

The Regular Meeting of the Brockton School Committee was held this evening in the George M. Romm Theatre at Brockton High School.

Present: Mayor Carpenter; Chair; Mr. Minichiello, Vice-Chair; Superintendent Smith, Secretary; Mr. Henningson, Mr. Jordan, Mrs. Joyce, Mr. Robinson, Mrs. Sullivan, Mrs. Wilson

Also Present: Executive Team Members A. Petronio, M. Thomas, C. Murray, J. Saba-Maguire, S. Terrasi, E. Cancell, K. Moran; L. Silva, Director of Development and Grants Management

Note: These minutes contain a summary of the meeting and list items that were under discussion.

Mayor Carpenter called the meeting to order at 7:18 p.m., followed by a salute to the flag.

## **Consent Agenda**

Mayor Carpenter explained the purpose of the Consent Agenda, and asked members if they wished to remove any items for discussion; Mrs. Joyce asked to remove Item E, Authorization to Submit Federal NCLB grants.

**Mr. Minichiello moved the Superintendent's recommendation to approve the following items on the Consent Agenda.**

- *July 21, 2015 Regular School Committee Meeting Minutes*
- *July 21, 2015 Minutes of Special Meeting*
- *July 22, 2015 Accounts Review Subcommittee Report*
- *Authorization to Submit: MA DESE Academic Support - \$72,500*
- *Notification of Personnel Actions: Leaves of Absence, Resignations, Retirements*

Voted: to adopt the recommendation, unanimous.

Mayor Carpenter called on Mrs. Joyce, who asked the Superintendent for a briefing on how the amounts on *Item E, No Child Left Behind grants*, compare with previous years. The Superintendent invited Mrs. Barry and Ms. Silva to respond.

Ms. Silva reported that the Special Education Entitlement grant is down \$139,000, Perkins Secondary (vocational program at BHS) is down \$8,000, Title III is down \$17,000. She said she has spoken with these grant managers who will cut back on supplies, field trips, there will be no cuts to student services. Ms. Silva said total losses this year amount to \$1,027,000. The Superintendent added that the good news is Title 1 received an increase, but we are seeing grants decreasing across the board. Mrs. Joyce requested that this be an agenda item for the School Committee retreat, to discuss the losses and how the district can continue to provide adequate services.

**After discussion, Mrs. Joyce moved to accept the Superintendent's recommendation to authorize the submission of the NCLB grants.**

Voted: to approve the motion, unanimous.

### Honorary High School Diploma

Mayor Carpenter requested that Item B, the awarding of an Honorary Diploma, be taken out of order. The Superintendent explained that the diploma would be awarded to Marguerite Brides Gaquin, who left school just shy of her graduation to support her family while the men went off to serve in WWII. The diploma was presented by Mayor Carpenter and Superintendent Smith to Maureen O'Mara, the daughter of Marguerite.

## **Communication**

### Elections Commission Request

Mayor Carpenter announced that the School Committee has received a request from the Elections Commission to use schools as polling locations for the October 6<sup>th</sup> special primary election to fill the vacant Senate seat after Tom Kennedy's passing.

**Mr. Robinson moved to approve the request as presented, the motion was seconded.**

Voted: to approve the motion, unanimous.

### Brockton Historical Society Request

A letter was submitted by Carl Landerholm requesting the loan of the B.B. Russell portrait that is in the Superintendent of Schools' office, to be displayed at the Brockton Historical Museum. Mayor Carpenter invited Mr. Landerholm to speak to his request. Mr. Landerholm said B.B. Russell was the first Superintendent of Schools and he would like to hang that portrait for a six-month period, in the Education Room of the Homestead at the Brockton Historical Museum. Mr. Landerholm spoke briefly about the importance of education and the importance of having a sense of one's history. School Committee members expressed their wholehearted support for Mr. Landerholm's request.

**Mr. Minichiello moved to approve the lending of the portrait of Barrett B. Russell, currently located in the Superintendent's Office, to be located at the Brockton Historical Society Homestead, for a period of no more than six months.**

Voted: to approve the motion, unanimous.

### Parent Letters

The Superintendent shared that she has received letters from parents from the Angelo and Gilmore schools who expressed their appreciation for the work done with their children, stating that these kinds of letters "make your day".

## **Superintendent's Report**

### Administrative Appointments

The Superintendent was pleased to announce two appointments: Nicholas Lee as the Director of Physical Education K – 12, and Joanne Camillo as the Principal of the Barrett Russell Kindergarten Center.

### PARCC Update

Dr. Cancell and Mrs. Barry gave a power point presentation (attached) reviewing Brockton's experience with the PARCC exam this year. Dr. Cancell praised the way all departments across the district supported the schools during testing, five schools took the test online, the remainder took the paper test. Dr. Cancell reviewed pros and cons.

Pros: This is the next generation test, which measures the Common Core standards and reflect the curricular shifts in the district. The test helps to prepare students for modern technology. Staff and students appreciated the time limit on the tests.

Cons: Dr. Cancell pointed out that in order to support all of the devices, districts need a robust network. There are still technical glitches, there were too many sessions, and the timing of the test coincided with other districtwide testing.

A question and answer period followed. Dr. Cancell said he will not know how Brockton will proceed until the State makes its decision whether it will stay with PARCC, probably in late November, which gives districts very little planning time.

Dr. Cancell and Mrs. Barry agreed that PARCC gives a much better assessment of student achievement than the current MCAS. He was asked whether we would be able to see any difference between those taking the online version and those taking the paper version, Dr. Cancell responded that kind of data would be available.

Committee members expressed their concerns about PARCC. Mr. Minichiello said it is hypocritical for the State to choose PARCC and not provide the tools, saying this is another unfunded mandate that we must pursue as part of our equity lawsuit. Concerns were expressed about not having enough computers and a strong enough network to support them, how the district will fund the technology needed to take the online assessment if the State does not, and about teacher accountability that is tied to the test when classes are not properly equipped and prepared. Mrs. Barry said it is unfair to students not have the devices in their hands at the beginning of the year. Mrs. Barry also had concerns about the readiness of grade three students. Dr. Cancell added that professional development for teachers is important—we are asking them to use different technology and we can significantly reduce the stress by more training.

### BHS

The Superintendent asked Principal Wolder and Associate Principal Perkins to update School Committee on the 2015-2016 BHS plan.

Ms. Wolder wanted to share with School Committee that she was called by the government to testify in Tennessee with respect to the email threats Brockton High and other area high schools received last year from a youth in that state. She said that the U.S. District Attorney's office is taking this issue very seriously.

Principal Wolder shared the academic, faculty, student life and school council/community plans for the 2015-2016 school year, including the following changes or new developments:

- The International Baccalaureate program at BHS is currently being reviewed
- More academic support, including developing supports for the AP/IB and honors level classes, to include summer enrichment opportunities
- Redesign of the IRC to accommodate more independent learning, including online courses, student collaborations and community partners for academic enrichment, the design team will include students
- The school has one year to prepare for the new six-period/day schedule
- Continue professional development to address Ch. 222 interventions for students
- Continued expansion of community service learning with local agencies

Principal Wolder reviewed the 2014-2015 school year. She extended an invitation to School Committee to visit the greenhouse and new garden, and to view the mural on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the yellow building. Ms. Wolder said the students at BHS are very involved in their school and community. She also acknowledged the support of parents and community members.

Mr. Henningson asked whether there are any special plans for the 2016 graduation, which will be the 150<sup>th</sup> commencement for Brockton High School, Ms. Wolder said that can be discussed.

#### Budget Update

Superintendent Smith provided the following update:

- 27 out of 30 paraprofessionals have been recalled, most due to compliance.
- 18 out of 25 MTA's have been recalled, compliance only
- 10 new custodians have been hired
- Over 90 involuntary transfers have all be placed
- To date there are still 56 teachers who have not been rehired
- The district is currently working on bringing back laid off teachers

Extended Day Audit - The Superintendent reported that the audit of the Extended Day program is ongoing, she was pleased to say that the Department of Early Education has found no new discrepancies. She said when the report comes in, it will be shared.

Commonwealth Charter School – The Superintendent reported that applications are in, New Heights has submitted a proposal for a regional charter, bringing in Taunton, Randolph and Brockton, and South Shore Collaborative in Norwell is looking to expand the number of seats.

#### Deputy Superintendent of Operations Update

*Facilities* – Mr. Thomas reported the Davis modulars are complete and advised school committee to contact him if they would like to see them; the pod build-outs at the Raymond School are almost complete, plans are to finish the final three over Christmas, February and April vacations. At BHS, major electrical work was completed in two buildings, the remaining two will be done next year, and more carpet has been removed and replaced with tiles.

*Where's My Bus?* – Mr. Thomas reported that he was contacted by MassDOT and asked whether Brockton would like to pilot "Where's My Bus?", a phone application for parents that allows them to see the location of their child's bus in real time. He reported that Brockton will begin piloting with thirty families in October, by November we should be able to advertise and get the word out to all parents. The program is free to the district for the next three years. MassDOT will translate into any language we request at no cost.

Mr. Jordan asked Mr. Thomas if he was able to reduce the amount of buses. Mr. Thomas replied he was able to reduce the number by four. He said that designating the Barrett Russell as a neighborhood school was very helpful. Mr. Thomas said the good news is that we can maintain the same level of service, even with the increase in bus costs and student population, and we have not had to change the walk zones. He reported that First Student was agreeable to using buses to transport out-of-district homeless students which has also saved the district money.

The Superintendent said she is happy to be able to bring back sports and three health teacher positions at the middle schools. Mayor Carpenter thanked those who worked to redesign the middle school sports program in order to bring it back, and said it will be well received. With respect to the health teacher positions, the Mayor said drug education and awareness at that level is critical. He reported that the Governor's Opioid Task Force is working with state universities on a standardized curriculum around drug awareness and prevention for all school districts. Mr. Minichiello voiced that every member of the School Committee recognized the importance of the losses of middle school sports and the health positions, they heard the disappointment from parents and students. He said they have worked diligently with administration and the Mayor to bring these back.

The Superintendent reported that she has received calls about school assignments, some parents are not happy with the process. She reminded the public that it is a difficult budget year, there are limited seats and the district is aware of the issues and we are doing the best that we can. This year the city and school department will begin working on a facilities master plan that will address these issues and more.

The Superintendent highlighted events she recently attended: Over 3,000 attended *Summerfest* this past weekend, she attended the *Rise Up Graduation*, a collaboration between the YMCA and Arnone School students, *Summer Leader's Graduation* recognized 8<sup>th</sup> graders from North and East middle schools who have been partaking in a leader's camp and will end up as mentors in many of the "Y" camps.

Mayor Carpenter thanked the School Committee for the financial support given to the city's Summer Parks program, approximately 300 children attend each day.

## **New Business**

### Report of August 18, 2015 Finance Subcommittee Meeting/Lunch Price Increases

Mr. Minichiello gave a report of said meeting: The Subcommittee met with Mr. Petronio, Erin Long and Tom Burke of Chartwells to discuss meal pricing for the 2015-2016 school year. At this meeting, the committee was informed that the district is being reviewed and audited and we will incur a \$145,000 penalty if we do not bring the prices of paid lunches up to the required \$2.70 average weighted lunch price. A number of pricing options were provided, the committee decided that the fifth option would impact the least number of families.

### **Mr. Minichiello moved to approve the report.**

Voted: to approve the report, unanimous.

### **Mr. Minichiello then moved the subcommittee's recommendation to set 2015-2016 lunch prices at \$2.65 for elementary, and \$2.80 for secondary schools.**

Voted: to approve the motion, unanimous.

The meeting adjourned at 9:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen A. Smith, JD  
Superintendent/Secretary  
*wka*