

# Pembroke Public Schools

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## PEMBROKE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

September 20, 2016

North Pembroke School Library

7:00PM

### Call to Order

Mr. Tropeano called the meeting to order at 7:15 PM.

**Present from Administration:** Mrs. Erin Obey, Superintendent; Marybeth Brust, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Learning; Jessica Duncanson, Director of Student Services

**Present from Committee:** Michael Tropeano, Chair; Ginny Wandell, Patrick Chilcott, Secretary and Paul Bosworth

Absent: Suzanne Scroggins

### Acknowledge & Schedule Visitors

Mr. Tropeano welcomed the audience.

### Adjustments to the Agenda

None

### Communications

None

### Approval of Bill Schedule

Bills were circulated for committee approval.

### Consideration of Approval: School Committee School Committee Regular Meeting Minutes of July 12, 2016

VOTE: On a motion made by Paul Bosworth and seconded by Ginny Wandell, it was unanimously voted to approve the school committee meeting minutes of July 12, 2016 as presented.

Voting Yes: Michael Tropeano, Patrick Chilcott, Paul Bosworth and Ginny Wandell

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: Suzanne Scroggins

### Discussion of Ballot Questions for the November 8<sup>th</sup> election

Chief Wall said Senator deMacedo made a visit to Colorado to see the operations and the Chief said he doesn't think Pembroke is ready for this. He said the MA Police Chief Association and MASS are against it. Chief Wall said he would like the town to know that he thinks this is a very bad choice and

**OUR MISSION:** To ensure student achievement through excellence in teaching and learning.

as parents and policymakers, voters should take a stand against it. He said he asks the school committee to also adopt that question 4 is not good. Mr. Chilcott said if a driver is pulled over and under the influence of marijuana there is no test to confirm it and Chief Wall said this is correct. He added that from a law enforcement perspective this is a nightmare. Mr. Tropeano asked for some reasons why the MA Policy Chief Association is suggesting to vote no and Chief Wall said in order to protect kids. He added that the packaging is geared toward children. Mrs. Wandell asked for more information on the legislators visit to Colorado and said they were 50/50 when they went to Colorado and all came back agreeing against it. Chief Wall said communities think there is money to be made but there isn't. He stated there is no way to separate homegrown from store grown from black market and the most potent marijuana will end up out there. He added unfortunately law enforcement doesn't have the tools, the technology or the manpower to prevent this from happening but there is the ability to vote this question down. Mr. Chilcott said supporting Chief Wall is the right thing to do for kids and the committee's job is to protect kids so the right thing to do is come out against question 4 as a unanimous body.

VOTE: On a motion made by Patrick Chilcott and seconded by Ginny Wandell, it was unanimously voted as a school committee to state our opinion against question 4 in support of Chief Wall and the Pembroke Police Department and authorize the Superintendent to submit a letter to all applicable government bodies stating our objection.

Voting Yes: Michael Tropeano, Patrick Chilcott, Paul Bosworth and Ginny Wandell  
Voting No: none  
Abstaining: none  
Absent: Suzanne Scroggins

Chief Wall said he will send a letter to the governor and anybody else who will listen and suggested the school committee do the same.

Question 2: Mrs. Obey said 31 Pembroke students attend charter schools. She said the MTA has put out a campaign about the loss of revenue and for Pembroke is it about \$280,000 and she said she thinks this is a little high. Mr. Bosworth confirmed that if a Pembroke resident goes to a charter or private school then Pembroke Public Schools loses money. Mr. Tropeano said charter schools are more competition for urban districts. Mr. Chilcott said he thinks Charter schools are a good thing and having to compete for the attendance of a child is also a good thing. Mrs. Wandell said this goes back to Chapter 70 funding and a review of the formula. Mr. Tropeano confirmed that more charter schools will cause a redistribution of funds. Mr. Bosworth said he sees charter schools as a benefit for some students. Mrs. Wandell said the committee does not have the exact dollar amount that Pembroke will lose and added that Pembroke shouldn't be threatened by the possibility of students going to charter schools. Mrs. Obey said last year's amount was \$72,000. Mr. Tropeano said if Pembroke had any portion of this money it could be put to good use for the students. He said it is questionable whether adding more charter schools will increase the competition or dilute the money. Mr. Bosworth said he doesn't think the committee needs to take a position on this and the committee agreed.

## **Superintendent's Report**

### Consideration of Approval: Homeschool Requests for 2016-2017 School Year

Mrs. Obey presented the two homeschooling requests approved by the building principals.

VOTE: On a motion made by Patrick Chilcott and seconded by Ginny Wandell, it was unanimously voted to accept the homeschooling request for Isaac Doescher, grade 10, PHS and Cameron Leonard, grade 11, PHS as presented and accepted by the principal.

Voting Yes: Michael Tropeano, Paul Bosworth, Ginny Wandell and Patrick Chilcott  
Voting No: none  
Abstaining: none  
Absent: Suzanne Scroggins

#### Handbook Update

Mrs. Obey said under the academic eligibility determination there is no process for which a student or parent could appeal the decision. She said there is a difference between what Pembroke schools is requiring of students and what the MIAA is requiring. She said Mr. Talbot, herself and the high school administration would like to add language around an appeal process and she read the language to the committee. Mr. Chilcott said the PHS academic eligibility policy is currently cut and dry with one F making a student ineligible to play. Mr. Tropeano said the committee is not lessening the standard but instead allowing for an extraordinary circumstance to be reviewed. Mrs. Obey said the current wording in the athletic eligibility determination is in clear violation of the MIAA handbook. She said for PHS an incomplete is not considered a failing grade which is in direct violation of the MIAA handbook. She said putting in this appeal process allows time to put in the due diligence to figure out the correct wording. Mr. Chilcott said he is not comfortable with the change but if Mrs. Obey and Mr. Talbot think it needs to be done he will support it. Mrs. Wandell said this change is important and will result in a revamp of the whole policy.

VOTE: On a motion made by Ginny Wandell and seconded by Paul Bosworth, it was voted to accept the change to the PHS handbook for the 2016-2017 school year.

Voting Yes: Michael Tropeano, Paul Bosworth and Ginny Wandell  
Voting No: Patrick Chilcott  
Abstaining: none  
Absent: Suzanne Scroggins

Mr. Bosworth said he would like to get information on the number of appeals and the number granted. Mrs. Wandell said this policy will go onto Mrs. Scroggins list of policy priorities. Mr. Chilcott said he worries about setting precedence.

#### Consideration of Approval: PHS Books Disposal

Mrs. Obey presented the list of books that Dr. Hartley had recommended for disposal.

VOTE: On a motion made by Paul Bosworth and seconded by Patrick Chilcott, it was unanimously voted to dispose of the books as presented.

Voting Yes: Michael Tropeano, Paul Bosworth, Ginny Wandell and Patrick Chilcott  
Voting No: none  
Abstaining: none  
Absent: Suzanne Scroggins

#### Discussion of Superintendent Goals for the SY16-17

Mrs. Obey said she was concerned that the areas are not specific enough and she struggles with goal versus the expectation of the role. She added that she thinks there measurable goals and she views communications as a professional practice goal of hers. Mr. Tropeano said the committee agrees on the four categories. . Mr. Bosworth said he expects these goals to be what will bring the district forward. He said regarding achievement, he would like a presentation of an innovative idea that is being considered and hearing different thoughts. Mr. Chilcott said ultimately this document will benchmark Mrs. Obey performance at the end of the performance year so it is important that they are measurable. He said some of the goals were too specific. He also asked Mrs. Obey to include student

involvement somewhere. Mrs. Obey said she doesn't like to state a goal if she is not going to be doing the work toward it. Mr. Tropeano said he will work with Mrs. Obey on her goals and she will come back to the committee with an updated version to bring back to the committee.

#### Athletic Participation Update

Mrs. Obey said Mr. Domingos talked to coach Zopatti about the need for another cross country coach due the high number of participants. Mrs. Obey said she would like to suggest Courtney Infascelli as the Assistant Cross Country coach as she has already been helping out.

VOTE: On a motion made by Paul Bosworth and seconded by Patrick Chilcott, it was unanimously voted to acknowledge the appointment of Courtney Infascelli as the Assistant Cross Country Coach.

Voting Yes: Michael Tropeano, Paul Bosworth, Ginny Wandell and Patrick Chilcott

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: Suzanne Scroggins

Mrs. Obey said the girls' soccer numbers are low. She informed the committee that the game against Silver Lake was canceled due not having subs and the high heat. She added that there needs to be conversation around the future of the program. Mr. Chilcott said the program needs to be turned around and Mrs. Obey said Mr. Domingos is committed to that.

#### Introduction and Discussion of Communication Strategy/Plan

Mrs. Obey introduced Sharon Monteforte as the new Communication Specialist. Mrs. Monteforte said she started by reviewing four other school websites which included Boston, Brockton, Plymouth and Norton. She described the attractive features of each of the sites including a unified brand which Pembroke does not have. She said she gave Norton Public an honorable mention for their Let's Talk Program which is where all communications go through and then are filtered to the appropriate person. Mrs. Obey said this will give people an avenue to communicate anonymously whether it is a complement or complaint. The committee said they were not fond of the anonymous option. Mr. Bosworth said to be sure parents are still communicating with principal, teachers and guidance versus putting their questions out to Let's Talk. Mrs. Obey said this would give administration a tool to measure response times.

Mrs. Monteforte said the Pembroke site at a glance looked great but looking more into it she found out of date pictures and had difficulty finding important information. She said the formats of the each schools page is different and gave the example of the different formats of the PTO contact information. Mr. Chilcott said the Town revamped their website recently and suggested Mrs. Monteforte contact them. Mrs. Monteforte said she also looked at the broadcast email system and who will be the communicators for that. She said she would like to add a superintendent's page. Mr. Bosworth said some groups are inconsistently using it and Mrs. Obey said the goal is to get to a template and an expectation of the frequency of communication. Mr. Bosworth suggested with the website to consider people moving to Pembroke and making it easy for them to find information to compare to other towns. He also stated that the website does not open properly on a mobile site. Mrs. Monteforte said there are several Pembroke logos found on the website and she suggested for this year using the town seal for external communications, the sail logo for internal communications and the titans P for sports. For 2017-2018 she suggested having a student contest to design the logo. She said she will also work with key communicators, like principals, to create Facebook pages.

#### Approval of parent communication survey

Mrs. Obey said she would like to ask the committee to approve a communication survey in order to continue the work on the communications plan.

VOTE: On a motion made by Patrick Chilcott and seconded by Ginny Wandell, it was unanimously voted to approve the survey as presented.

Voting Yes: Michael Tropeano, Paul Bosworth, Ginny Wandell and Patrick Chilcott

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: Suzanne Scroggins

### **Consideration for First Read: Athenaeum Learning Academy (private school) approval**

Megan Buhr and Heather O’Gorman spoke on behalf of Athenaeum Learning Academy. Mrs. Buhr said the Trellis School closed down and now a group of homeschooling parents is looking to open a private school in its place. She said the school will be based on the Forest School movement in which students spend most of the time learning outdoors. She said they want to start out as a kindergarten to grade 5 school and eventually expand to 8<sup>th</sup> grade. She said there are private schools options but they are costly and they want to open a school that is more inclusive. Mrs. Wandell asked for an explanation on the amount of time outside. Mrs. Buhr said the K-2 group spends about 90 minutes indoors with two teachers doing their academic work and then go outside from about 10:30 to 2:00. Mrs. Obey said the level of detail in the plan that they submitted to the School Committee is not enough. Mrs. Brust said she has questions around the curriculum. Mr. Chilcott said in looking at the school committee policy AFFA, he has questions regarding subject areas 3, 4, 5, 6, 9 and 10 in order to grant approval. He said he hopes Mrs. Brust, Mrs. Obey and Mrs. Duncanson will do a tour of the facilities and also bring back a detailed presentation of the curriculum. Mr. Tropeano said the level of instruction has to be equitable to what Pembroke schools offer. He said the main considerations are curriculum and sustainability and Mrs. Obey said also the qualifications of the staff. Mrs. Wandell said she is concerned about the length of time it will take for administration to gather the necessary information. Mr. Tropeano explained the school committee responsibility of making sure the school is sustainable. Mr. Chilcott clarified that the school cannot function as a school without the school committee approval. Mrs. Buhr stated they have a two year lease with an option to renew for another two years. Mrs. Wandell said the school committee is ready to move to the next step of having Mrs. Obey, Mrs. Brust and Mrs. Duncanson get the requested information and come back to the committee on October 4<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Tropeano said this will be on the next agenda as an update.

### **Discussion of Future Meeting Dates**

Mrs. Obey suggested having two meetings per month with one having a curriculum focus and the other is a business meeting. The committee decided on October 4<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> as the next two meeting dates.

VOTE: At 9:10 PM, on a motion made by Patrick Chilcott and seconded by Ginny Wandell, it was unanimously voted, by roll call vote, to enter Executive Session Pursuant to Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(3) to discuss strategy for negotiations as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the legal position of the School Committee, as declared by the Chair.

Voting Yes: Michael Tropeano, Paul Bosworth, Ginny Wandell and Patrick Chilcott

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: Suzanne Scroggins

**APPROVED: October 4, 2016**

## **MOTIONS**

**VOTE:** On a motion made by Paul Bosworth and seconded by Ginny Wandell, it was unanimously voted to approve the school committee meeting minutes of July 12, 2016 as presented.

Voting Yes: Michael Tropeano, Patrick Chilcott, Paul Bosworth and Ginny Wandell

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: Suzanne Scroggins

**VOTE:** On a motion made by Patrick Chilcott and seconded by Ginny Wandell, it was unanimously voted as a school committee to state our opinion against question 4 in support of Chief Wall and the Pembroke Police Department and authorize the Superintendent to submit a letter to all applicable government bodies stating our objection.

Voting Yes: Michael Tropeano, Patrick Chilcott, Paul Bosworth and Ginny Wandell

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: Suzanne Scroggins

**VOTE:** On a motion made by Patrick Chilcott and seconded by Ginny Wandell, it was unanimously voted to accept the homeschooling request for Isaac Doescher, grade 10, PHS and Cameron Leonard, grade 11, PHS as presented and accepted by the principal.

Voting Yes: Michael Tropeano, Paul Bosworth, Ginny Wandell and Patrick Chilcott

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: Suzanne Scroggins

**VOTE:** On a motion made by Ginny Wandell and seconded by Paul Bosworth, it was voted to accept the change to the PHS handbook for the 2016-2017 school year.

Voting Yes: Michael Tropeano, Paul Bosworth and Ginny Wandell

Voting No: Patrick Chilcott

Abstaining: none

Absent: Suzanne Scroggins

**VOTE:** On a motion made by Paul Bosworth and seconded by Patrick Chilcott, it was unanimously voted to dispose of the books as presented.

Voting Yes: Michael Tropeano, Paul Bosworth, Ginny Wandell and Patrick Chilcott

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: Suzanne Scroggins

**VOTE:** On a motion made by Paul Bosworth and seconded by Patrick Chilcott, it was unanimously voted to acknowledge the appointment of Courtney Infascelli as the Assistant Cross Country Coach.

Voting Yes: Michael Tropeano, Paul Bosworth, Ginny Wandell and Patrick Chilcott

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: Suzanne Scroggins

VOTE: On a motion made by Patrick Chilcott and seconded by Ginny Wandell, it was unanimously voted to approve the survey as presented.

Voting Yes: Michael Tropeano, Paul Bosworth, Ginny Wandell and Patrick Chilcott

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: Suzanne Scroggins

VOTE: At 9:10 PM, on a motion made by Patrick Chilcott and seconded by Ginny Wandell, it was unanimously voted, by roll call vote, to enter Executive Session Pursuant to Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(3) to discuss strategy for negotiations as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the legal position of the School Committee, as declared by the Chair.

Voting Yes: Michael Tropeano, Paul Bosworth, Ginny Wandell and Patrick Chilcott

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: Suzanne Scroggins