

GROTON-DUNSTABLE REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

High School Library
Business Meeting Minutes
September 16, 2009
(Approved 10/7/09)

PRESENT:

Mr. Peter Carson
Mr. Erik Dichter
Ms Berta Erickson
Mr. Jim Frey, Chair
Dr. Paul Funch
Ms Alison Manugian, Secretary
Mr. Jon Sjoberg, Vice-chair

ADMINISTRATION:

Dr. Alan Genovese, Superintendent

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES:

Rafael Glod and Brianna Riposa (Left at 8:45 p.m.)

STAFF, PRESS, OTHERS: C. Beckert-Long, Groton Herald; P. Comtois, Groton Landmark;
A. Eliot, M. Sweenie, J. Sweenie, S. Sweenie, K. Sweenie, C. Jeannotte, B. Vasquez, A. Bettencourt

CALL TO ORDER:

The GDRSC Meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by the chair, J. Frey.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/SPOTLIGHTS

A. Recognition of GDAY Member - Recognizing Alice Anne Barbo will be done at the October 7th meeting.

B. Young Heroes Award

Dr. Genovese introduced third grade triplets Meagan, Jordon and Shaelyn Sweenie. A ceremony was held at Florence Roche yesterday where they were recognized by the Office of the State Fire Marshal and presented with the Young Heroes Award. In July, the girls smelled smoke coming from the basement of their home and alerted their parents. Two weeks prior to this, the girls had participated in a SAFE lesson from the Groton Fire Department where they, and their classmates, practiced what to do in case of smoke or fire in the home. Dr. Genovese said this is an instance of where they can take training given to students and look at documented results of how that training can turn into a success. J. Frey presented certificates to Meagan, Jordon and Shaelyn.

Rafael and Brianna read prepared announcements and a copy is attached to these minutes.

B. Erickson announced the Grand Finale After Dark Committee is hosting the second annual Junior/Senior Fashion Show which will be held on November 20th at the PAC. Volunteers and models are needed and proceeds are used to run the substance-free after prom party. A kick-off meeting will be held on September 22nd at 7:00 p.m. in the MSN library.

PRESENTATIONS

A. Recommendation for Interim Director of Business and Finance

Dr. Genovese introduced Clare Jeannotte. She has served as the Business Administrator for Nashoba Tech and took care of the finances at the Parker Charter School.

Ms Jeannotte met with Personnel and Negotiations and they support his recommendation to ask the school

committee to appoint her as part-time Interim Director of Business and Finance. He explained her primary responsibilities will be to monitor the FY10 budget and to develop and usher through the FY11 budget. He will continue to do the day to day operations. She is available to start on September 28th. The office staff also met with her and gave positive feedback.

P. FUNCH MOVED TO SUSPEND THE RULES AND ADVANCE FOR IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION THE ACTION ITEM TO APPOINT A PART-TIME INTERIM DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS AND FINANCE.

SECONDED BY B. ERICKSON

SO VOTED IN FAVOR UNANIMOUSLY

P. FUNCH MOVED THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPOINT CLARE JEANNOTTE AS PART-TIME INTERIM DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS AND FINANCE FOR THIS COMING FISCAL YEAR ACCORDING TO THE TERMS OF THE CONTRACT. SECONDED BY B. ERICKSON

SO VOTED IN FAVOR UNANIMOUSLY

B. Superintendent Search: Future Management Systems (FMS) - Burt Vasquez

B. Vasquez stated Future Management Systems has 30 years of experience working with over 700 organizations and over 250 school systems. They have developed a training program with the statewide leadership program, called the Alliance, to assist educational leaders with high performance team development across the Commonwealth. They also contributed leadership development in fashioning new professional standards for Massachusetts superintendents. These new standards include learning instruction, management operations, family and community partnerships and ethical and reflective leadership. He stated they are presently consultants for the Groton-Dunstable Strategic Plan.

He said FMS is known for helping to find the best fit that lasts. They advertise nationally but focus their recruitment efforts regionally. He noted it is the school committee's search and FMS are their consultants, providing added value services and they can control costs. They assess the leadership needs of the school system, develop leadership criteria, consult on advertising and train and support the search committee. Their major focus is on recruitment with recent searches attracting 25 to 35 candidates.

B. Vasquez explained they will train facilitators to conduct focus groups with internal and external constituents and assist the search committee and school committee throughout the interview process by helping to develop questions for the candidates based on information he has received. The school committee determines how many candidates they want to interview. FMS does extensive reference checks with the candidate's prior employer rather than with their current employer.

FMS did between 8 and 12 superintendent searches last year and the cost of their services is between \$12,500 and \$14,500. They are not currently doing any superintendent searches.

B. Erickson asked if the screening committee can see all the resumes. B. Vasquez said the applicants would come to him from the committee and he will develop a scoring rubric to assess each candidate on any of the 10 points developed from the leadership profile. The candidates are then presented to the search committee in an ordinal fashion. They do a lot of active recruiting.

J. Frey asked if the entry consulting process is included in the cost proposal and was told yes. He asked what the typical additional costs, above the proposal rates, might be for advertising and a potential candidate's travel expenses. B. Vasquez said between \$600 and \$800. Travel expenses are negotiable.

Dr. Funch asked if FMS participates in the focus groups. B. Vasquez said they have but he recommends training their own facilitators. P. Carson asked about the timeframe. B. Vasquez said it will take 2 to 3 months to compile a list of candidates, conduct background checks and have the committee review the list. He hopes to have a candidate selected by March. He would like 1 or 2 school committee members on the search committee, with one of them serving as the chair, as well as key administrators, with no more than 6 to 8

C. Superintendent Search: NESDEC (New England School Development Council) - Arthur Bettencourt
Assistant Executive Director Arthur Bettencourt said NESDEC has been in existence for 60 years and they are a not-for-profit corporation that serves all of New England with one consultant serving each of the states. Should they be awarded the search, Joanne Rys would be the team consultant. They have done over 350 executive searches since 1982 and he explained they do not have a stable of candidates but develop an applicant pool from a candidate profile. They pride themselves on finding a good fit that can relate to the staff and community. Their concentration is in New England but they are known nationwide and they actively recruit highly qualified and people who have the potential to be high performing. Because of the types of work they do, they are in school districts all over New England and they have an understanding of who might be available.

E. Dichter said the proposed 4 month timeline is aggressive based on what the committee has heard from the other firms. A. Bettencourt said there is an advantage to hit the ground running and to be as aggressive as you can since they are competing against several other districts. The 4 month deadline can always be extended. He said the screening committee will have to understand they will have milestones they will have to meet. E. Dichter asked how far he can go with the recruitment without having the community needs identified. A. Bettencourt said they start with conversations with the school committee to determine what they are looking for in general terms. They will run focus groups with identified constituencies, rank priorities and develop a comprehensive candidate profile. They reflect the committee's views against what the community is saying to see if there is anything new. The profile is used to measure candidates and he suggests the profile be put on a website.

B. Erickson asked if the screening committee will see all the resumes before candidates are brought forward. A. Bettencourt said they bring all the applications to the screening committee and NESDEC will give them their view if that is what the committee wants. The cost of their services is \$11,320 with a fixed expense charge of \$3660, excluding advertising.

P. Carson asked his opinion on the make up of the screening committee and whether school committee members should participate. A. Bettencourt said they consider it to be the school committee's search. They suggest the screening committee have between 10 and 15 people but 11 to 12 is ideal, and that they think in terms of constituencies rather than the number of people. He suggests the school committee not select the members but ask the constituencies to recommend candidates. They suggest having two school committee members, with one serving as the chair and the other as vice-chair, as this demonstrates the school committee is in control of their search and this provides a direct line of communication between the screening committee and school committee.

NESDEC currently has 8 searches going on in New England and each has a dedicated consultant. He has coordinated all of the searches since 2004 and done about 50 personally. He would be involved in Groton-Dunstable's search with Ms Rys. Fifty percent or better of the candidates will come from New England but they will see applicants from other states.

J. Frey asked about advertising and travel costs for these searches. A. Bettencourt said using print media, such as **Education Week**, will cost \$2100 to \$2200 and this includes 30 days of their on-line service. They do searches electronically and can send out announcements of the vacancy throughout their network. Initially there would be nothing for candidate travel because NESDEC has a teleconferencing center. J. Frey asked if he is familiar with the concept of assessment centers and he said he is not sure but they have trained their consultant staff in situational interviews and can provide this service.

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

None

DISCUSSIONS

A. Policies - First Reading

Dr. Funch highlighted the policy changes.

a. BDFA - School Councils

The primary change is to reflect that SIP's are not approved by the school committee any longer but it is the Policy subcommittee's recommendation they be reviewed by the school committee.

b. BDFA-E-1 - School Improvement Plan (SIP)

c. BDFA-E-2 - Submission and Approval of the SIP

d. BDFA-E-3 - Conduct of School Council Business

These three Exhibits read like policy rather than exhibits and they are looking into why they are in this form. If they feel everything that needs to be said about School Councils is said in the law, they would just say they will follow the law. There may be things in the exhibits that should be an exhibit or could be brought into the policy. J. Frey said he did not find anything about the composition of a School Council and Dr. Genovese said this is part of the statute. A. Manugian pointed out Line 6 of BDFA-E-1 refers to approval by the school committee.

e. DBJ - Budget Transfer Authority

Based on the new structure of the budget, any transfers between the different major categories would require school committee approval. Transfers between line items within a major budget category must be reported to the committee for approval if they exceed \$10,000. Providing a quarterly report will be added to Line 16. The words "per the method specified in M.G.L.71 Chapter 16B1" will be added to the end of Line 22.

f. EF - Food Service Management

This policy is up for review to consider putting language in here for the collection of delinquent accounts. An incremental process for collection will be outlined and would be implemented by the administration. Ms Barker will make some suggestions as well.

B. Policies - Second & Subsequent Readings

a. BDE - Subcommittees of the School Committee

Lines 27 through 31, in accordance with Open Meeting Law requirements, clarify a subcommittee meeting should be posted as a school committee meeting if a quorum is likely to be present. If the meeting has only been posted as a subcommittee meeting, no more than 3 school committee members in total may participate.

b. EEAAs - Assignment of Students to Destinations Other Than Their Homes

"Non-house" in Line 27 will be changed to "different". J. Sjoberg would like the word "emergency" in Line 27 changed to "extraordinary". Other members feel this would be giving parents a "free pass" while an emergency is used as a last resort.

A. Manugian advised Florence Roche has their pick-up and extended day dismissal procedures on their website which outlines how to notify the school that your child is going home with someone else and a change to the policy will need to be communicated to the parents. She asked if there is a similar problem with students being picked up at a stop where they have been dropped off by a parent. If a bus driver found a child to regularly be at a bus stop where he/she is not scheduled to be,

Dr. Genovese said the driver would do a follow-up as to why the child is there. When a child is not on their scheduled bus, there is a record in the office that they went home with their parents. It was agreed this policy needs more discussion.

Members were reminded to put the approved policies in their books.

REPORTS

Policy Subcommittee - Dr. Funch reported their meeting schedule will change to the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month. It was agreed they will meet on September 29th.

Budget & Finance Subcommittee - A. Manugian reported they met last week. The Swallow Union painting project has been completed and all the paperwork is in. The installation of the MS projectors is ongoing and

being done after school hours. All contractors had CORI checks. The water bottles have been removed from the high school and the extra water was donated to the athletic teams. The water pump repair is about done.

They plan to have the bond for the Casella land to market by the end of September and the committee will vote on it at their October 7th meeting. Some logistical budget transfers need to be made for reconciliation as they begin to conform with the DESE codes.

Personnel and Negotiations - J. Sjoberg reported they met with Ms Jeannotte and recommended her appointment to the position of part-time Interim Director of Business and Finance.

Communication Advisory Committee - E. Dichter reported he will be sending out their meeting schedule. They will be meeting next Monday, following the Personnel and Negotiations meeting.

Think Tank Committee - B. Erickson reported they met and are working on intra-district sharing, incentives, energy, virtual classrooms and establishing endowments. Their next meeting is scheduled for October 1st at 7:00 p.m. at Prescott. J. Frey advised he will try to attend that meeting.

Tarbell Committee - Dr. Genovese reported they are meeting tomorrow at 8:00 a.m. As an abutter to the Tarbell School, A. Manugian advised she cannot be part of this subcommittee due to a conflict of interest.

Director of Business & Finance

FY10 Budget Update - Dr. Genovese reported they are in the process of setting up the KVS financial software program for FY10. The approved budget needs to match the budget going into KVS. The budget was voted by 1000, 2000 and 3000 categories and by salary, payroll and expense. It was a given that some changes would need to be made to match DOE function codes.

FY10 Budget Transfer Requests - A Chart of Accounts and a FY2010 Budget Request 1000 Level Summary were distributed. The budget summary shows what they want to put in KVS in order for things to match and Dr. Genovese stated the bottom line to the budget will not change. The adjustments that need to be made in the 1000 and 2000 categories were reviewed. Dr. Genovese stated no one's salary or stipend has increased. The line item transfers were also reviewed. Transfers between categories will need school committee approval.

Other Items of Interest - The auditors are at Central Office and the committee will see, as part of the budget for the first time, the liability associated with GASB 45 for retirees.

Superintendent

Update on School Choice - Dr. Genovese reported a meeting was held and the committee reviewed the enrollment numbers. A vote was taken to declare three seats in the 9th grade and six seats in the 10th grade. Fourteen had applied for the ninth grade and about 6 had applied for the 10th grade and a lottery was held. J. Frey said the Lowell Sun article about the district rejecting kids that do not live in the district had some unfortunate wording choices. He clarified they currently have 33 approved School Choice students. Occasionally ineligible students that are no longer residents attend the schools and have to be unenrolled but they can apply to come back on School Choice.

Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) - Dr. Genovese reported he had Drug and Alcohol Counselor Alice Lenhart and GDAY President Alice Barbo attend the last Administrative Council meeting to make sure there is follow-up on the YRBS. Ms Barbo and Ms Lenhart will lead a forum for the wellness staff to discuss the information and how to apply it to programs and support systems for students.

Chairman

Open Meeting Law Seminar - J. Frey reported several members attended the Open Meeting Law seminar and they received some updates on the process that have resulted in some policy changes. A lot of time was spent discussing the use of email and any emails members send that discuss school committee business should be copied to Central Office and members should keep their own email folder. Other changes to take

effect July 1, 2010 include Saturdays not counting as part of the 48 hour notice requirement and any posting must be in a place that is accessible 24 hours a day. Handouts will be required to be part of a permanent record. B. Erickson asked if the subcommittees approve their minutes even though it is not required and was told the minutes are reviewed and any necessary corrections are made. If requested, meeting minutes are to be made available within 10 days and they can be labeled DRAFT.

President Obama's Address to Students - J. Frey reported the district collectively made the decision that they were not prepared to support the live broadcast of President Obama's speech on September 8th. After speaking with members of the administration, he determined there was no political basis or motivation for this decision, it was purely a logistical one. P. Carson agreed the intent was not to review the content before showing the speech. The speech has been shown to everyone at the middle school and has been made available to the elementary and high schools.

Other Items of Interest - J. Frey reported he and Dr. Genovese met with the Dunstable Finance Committee last week to start conversations about the budget process and answer questions about funding. Dunstable officials are anxious to establish constructive dialogue and avoid having to override their recommendations again this year. He and Mr. Dichter will be invited to a selectmen's meeting to set up how they will work on the budget process.

ACTION ITEMS

Consent Action Items

A. Vote to Approve Business Meeting Minutes of September 2, 2009

P. FUNCH MOVED TO APPROVE THE BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 2, 2009.

SECONDED BY J. SJOBERG

SO VOTED IN FAVOR UNANIMOUSLY

B. Vote to Approve Final Reading of the Following Policies:

a. BBAA - School Committee Member Authority

P. FUNCH MOVED TO APPROVE POLICY BBAA AS REVISED IN THEIR PACKET.

SECONDED BY P. CARSON

SO VOTED IN FAVOR UNANIMOUSLY

b. BDA - School Committee Organizational Meeting

c. BEDB - Meeting Agenda

d. BEDB-E-1 - Agenda Content

e. EDB-E-2 - 2009-2010 Agenda Format

f. BEDH - Public Participation at School Committee Meetings

g. BEDH-E - Rules for Questions and Comments from the Public

P. FUNCH MOVED TO APPROVE POLICIES b THROUGH g AS LISTED ON THE AGENDA (b. BDA - SCHOOL COMMITTEE ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING, c. BEDB - MEETING AGENDA, d. BEDB-E-1 - AGENDA CONTENT, e. EDB-E-2 - 2009-2010 AGENDA FORMAT, f. BEDH - PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS, g. BEDH-E - RULES FOR QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC) SECONDED BY P. CARSON

SO VOTED IN FAVOR UNANIMOUSLY

h. KHB - Advertising in the Schools

P. FUNCH MOVED TO APPROVE POLICY KHB - ADVERTISING IN THE SCHOOLS.

SECONDED BY P. CARSON

It was agreed this may not be perfect but it is a start and can always be revisited.

In Favor: P. Funch, J. Sjoberg, J. Frey, P. Carson, B. Erickson, E. Dichter

Abstention: A. Manugian

i. KHB- E - Advertising in the Schools - Sample Policy Applications

P. FUNCH MOVED TO APPROVE POLICY KHB - E- ADVERTISING IN THE SCHOOLS - SAMPLE POLICY APPLICATIONS. SECONDED BY B. ERICKSON

Dr. Funch said additional things may need to be added to the exhibit as they move forward.

In Favor: P. Funch, J. Sjoberg, J. Frey, P. Carson, B. Erickson, E. Dichter

Abstention: A. Manugian

It was agreed the advertising policy needed to have a lot of discussion and it served a good purpose.

C. Other Action Items

Vote to Approve Transfers

A. MANUGIAN MOVED THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE THE BUDGET CATEGORY TRANSFERS THAT WERE HANDED OUT TONIGHT IN THE DOCUMENT ENTITLED FISCAL YEAR 2010 ADOPTED BUDGET - CATEGORY TRANSFER REQUEST, DATED SEPTEMBER 16, 2009.

SECONDED BY J. SJOBERG

SO VOTED IN FAVOR UNANIMOUSLY

A. MANUGIAN MOVED THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE THE LINE ITEM BUDGET TRANSFERS AS SET FORTH IN THE ADDITIONAL HANDOUT ENTITLED FISCAL YEAR 2010 BUDGET LINE ITEM TRANSFER REQUEST, DATED SEPTEMBER 11, 2009. SECONDED BY J. SJOBERG

SO VOTED IN FAVOR UNANIMOUSLY

Vote to Appoint Part-Time Interim Director of Business & Finance

See earlier vote

Vote to Select a Superintendent Search Consultant

P. FUNCH MOVED THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE RETAIN THE SERVICES OF NESDEC FOR THE PURPOSES OF PROVIDING SERVICES TO THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE FOR THE SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH. SECONDED BY E. DICHTER

J. Sjoberg said two former school committee members, and two other members, who were part of the last search committee, will be attending a school committee meeting on September 21st. Another preliminary meeting is scheduled for September 28th with the hope of meeting with their consultant.

Members discussed what each firm had to offer. E. Dichter would be happy with MASC or NESDEC but feels NESDEC's network is more robust. B. Erickson would not be upset choosing any of the three but liked FMS's presentation and the quality of their clients. P. Carson likes both MASC and NESDEC and would choose MASC first but it would be close. A. Manugian would be comfortable with either MASC or NESDEC and pointed out that if they choose NESDEC, as members of MASC, they are still able to call them with any questions.

J. Sjoberg feels NESDEC came prepared to answer their questions before they asked them. He enjoys the relationship they have with MASC and has no doubt Mr. Gilbert will be there when the search is over and would choose them. Dr. Funch was close to choosing MASC but feels NESDEC has access to more data and he would prefer the independent view of the district they would get from NESDEC. J. Frey said any of them would be helpful to them but he is leaning towards NESDEC's experience and aggressive timeline. The consultant also has many years of experience on MASC. E. Dichter noted NESDEC was their consultant for

SO VOTED IN FAVOR UNANIMOUSLY

E. Dichter said he wants Ms Rys to be at the September 28th meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Dr. Genovese explained they are fortunate to have certified speech assistants and this is a less expensive way to provide a service to the kids. However, an assistant has to work under a licensed speech person. A licensed speech person is on an extended family medical leave and someone is filling in. They have a licensed speech therapist who they would like to pay a \$2000 stipend, which would come out of a federal grant, to oversee the assistants. This person all ready works for the district as a SPED liaison. Not using this model would require the hiring of a certified speech therapist instead of an assistant and would cost several thousand dollars. He noted the Director of Pupil Services does not have a speech license. Dr. Genovese would like the committee to establish a stipend of \$2000 from a federal grant to provide for a speech language service coordinator for this year. Action on this request will be taken at the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

P. FUNCH MOVED TO ADJOURN AT 11:02 P.M. SECONDED BY J. SJOBERG

SO VOTED IN FAVOR UNANIMOUSLY

Respectfully submitted,

Susan H. Smith
Recording Secretary

With attachment