

Regular Meeting
November 7, 2011
School Committee Meeting
Council Chambers

The Regular Meeting of the Medford School Committee was called to order by Mayor McGlynn, in the City Hall Council Chambers at 7:01 p.m. Those present were Ms. Cugno, Mr. Falco, Ms. Guzik, Mr. O'Keefe, Mr. Scarpelli, Ms. Van der Kloot and Superintendent Belson.

On the motion of Ms. Cugno, that the minutes of October 17, 2011 be approved as amended:

Vote:

Yes: 7
No: 0
Absent: 0

On the motion of Mr. Scarpelli that the Bills/Transfer of Funds be approved:

Voted: That the Bills/Transfer of Funds be approved.

Roll Call:

Yea: 7 - Cugno, Falco, Guzik, O'Keefe, Scarpelli, Van der Kloot, McGlynn
Nay: 0
Absent: 0

On the motion of Mr. O'Keefe that the Payrolls be approved:

Voted: That the Payrolls be approved.

Roll Call:

Yea: 7 - Cugno, Falco, Guzik, O'Keefe, Scarpelli, Van der Kloot, McGlynn
Nay: 0
Absent: 0

Report on Verizon Foundation Grant to Medford Public Schools

Richard Trotta, Director of Media, Technology and Fine Arts stated that the purpose of the grant is to provide teachers with instructional tools that will help their students attain state and local instructional outcomes and learning standards. The funds will be used to train and support teachers in the effective use of two important internet resources. Mr. Trotta introduced Stanley Usovich. Mr. Usovich presented a check for \$10,000 on behalf of Verizon to help with the integration of technology.

On the motion of Mr. Falco that the committee accept the gift:

Roll Call:

Yea: 7 - Cugno, Falco, Guzik, O'Keefe, Scarpelli, Van der Kloot, McGlynn
Nay: 0
Absent: 0

On the motion of Ms. Guzik to move suspension of the rules to take papers out of order

Vote:

Yes: 7
No: 0
Absent: 0

Report on Advanced Placement Italian Studies Scholarships

Rita DiCarlo, Director of Foreign Languages presented the report. Mrs. DiCarlo said that on October 15 two students were awarded scholarships for excellence in the study of Italian language and culture. MHS seniors and AP Italian students Brendon Breen was awarded a check for \$1,000 and Ariana Colozzo was awarded \$500 from the Federazione Assoiazioni Abruzzesi – USA. Mrs. DiCarlo told the committee that students apply for the scholarship at the end of their junior year and receive notification in October of their

senior year. With their application students have to include their high school transcripts, teacher recommendations and an essay on how the study of Italian has impacted their lives.

On the motion that the report be accepted and placed on file:

Vote:

Yes: 7

No: 0

Absent: 0

Communications:

Dr. Paul Krueger, Headmaster recommends that Commencement Exercises for Medford High School Class of 2012 be held on Wednesday, June 6 at 6:00 p.m. at the Gantcher Center at Tufts University.

On the motion that the recommendation be approved:

Vote:

Yes: 7

No: 0

Absent: 0

Recommendation to Approve MVTHS Health and Safety Plan

Vocational School Director William Mahoney told the committee that the plan is one of the documents that the DESE will review as part of the Coordinated Program Review (CPR) in December. The objectives and plans have been developed by the Vocational School Steering Committee and Safety Team. Each department must have an approved safety plan in place.

On the motion of Ms. Van der Kloot that the report be approved:

Yes: 7

No: 0

Absent: 0

Report on Teaching Resource Room Initiative

Diane Caldwell, Director of Elementary Education presented the report. Ms. Caldwell said that the Medford Public Schools has opened a Teacher Resource Room at Medford High School for elementary staff. The resource room is stocked with educational materials such as globes, maps, posters, envelopes, calendars, folders, crayons, markers, binders, woodcraft and beading materials, classroom decorations, poster board, crayons and much more. The room will be open the first Wednesday of each month from 2:30-4:00 p.m. Teachers will be able to “shop” for items up to a maximum amount. Limits will be placed on the total overall items so that the volunteers can ensure that as many teachers who would like materials are able to get them. School Committee member Sharon Guzik and Parent Volunteer Kris Johnson worked tirelessly to bring this idea to fruition. Our thanks go out to all the Medford Public Schools volunteers for all their efforts in creating this room.

Discussion:

Members congratulated Sharon Guzik and Kris Johnson for their hard work getting this project off the ground. A letter of appreciation was requested to be sent to Ms. Johnson from the School Committee.

On the motion of approval:

Yes: 7

No: 0

Absent: 0

Report on Elementary Mathematics Forum for Parents

Diane Caldwell presented the report to the committee. Ms. Caldwell stated that the Medford Public Schools sponsored a parent math night at each of our elementary schools.

Teachers from kindergarten through grade five modeled lessons and shared many educational math games with parents. The purpose of the evening was to share strategies for helping students with homework at home and to encourage their children to use math in their daily lives.

Discussion: Ms. Cugno said that the program is very successful at the elementary level – is this something we could try at the middle schools? Ms. Caldwell said that this was certainly something that could be looked into. Mr. Falco asked if the participation was increased do to moving the event to the fall as requested? Ms. Caldwell said that there were more parents this year. Mr. Falco said that he is in favor of

holding these sessions a couple of times throughout the year because it would assist the parents in helping with homework. Ms. Van der Kloot asked if the presentation could be put online for any parent that could not attend the session. This suggestion would also be researched.

On the motion of Ms. Cugno that the report be approved:

Yes: 7

No: 0

Absent: 0

At this time Italian student Arianna Colozzo arrived and was congratulated by the School Committee for her award.

Report on Professional Development Day – November 8, 2011

Diane Caldwell presented the report to the committee. She said that the Medford Public Schools will hold the first of two required professional development days for teachers on Tuesday, November 8, 2011. There is no school for students that day. All teachers will be engaged in activities planned by their principals or administrator. Topics for the day include writing workshops, differentiated instruction, reaccreditation plans, Xer pro boot camp, utilizing mental health assessment tools, curriculum mapping for music and art, internet safety, training for the autism diagnostic observation scale, and CPR compliance.

It is the goal of all administrators that each of the topics addressed during the day be reinforced at subsequent faculty meeting and other school and district development opportunities.

On the motion of Ms. Van der Kloot that the report be approved:

Yes: 7

No: 0

Absent: 0

Report on Veterans Day Program

Bernadette Ricciardelli, Director of Humanities presented the report. Ms. Ricciardelli stated that the Humanities Department will coordinate the 11th annual Veterans Day Speaker Program at Medford High School and Medford Vocational Technical High School. This year's program will occur on Thursday, November 10, 2011 and is being co-coordinated with the Director of Veterans Services, Mr. Earnest Lindsay. Thirty veterans are expected to participate in the event. Veterans from several eras, including World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Persian Gulf War, and the Iraq War will visit over 40 classes and will give a brief overview of their military experiences and contributions. The program provides our students with an oral history of personal experiences that enhances their study of history in the classroom. Feedback from students, teachers, and veterans from past programs has been overwhelmingly positive.

Discussion:

Ms. Van der Kloot apologized for not being able to attend but it is the same time as the school committee conference. Ms. Cugno requests that a letter be sent to thank Mr. Lindsay. Ms. Guzik said that she had attended last year's event and she enjoyed hearing the veterans' views.

On the motion of approval:

Yes: 7

No: 0

Absent: 0

Ms. Van der Kloot congratulated the Medford Family Network on the wonderful, fun-filled event that they recently held. She said it was a great night and would like a letter sent to them.

On the motion of approval:

Yes: 7

No: 0

Absent: 0

School Committee Resolution

Be it resolved, that the Medford School Committee express its sincere condolences to the family of James Baker, husband of Anne Baker, City of Medford Finance Director.

School Committee Resolution

Be it resolved, that the Medford School Committee express its sincere condolences to the family of Samuel Goncalves. Sammy was a graduate of the class of 2006 and an outstanding soccer player.

School Committee Resolution

Be it resolved, that the Medford School Committee express its sincere condolences to the family of Michael Davenport. Mr. Davenport was a long time resident of Medford and the father of Medford teacher Kathleen Davenport.

School Committee Resolution

Be it resolved, that the Medford School Committee express its sincere condolences to the family of Martha Ratto. Martha was a secretary in the Title One Office for many years.

School Committee Resolution

Be it resolved, that the Medford School Committee express its sincere condolences to the family of Marion Chapman. Mrs. Chapman was the mother of Maureen Chapman-Fahey retired Director of Mathematics and Science.

Resolutions submitted by Mr. O'Keefe

1. *That the School Committee be updated on the recent meeting with the DOE at the Curtis Tufts School.*

The Medford Special Education Parents Advisory Council (SEPAC) hosted the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education at the Curtis Tufts School to provide the group with an orientation to the upcoming Coordinated Program Review (CPR). Approximately twenty people were in attendance.

Kathy Aluia, President of SEPAC, addressed the committee and said that they had invited a representative from the DESE to speak and that they had posted the event on their website and in a district mailing.

On the motion, all in favor, the item lays on the table.

2. *That an update regarding the lighting behind the MHS at night be discussed in the interest of public safety.*

All lights in the back of Medford High School are now fully operational. A new power source was found for two of the lights and bulbs were replaced in several of the lamps.

On the motion, all in favor, the item lays on the table.

3. *That an update on the video from the school buses for review by the School Committee be discussed as requested.*

The Federal Family Policy Compliance Office (FPCO) has not yet clarified if, when, and under what conditions video of students on school buses can be viewed by persons or third parties outside of law enforcement or school officials. The Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) places very specific restrictions on the review of students' records and video is included in definition of student records. This means that we cannot allow general viewing of such video at this time without substantial risk of violation under FERPA. However, we have checked our regular eighteen buses and have spoken with Principals to determine if the cameras are in place as required. At this time we believe that cameras are in place on our buses and the ability of principals to view them for assessing student behavior is possible. From time to time substitute buses may be required and not all of them have cameras.

Ms. Van der Kloot said that as policy makers the committee needs to know that the cameras are working and they are in compliance.

On the motion, all in favor, the item is accepted and placed on file.

4. *That the bus stop and busing be discussed in the interest of public safety.*

The police department has ensured that the crossing guard is now posted at Winthrop and George beginning at 7:10 a.m. This provides coverage for both middle and elementary students.

Ms. Van der Kloot said that parents are very concerned with this intersection. Ms. Guzik states that parents are concerned because it is very busy but suggests they go to the council because it is not just a bus issue. Ms. Cugno asked if a letter could be sent to Chief Sacco regarding the intersection.

On the motion, all in favor, the item lays on the table.

5. *That a curriculum subcommittee be scheduled to address the math curriculum and why no meeting has occurred as a professional courtesy based upon US Navy Commander Edward Hafner's request to present his community service curriculum.*

The algebra issue was resolved with parents subsequent to our last meeting. Parents agreed to the original solution proposed by administration. The curriculum subcommittee is planning to meet in the near future to review this topic and to hear from Navy Commander Hafner.

Ms. Van der Kloot said that she has recently spoken to Commander Hafner regarding meeting dates and that a meeting will be scheduled in the near future.

On the motion, all in favor, the item is accepted and placed on file.

6. *That the School Committee be updated on the recent announcement regarding the phases of technology for the Medford Public Schools.*

The Technology Advisory Committee met last Thursday evening to review the Tec-Edge proposal. The proposal currently calls for two phases of capital funding in the amount of two million dollars each. The advisory committee provided feedback to the consultant who will review options. The Medford School Committee has been given the proposal. Six members of the School Committee were present at the Advisory Committee. The reviewed proposal will be presented to the School Committee in the near future for a formal discussion and determination.

On the motion, all in favor, the item is accepted and placed on file

7. *That the School Committee be updated on the recent announcement regarding the Marsha Caron Theatre.*

Renovations to the Theatre are expected to be underway during the December school break. Funding for this project was part of a previous capital bond. It is expected that this project will cost approximately \$170,000 in total. It is our anticipation that the Theatre will be ready for use in January.

Mr. Scarpelli asked if any of the renovations would affect any of high school shows that are planned. The Superintendent said that it should not disrupt anything scheduled.

On the motion, all in favor, the item is accepted and placed on file

8. *That the School Committee be updated regarding Hormel Field.*

Richard Sullivan, Secretary of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, visited Medford High School on Monday to announce that Medford is receiving a \$500,000 PARK grant to install a turf field at Hormel Stadium. Sullivan said the grant is part of an investment by Governor Deval Patrick's administration in open space and recreational opportunities. According to Mayor McGlynn, in addition to a new turf field with improved drainage, the track will be repaired and repainted and a new scoreboard will be constructed at an angle that will be easier to read by spectators in the bleachers. Hormel Stadium Commission Chair Jack Buckley said the entire project will cost over \$800,000. Mayor McGlynn credited the Hormel Stadium Commission for helping push the project forward. Commission members include Buckley, Wallace Kountze and Cosmo Volpe. The project should likely be completed during the summer of 2012.

On the motion, all in favor, the item is accepted and placed on file

9. *That the Medford School Committee hold their next School Committee meeting at the Curtis Tufts School.*

School Committee decision. However, it should be reminded that the Curtis-Tufts site cannot cablecast live and that there are additional costs including custodial overtime for a meeting in the evening.

It was suggested that possibly a Committee of the Whole meeting could be scheduled at the Curtis Tufts. Ms. Van der Kloot said that perhaps the committee could take a tour of the building.

On the motion, all in favor, the item lays on the table.

On the motion of Ms. Van der Kloot that the meeting be adjourned at 8:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

John Falco
Secretary