrants on their behalf.

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. Dr. Walsh seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by:

Angelica Alayon, Secretary
Salem School Committee

Meeting Materials and Reports

- School Committee Agenda September 18, 2017
- Description of the Corrections Made to the Minutes for 12/5/16 and 8/21/17
- Revised Minutes of the December 5, 2016 Regular School Committee Meeting
- Revised Minutes of the August 21, 2017 Regular School Committee Meeting
- Minutes of the September 5, 2017 Regular School Committee Meeting
- Salem Public Schools Strategic Planning Process Work Team Recommendations
- Strategic Planning Update
- Field Trip Request for the Saltonstall School to the Nature Classroom in Ocean Park, ME
- Policy 6406