

Regular Meeting
March 20, 2017
School Committee Meeting
Council Chambers

The regular meeting of the Medford School Committee was called to order by Mayor Burke in the City Hall Council Chambers at 7:00 p.m. Those present were Ms. Cugno, Ms. DiBenedetto, Ms. Kreatz, Ms. Mustone, Mr. Skerry, Ms. Van der Kloot, Mayor Burke and Superintendent Belson.

On the motion of Mr. Skerry seconded by Ms. Kreatz that the minutes of March 6, 2017 be approved:

Vote:

Yes: 7
No: 0
Absent: 0

On the motion of Mr. Skerry seconded by Ms. Kreatz that the Bills/Transfer of Funds be approved:

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

Roll Call:

Yea: 7 Cugno, DiBenedetto, Kreatz, Mustone, Skerry, Van der Kloot, Burke
Nay: 0
Absent: 0

On the motion of Mr. Skerry seconded by Ms. Van der Kloot that the Payrolls be approved:

Voted: That the Payrolls be approved

Roll Call:

Yea: 7 Cugno, DiBenedetto, Kreatz, Mustone, Skerry, Van der Kloot, Burke
Nay: 0
Absent: 0

Report of Secretary

Secretary Van der Kloot reported that she recently attended the MASC workshop on poverty. She said that it personally made her more aware of the situation. She learned of a project with Whirlpool that provides schools with washers and dryers to be used for students in need. She commented that she was honored to represent Medford.

On the motion of Mr. Skerry for the Superintendent to obtain information regarding washer/dryer program with Whirlpool:

Vote:

Yes: 7
No: 0
Absent: 0

Ms. DiBenedetto thanked her colleague for attending the meeting and presenting the report.

On the motion of Ms. DiBenedetto seconded by Mr. Skerry to accept the report and place on file:

Vote:

Yes: 7

No: 0

Absent: 0

Community Participation

Cheryl Rodrigues updated the committee on Spring at the Roberts School. She informed them of the many upcoming events planned including puppetry residence, science night, poetry event and the third annual art night. She welcomed all to attend the exciting events and support the students.

Joseph Viglione, 59 Garfield Street, Medford said that he was there in regards to public access television in Medford. He commented that it was reported that the new facility would open in the spring and today is spring so he inquired as to when is it opening. He also mentioned that other communities have public access during construction so why not Medford. He proposes to have access television now. Why no access television. Where does our cable money go? He said that our first amendment rights are being denied in Medford. He came before the committee to get some answers tonight.

Report on Mission Buzz-Off Cancer

Anthony Petrellis, a fifth grade teacher at the McGlynn Elementary School is reaching out to all departments, businesses and citizens of Medford to put together a team of people who are brave and willing enough to Buzz their heads for the 7th Annual Mission Buzz-Off on June 4th (Sunday) at Gillette Stadium. Medford has had a Team participating for the last three years. We do it in honor of all children battling Cancer, but in particular for a Medford Boy named Heemo Radady, who passed away 4 years ago from a rare form of Cancer. He was a third grade student at the McGlynn Elementary. Our School has honored him the three years after he passed with our Annual 5th grade vs. teacher's basketball game. All the money that was raised was donated to Children's Hospital in his name and his name was placed permanently on the Wall of Fame at the Boston Children's Hospital. Chris Murphy, 70 Windsor Road, stated that the first annual "BUZZ-OFF" fundraiser will be held at John Brewers Tavern on Thursday April 13, from 7PM – 11PM. There will be a DJ, food and many raffle prizes. Over 100 people are expected. For the past three years, Dave Kuzmicz, a 6th grade teacher at the McGlynn Middle School and Anthony have been running TEAM Heemo at this wonderful event. The last 2 years, the team raised over \$25,000. Last year the city of Medford was involved with City Hall, to promote our TEAM and the event. This year we are looking to expand our team even more. We reached out to the Mayor's office and a banner for the event will be going in front of City Hall, as well as Medford High School. The Video Production Department is helping put together a video that promotes our team, our cause, and most importantly Heemo. Many will be pledging to shave our heads in his memory. We will be posting this video all over the City of Medford Facebook Pages.

There are many terrific events and causes developed and presented by Medford educators and the community every year. This is a significant example.

Discussion:

Ms. Van der Kloot thanked Anthony Petrellis and asked if the cosmetology students are involved at all. Mr. Petrellis answered not at this time. Ms. Cugno thanked all and wished them good luck. Ms. Kreatz also thanked them and said it is a great way to give back.

On the motion of Ms. Cugno seconded by Ms. Kreatz to accept the paper and place on file:

Vote:

Yes: 7
No: 0
Absent: 0

Report on Safe Routes to School Program

Mayor Burke informed the committee that the parent presenting the report is ill and asked to table report.

On the motion of Mr. Skerry seconded by Ms. DiBenedetto to table the report until the next meeting:

Vote:

Yes: 7
No: 0
Absent: 0

Report on Brooks School Collaboration Project and Our Medford History Guide

Michael Coates will be celebrating Medford's Shipbuilding history with all third grade students of the Brooks Elementary School by launching sail boats built by our students. Our students will have a hands on learning opportunity to design, build, name and sail their own pine wood model ship at the culmination of an in depth Medford history unit. The study will have an emphasis on Medford's ship building days of the nineteenth century. The designing and building of the ships will take place in each of the four third grade classrooms at the Brooks Elementary School. This project will take place over a two month period. The study begins in May. The Medford Historical Society will make a grade level presentation that will include artifacts from Medford's shipbuilding era. In late May, model ships will be designed, built and names. On June 9, 2017, a "Sailebration" event will be held. The ships will be christened, launched, and sailed. Each student will write a captain's ship log about the maiden voyage. The sailebration will take place on the Brooks playing field. Brooks Assistant Principal Rocco Grover-Silvestri will borrow two easy to build shallow pools from his family business. This project will inspire students to appreciate their link to the past and launch a strong sense of city pride. All our children can share in this city's rich history. Mr. Coates hopes to encourage creative discussion among third grade students and teachers about effective, inspiring ways to culminate our Medford History units. We would like to thank the Medford Educational Foundation (MEF) for awarding Mr. Coates at \$440.00 grant as well as the Brooks Elementary PTO for giving \$522.00 to help fund this project.

In addition to the project above, Michael Coates continues to follow his passion of increasing the knowledge of our third grade students' history of Medford. As you know, last year with the help of Century Bank and Graphic Designer Sue Gerould, Michael wrote *Our Medford: An Elementary Guide to the History of Medford*. Now, Michael along with his colleague Jennifer Ellis, will write a Teacher's Edition to our Medford which will be completed by September 2017. This book will help our third grade teachers and specialists deliver an interesting, thorough local history unit. The teacher's edition will cover all grade three Social Studies Learning Standards. Once again, Graphic Designer Sue Gerould will help lay out the book's format. This teacher's edition will be stored in a three ring binder so that teachers will be encouraged to add their own ideas and lessons. The copies for the third grade teachers will be paid for from the Our Medford book sale profits.

On the motion of Mr. Skerry seconded by Ms. Mustone to accept the report was accepted and placed on file:

Vote:

Yes: 7

No: 0

Absent: 0

Report on Focus on Kindergarten

Medford Public Schools' kindergarten teachers have been implementing Focus on K, an integrated approach to learning, this school year. As you know last year we were awarded a grant from January to June 2016 that helped provide professional development opportunities, c and materials for our kindergarten teaching staff. The goal of the grant was to improve literacy in our schools. Maria Skiffington and Amanda Gass, kindergarten teachers at the Roberts Elementary School have been providing professional development opportunities this year for all our kindergarten teachers. In addition, Maria was awarded a grant through the Medford Educational Foundation (MEF) to help support the required additional materials and supplies. Our kindergarten teachers feel that Focus on K has enhanced the overall learning in the kindergarten classroom. Children are more engaged and are using higher order thinking skills. Teachers have noticed an improvement in vocabulary, collaboration and creativity. The integrated centers gives an opportunity for students to move around, interact with peers, and gain a deeper understanding of the curriculum by using hands on activities and child oriented projects. Teachers find that the students are more enthusiastic with the thematic units, and have a better understanding go the concepts they are teaching. The read aloud books are engaging and enjoyable to read and also help with comprehension strategies. Our kindergarten staff use Focus on K for text-based literacy lessons and continue to integrate other content area curricula. Kindergarten teachers also say the developmental teaching strategies are more appropriate for kindergarteners. Daily work is shared and comments are made about what inspired them. They also incorporate feedback about the classmates work. Overall, they are pleased with the outcome of the Focus on K program and hope to continue using it for many years to come. This spring all of our elementary schools will be showcasing "Our Medford." Mayor Burke sent a letter to the students asking what suggestions they have for building structures in our city that would make Medford a fairer and more interesting place for children.

Please join us on as the students deliver their presentations on building structures on the following dates:

Roberts Elementary School- Thursday, April 12, 2017

Brooks Elementary School- Wednesday, May 3, 2017

McGlynn Elementary School- First week in May

Columbus Elementary School- May 2nd

Discussion:

Ms. DiBenedetto asked how the teachers feel the program affects students. Ms. Skiffington replied that they have met with first grade teachers and the feedback has been positive. They feel students have more comprehension skills and strategies, a higher level of thinking and a positive interaction. Ms. DiBenedetto said she would like to see this initiative implemented across the district; it should be a future goal. Ms. Cugno thanked the teachers for going forward with this initiative. Ms. Kreatz mentioned that she and Mr. Skeerry had visited a classroom to observe and it was so much fun. Ms. Mustone asked the teachers to share the benefits of having a full time kindergarten aide with the committee. Ms. Caldwell answered that it is very helpful. Ms. Van der Kloot said that our commitment to small class size is emphasized in these classrooms and it needs to continue to be on the forefront.

On the motion of Ms. DiBenedetto seconded by Mr. Skerry to accept the report was accepted and placed on file:

Vote:

Yes: 7

No: 0

Absent: 0

Pre Budget Report on School Library Services

Director of the Library services Richard Trotta presented the report. Mr. Trotta reported that libraries are open every day except the Brooks and Columbus which are open four days per week. Mr. Trotta presented an overview of the accomplishments of the department. He also reported on how funding was used this year. Mr. Trotta presented his budget request for next year.

Discussion:

Ms. DiBenedetto commented that year after year we are asking for additional help for the libraries and this increase in personnel is needed to support the technology needs. Ms. Mustone asked if the paraprofessionals are based on 40 hours per week. Mr. Trotta answered they are based on 36 hours. Ms. Mustone asked if they would hire new personnel or train the existing paraprofessionals. Mr. Trotta answered that Frank D'Allessio would train current staff.

On the motion of Mr. Skerry seconded by Ms. Van der Kloot to accept the report was accepted and placed on file:

Vote:

Yes: 7

No: 0

Absent: 0

Pre Budget Fine Arts

Pre Budget Report – Fine Arts

Director of the Fine Arts Department Richard Trotta presented the report. Mr. Trotta reported that music programs are available to students in grades K-12 and include offerings in vocal, classroom, music appreciation and instrumental music. The visual art program presents opportunities for students to explore and develop talents in a variety of art forms. Mr. Trotta presented an overview of the accomplishments of the music programs. He also presented his budget request for next year.

Discussion:

Ms. Cugno asked Mr. Trotta about the new director teaching .2 class stating that she thought as a committee they have tried to have directors not teach so this will need to be looked at. She also asked if media/technology and fine arts will be kept together. Superintendent Belson answered that each department needs their own director and it can possibly be done with existing staff. Ms. Van der Kloot commented that she had not heard that Mr. Trotta's retirement was official until tonight and thanked him for all his work. She asked the Superintendent to report on or perhaps set up a subcommittee to explore the options for the departments. The superintendent said that he is working on this now and there are different options so he will provide a report as soon as possible. Ms. DiBenedetto thanked Mr. Trotta for his many years of service. She said that she like when a director interacts with the students. She asked when the position will be posted. Superintendent Belson said that it will be fairly soon. Ms. Mustone questioned the on-site high school theatre responsibility.

On the motion of Ms. DiBenedetto seconded by Mr. Skerry to suspend the rules to discuss the sale of the instruments.

Vote:

Yes: 7

No: 0

Absent: 0

Superintendent Belson explained the memo that was in the packet. He stated that the receipts from the sale must first go back to the city's general fund as surplus property revenue. If we are successful, we will request the Medford City Council to appropriate the receipts for use by the music department. It is expected that the funds will be used to support the band program.

On the motion of Ms. DiBenedetto seconded by Ms. Van der Kloot to authorize the sale of the instruments by the procurement officer:

Roll Call:

Yea: 7 Cugno, DiBenedetto, Kreatz, Mustone, Skerry, Van der Kloot, Burke

Nay: 0

Absent: 0

Also while under suspension the committee discussed the bleachers and scoreboards. Ms. Van der Kloot asked if the necessary repairs will be paid by the operating budget. The Superintendent said if the costs are reasonable. Ms. Van der Kloot requested that the

school committee be kept informed. Ms. DiBenedetto would like a report when the work is complete.

Ms. DiBenedetto then commented on the financial report that was received for community schools. She said that it doesn't have the detail that was requested and asked for a report in the previous format. She also requested a subcommittee meeting be schedule to discuss where the money is, who is using the buildings, and an entire overview of the department. Ms. Cugno said this is an important meeting and should go to a committee of the whole.

On the motion of Ms. Cugno seconded by Ms. DiBenedetto to send to Committee of Whole for further discussion:

Vote:

Yes: 7
No: 0
Absent: 0

Ms. Van der Kloot asked for a quick update on the tv studio. Superintendent Belson answered stating that the windows arrived this week. They project to be finished by the end of April. The city is about to advertise for a studio manager. He said it is better to do it right than do it fast. Air conditioning, handicap accessibility and lighting all take time.

On the motion of Ms. DiBenedetto seconded by Ms. Van der Kloot to revert back to regular order of business:

Vote:

Yes: 7
No: 0
Absent: 0

Pre Budget Science

Director of Science Rocco Cieri presented the report. Mr. Cieri reported that the science program for grades kindergarten through twelve in Medford supports student acquisition of knowledge and skills in the area of general science and technology/engineering. He stated that some of the highlights of 2016-2017 include a grant award of \$99,514 from the Massachusetts Life Science Center for the Automation/Robotics program. He also stated that the partnerships with universities are robust and continuing to grow. He discussed the 2016-2017 use of funds. Mr. Cieri also discussed his budget requests for 2017-2018 which include \$40,000 for elementary and middle school curriculum materials and consumable supplies to replace outdated materials and align with the new Massachusetts Science/Engineering Curriculum Frameworks.

Discussion:

Ms. Van der Kloot said that she understands the piloting of the elementary science program next year and asked if a vendor has been selected. Mr. Cieri answered that vendors are presenting to the committee in the next few weeks to make a decision. He said funding is critical. Ms. Van der Kloot asked if all teachers will be involved. Mr. Cieri said that he is stressing to vendors that all teachers be included. Ms. Mustone asked if just grade 5 received new books. Ms. Cieri said yes as a resource for teachers to use

for MCAS. Ms. Cugno asked if there are any grants or corporate sources for this type of project. Mr. Cieri said it depends on how the grantor writes the grant so it is always a challenge to find one. Ms. DiBenedetto asked if there are enough supplies and consumables. Mr. Cieri answered yes.

On the motion of Mr. Skerry seconded by Ms. Van der Kloot to accept the report was accepted and placed on file:

Vote:

Yes: 7
No: 0
Absent: 0

Pre Budget Physical Education and Health Education

Supervisor Rachel Perry presented the report. Ms. Perry said that the goal of the physical education and health department is to enhance the well-being of the school community by creating a culture that integrates and balances the six dimensions of wellness: social, physical, intellectual, occupational, emotional and spiritual. The department strives to encourage an active, healthy lifestyle, healthy decision-making and a life-long commitment to wellness. Ms. Perry discussed the department's highlights for the year, staffing needs and funding requests for next year which includes an additional two health teachers at the middle school level.

Discussion:

Ms. Van der Kloot commented that she likes the idea of teaching the early education class to the high school students.

On the motion of Mr. Skerry seconded by Ms. DiBenedetto to accept the paper and place on file:

Vote:

Yes: 7
No: 0
Absent: 0

Negotiations and Legal Matters moved to end of calendar.

New Business:

Be it resolved, that the Medford School Committee express its sincere condolences to the family of Elaine Bordonaro Palmacci. Elaine was a teacher in the Medford Public Schools and an active member of the community.

Be it resolved, that the Medford School Committee express its sincere condolences to the family of George LeCesse. Mr. LeCesse was the step-father of Medford High School teacher and coach John Skerry and the brother in law of former Athletic Director Bud Kelley.

A moment of silence was held.

On the motion of Mr. Skerry seconded by Ms. Cugno to go to Executive Session at 9:16 p.m. for the discussion of Negotiations and Legal Matters pertaining to cafeteria workers contract and security contract. The committee may return for a vote.

Roll Call:

Yea: 7 Cugno, DiBenedetto, Kreatz, Mustone, Skerry, Van der Kloot, Burke

Nay: 0

Absent: 0

The Committee returned from Executive Session at 9:25 p.m.

On the motion of Mr. Skerry seconded by Ms. Van der Klott the School Committee reatified the contract with the Cafeteria Workers (see attached).

Roll Call:

Yea: 7 Cugno, DiBenedetto, Kreatz, Mustone, Skerry, Van der Kloot, Burke

Nay: 0

Absent: 0

On the motion of Ms. DiBenedetto seconded by Ms. Van der Kloot the meeting was adjourned at 9:26 p.m.

Roll Call:

Yea: 7 Cugno, DiBenedetto, Kreatz, Mustone, Skerry, Van der Kloot, Burke

Nay: 0

Absent: 0

Respectfully submitted:

Paulette Van der Kloot
Secretary

