

Pembroke Public Schools

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PEMBROKE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

April 5, 2016

North Pembroke Elementary School Library

Call to Order

Mr. Tropeano called the meeting to order at 7:10 PM.

Present from Administration: Mrs. Erin Obey, Interim Superintendent; Marybeth Brust, Director of Teaching & Learning; Jessica Duncanson, Director of Student Services

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

Acknowledge & Schedule Visitors

Mr. Tropeano welcomed the audience and explained the protocol for speaking at the meeting.

Adjustments to the Agenda

None

Communications

None

Approval of Bill Schedule

Bills were circulated for committee approval.

Consideration of Approval: School Committee Meeting Minutes of March 1, 2016.

VOTE: On a motion made by Patrick Chilcott and seconded by Paul Bosworth, it was unanimously voted to approve the school committee meeting minutes of March 1, 2016 as amended.

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

Voting No: none

Abstaining: Suzanne Scroggins

Absent: none

Mr. David Boyle said he has been a Pembroke resident for 20 years and spent summers here during his childhood. He added that he has two children in Pembroke schools. He said he would like to address some issues and it should be viewed as constructive criticism. He said he sat through the superintendent interview meetings and the process was very transparent and he loved everything about it. He said with the budgetary constraints on school district, he is concerned why the district is hiring for a position that has been vacant for a number of years. He said it doesn't make sense and it sent up a red flag. The committee confirmed the position is the waste water management position. Mrs. Obey explained that there is a plant at PHS and Bryantville and to operate the plants a person needs a level 4 license. She added that the position was not vacant, but that the employee holding that job has been on workmen's compensation and the district has been contracting the position with the person that does waste water management for Silver Lake while this employee has been out.

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

She explained in order for someone to get a license to operate the plant, it is a requirement to work under a licensed individual four years. Mrs. Obey explained the waste water position is four hours per day and the other four hours are maintenance custodian job duties. Mr. Fitzgibbons, Operation Managers, said the DEP would shut down the school if the reporting on plant was not done. Mr. Boyle asked for clarification on the custodial opening and questioned why a current custodian wasn't placed into the vacant job as a result of the waste water hire.

Mr. Tropeano said the committee cannot discuss why a person did not get hired. Mrs. Obey said the number one driving force of a hire is building need and each building is looked at as a whole. She added that custodial staffing is at the minimum number it could be. Mr. Chilcott clarified that the position had to be filled because the current consultant may retire in the next four years and the new person needs to work under him for four years. He said that leaves no choice but to fill the position in order to begin with the licensure process. Mr. Tropeano said the committee cannot discuss the person out on workmen's compensation. He said having the employee on workmen's compensation for a lengthy time has prompted the superintendent to make the decision to fill the position. Mr. Tropeano added that if the plant has problems it will cost a lot to the district. He said the district is trying to handle this efficiently and effectively and said school committee wouldn't allow a new hire at this time if it was going to have a budget impact. Mr. Tropeano added that Pembroke custodial expenses are considerably lower compared to surrounding districts. He said the district is at the bare minimum of custodians because the committee wants to put the budget money toward staffing teachers. Mr. Boyle said the new hire has extracurricular activities and questioned how he will work the shift. Mr. Obey said his hours will fluctuate to make sure he gets the 40 hours in. Mr. Boyle said the district will have to spend money to run the building for extra hours beyond the usual. Mr. Tropeano pointed out that the district has made accommodations for other employees to participate in activities like coaching and officiating. He said the committee likes having teachers work as coaches to support students. Mr. Boyle said he wants to know how the work schedule is monitored. Mrs. Obey said the custodial staff works 40 hours and each custodian completes a time sheet which is signed off by their building principal. Mr. Chilcott suggested having the business office figure out the cost of the accommodations and get it to Mr. Boyle. Mr. Tropeano said the committee has to trust that administration is monitoring their staff. Mr. Boyle said he is a concerned parent and taxpayer. Mrs. Scroggins added that the committee is bound by open meeting law and bound by contracts of employees so they have to play by the rules and if the committee doesn't follow the rules everyone will be in trouble. Mr. Tropeano told Mr. Boyle he is welcome to meet with Mr. Fitzgibbons and Mrs. Obey if he needs additional information. Mr. Boyle said he will and thanked the committee.

Resolution Calling for Full Funding of the Foundation Budget Review Commission's Recommendations

Mr. Tropeano said a Suburban Coalition has been formed to call for the legislature and the governor to fully fund the foundation budget. It is asking suburban school communities to adopt their resolution with the goal of getting the State to pay their share.

Mr. Tropeano read the resolution:

Whereas the Massachusetts Foundation Budget Review Commission identified two areas (employee health insurance and special education) where the Massachusetts Foundation Budget significantly understates the true cost of educating students in the Commonwealth and has failed to keep pace with rising costs;

Whereas this underfunding means the cost of providing a quality education has increasingly been borne by local communities, most often at the expense of other vital municipal operations;

Whereas investing in education today leads to higher incomes, and thus less investment in police, prisons, subsidized health care, low income housing, welfare, etc. in the future;

Whereas state and local economies are most effectively strengthened "by investing in education and increasing the number of well-educated workers."

Therefore Be It Resolved that the Pembroke School Committee calls on the Massachusetts Legislature and the Governor of Massachusetts to fully fund and adopt the recommendations of the Foundation Budget Review Commission in the immediate future.

VOTE: On a motion made by Paul Bosworth and seconded by Patrick Chilcott, it was unanimously voted to adopt the resolution.

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

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

Mr. Tropeano said he will reach out to the Suburban Coalition and let them know that Pembroke is adopting the resolution.

Presentation of the FY17 Administration Recommended Budget

Mrs. Obey said the guiding philosophies include making investments in ELL and SPED, preserving restorations made possible by override, increasing support for social emotional needs and realigning infrastructure to better support teachers. The process will be to continue to increase budget transparency and begin the steps towards transitioning to zero based budgeting. Mr. Chilcott asked the superintendent to explain the task of zero based budgeting and Mrs. Wandell asked to have the definition of zero based budgeting available for public information. Mrs. Obey went on to explain that the current recommended budget keeps all the restorations made this year. She said there are only eight elementary classes larger than 25 students and they are primarily accelerated classes and at the secondary level, there are 34 core courses and 38 electives greater than 25 and they are social studies and art related. Mr. Tropeano asked Mrs. Obey to gather up evidence of the tangible benefits of the PHS Librarian and the library paras to both students and teachers.

Mrs. Obey said the additional restorations as a result of the override include elimination of fee increases, no reduction of the PCMS/PHS clubs, the purchase for the marching band and no cuts to athletics. She gave a nine year historical picture and said Chapter 70 funding has been flat. Mr. Tropeano asked about student enrollments and Mrs. Obey said the district is down 11 students. Mr. Chilcott said the school district's overall percentage of the Town budget has been flat. He said what the district did last year was prudent and because the \$1.3 million wasn't fully spent, it allows funding of this year's maintenance of effort budget. Mrs. Obey said the FY16 budget was \$30,832,029 and FY17 MOE is \$31,799,383 so the FY17 budget gap is \$967,354 and this is in the same range the district usually sees. She added that the FY17 priorities will cost \$402,300 which brings the gap to \$1,369,654. Chapter 70 will only supply \$61,820, with the Town supplying \$438,180. The resulting gap is \$869,654 and Mrs. Obey said to cover that gap the proposed recommendations are a Central Office restructure which will save \$145,000, athletics restructure which will save \$45,000, SPED tuition pre-buy which will make up \$350,000, retirements and leaves will save \$50,000 and the revolving fund offset will give \$194,654. Mr. Tropeano said the Town got hit with a \$400,000 increase in health care costs and wants the school department to accept \$350,000 instead of \$500,000. Mr. Chilcott said there is no vision on revenue at the Town level and the committee shouldn't have to make cuts and should ask the Town for the \$500,000. Mr. Tropeano said it has been said that the school department doesn't need money because of the override.

Mr. Bosworth said the school district is not getting the appropriate level of funding from the increase in the tax base with the override. Mr. Tropeano said he has been working with Mr. Arthur Boyle to get on the Selectmen's meeting agenda and he offered the Board of Selectmen to attend tonight's meeting. Mr. Chilcott said there isn't an understanding of the school budget and the selectmen did not come tonight. Mrs. Obey added that when she meets with the town department heads she finds it a unified approach and would like to give them credit.

Mrs. Obey reviewed the administrative budget priorities which include an additional ELL teacher, 2 SPED teachers, 1 elementary social worker for the 3 schools, 1 secondary social worker for PCMS/PHS, technology restructure, investment in intervention software, and 1 wellness teacher at PHS. Mrs. Obey said administration has talked about partnering with a Bay State hospital and giving them space in the

school building so they can counsel students/families. She added that this would be in addition to the current recommendation. The committee talked about the benefits of the DOT program in place at Duxbury high school. Mr. Bosworth asked if adding a social worker will take some burden off guidance and Mrs. Obey said it would and it would also help administration.

Mrs. Obey said the district needs a structure in place to help teachers integrate/use technology. She said there is currently a director of information technology but there is also a need for a director of instructional technology/technology integration. She said this position could be the result of upgrading a current position and said she also recommends a technology point person at each building that would be paid with a stipend. Mr. Bosworth said he is concerned about upgrading a current position and suggested reviewing the job description and opening the application process and Mr. Chilcott agreed. Mr. Tropeano asked to get a technology vision statement, organizational chart and job descriptions of these positions for the public budget hearing. Mr. Chilcott suggested looking at the operating model and organizational design in order to make sure that this is most effective for the future need of the district. Mrs. Wandell said she expected this restructure to happen in the coming fiscal year and the vision would have to be expanded long term. Mrs. Obey said the frustration level with technology is high with both teachers and parents. Mr. Tropeano suggested continuing this discussion once more information is received from the superintendent.

Mrs. Obey said another priority is the addition of a wellness teacher at PHS. This will allow the two current gym teachers to go back to teaching five classes instead of six in addition to releasing a paraprofessional from teaching two sections of PE. She said the district could hire a candidate that is dual certified in PE and Health as a way to be able to offer more courses. Mrs. Scroggins clarified that the program of studies has been approved and that any course changes will have to take place the following year. Mrs. Wandell added that in this scenario course content may be enhanced for the coming year.

Mr. Bosworth said he thinks a social studies teacher should be added based on class sizes. Mrs. Brust said she thinks this would be helpful as more social studies electives could be added and it would keep students out of studies. She added that she thinks this addition comes second to the social emotional needs positions. Mrs. Scroggins said the committee has to figure out a balance.

Mrs. Obey reviewed her proposed organizational chart and described the possible Central Office restructure. The committee discussed the number of direct reports to the superintendent.

Mrs. Obey presented the Administrative Level 2 and 3 priorities. She said the district can start phasing in the music and STEM materials that are needed. Mr. Tropeano said the \$140,000 cost of social studies texts for grades 7-11 should be brought as a capital item to Town meeting. Mrs. Obey added that if additional reductions were needed they would include not filling the PCMS guidance vacancy, cutting athletics, cutting library/office paraprofessionals and the last option would be cutting classroom teachers.

Superintendent's Report

Consideration of Acknowledgement: Donation to PHS Music Department

Mrs. Obey said the PHS marching band marched in the Abington St. Patrick's Day parade and as a result received a donation to the PHS Music Department.

VOTE: On a motion made by Patrick Chilcott and seconded by Ginny Wandell, it was unanimously voted to accept the PHS marching band Abington St. Patrick's Day donation of \$2,000 with the intent to purchase a French horn.

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

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

Consideration of Acknowledgement: Donation from PHS Boosters to PHS Athletics

Mrs. Obey said the donation includes sports banners for the gym, practice time at Sandbaggers for the golf team, a pitching machine, soccer nets, speed ladders, hurdles for soccer and certificates, pins and letters for the Athletic department.

VOTE: On a motion made by Patrick Chilcott and seconded by Ginny Wandell, it was unanimously voted accept the PHS Boosters several sports donations to PHS.

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

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

Consideration of Approval: PHS DECA Trip to Nashville, TN

VOTE: On a motion made by Patrick Chilcott and seconded by Ginny Wandell, it was unanimously voted to approve the PHS DECA trip to Nashville, TN on April 22-27, 2016.

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

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

Consideration of Approval: PHS Trip to Madrid, Spain

Mr. Tropeano said his family participated in this and it was great. He said Mrs. Noguer did a great job.

VOTE: On a motion made by Paul Bosworth and seconded by Patrick Chilcott, it was unanimously voted to approve the PHS trip to Madrid, Spain in February 2017.

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

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

Consideration of Approval: PHS Music Department Trip to New York City

Mr. Tropeano noted that this trip is for next school year.

VOTE: On a motion made by Patrick Chilcott and seconded by Ginny Wandell, it was unanimously voted to approve the PHS Music department trip to New York City, April 6-9, 2017.

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

Voting No: none

Abstaining: none

Absent: none

Consideration of Approval: PCMS Homeschooling Request

VOTE: On a motion made by Patrick Chilcott and seconded by Ginny Wandell, it was unanimously voted to approve the 2015-2016 homeschooling request of Zella S. DePesa submitted by Michelle DePesa.

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

Mr. Bosworth asked for information on the Hobomock and PHS principal postings. Mrs. Obey said the Hobomock principal posting is closed and administration is setting up the screening committee. The committee agreed that the three PHS principal finalists will be brought to School Committee for review.

VOTE: At 9:24 PM, on a motion made by Patrick Chilcott and seconded by Suzanne Scroggins, 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 of a Personal Service Contract and a Legal Matter 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, Patrick Chilcott and Suzanne Scroggins
Voting No: none
Abstaining: none
Absent: none

APPROVED: May 3, 2016

MOTIONS

VOTE: On a motion made by Patrick Chilcott and seconded by Paul Bosworth, it was unanimously voted to approve the school committee meeting minutes of March 1, 2016 as amended.

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

VOTE: On a motion made by Paul Bosworth and seconded by Patrick Chilcott it, was unanimously voted to adopt the resolution.

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

VOTE: On a motion made by Patrick Chilcott and seconded by Ginny Wandell, it was unanimously voted to acknowledge the \$2,000 donation to the PHS Music Department to purchase a French horn.

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

VOTE: On a motion made by Patrick Chilcott and seconded by Ginny Wandell, it was unanimously voted acknowledge the donation from PHS Boosters to PHS Athletics.

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

VOTE: On a motion made by Patrick Chilcott and seconded by Ginny Wandell, it was unanimously voted to approve the PHS DECA trip to Nashville, TN on April 22-27, 2016.

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

VOTE: On a motion made by Paul Bosworth and seconded by Patrick Chilcott, it was unanimously voted to approve the PHS trip to Madrid, Spain in February 2017.

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

VOTE: On a motion made by Patrick Chilcott and seconded by Ginny Wandell, it was unanimously voted to approve the PHS Music department trip to New York City, April 6-9, 2017.

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

VOTE: On a motion made by Patrick Chilcott and seconded by Ginny Wandell, it was unanimously voted to approve the 2015-2016 homeschooling request of Zella S. DePesa submitted by Michelle DePesa.

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