

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

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

Absent: Mrs. Wilson

Also Present: Executive Team, Ed Lenox, M. Conners

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

Mayor Carpenter called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m., followed by a salute to the flag.

Consent Agenda

Mayor Carpenter explained the purpose of the Consent Agenda, and asked if School Committee members wished to remove any items. There were no requests.

Mr. Jordan moved the Superintendent's recommendation to approve the following items on the Consent Agenda:

- September 2, 2015 Regular School Committee Meeting Minutes
- August 18, 2015 Superintendent's Contract Subcommittee Meeting Report
- September 2, 2015 Policy Subcommittee Meeting Minutes
- Submission of MA DESE After School/Out of School Quality Enhancement - \$20,000
- Submission of MA DESE Work and Learn FY 16 - \$45,000
- Acceptance of Notification of Personnel Appointments – Certified and Non-Certified
- Acceptance of Notification of Personnel Actions: Leaves of Absence, Resignations, Retirements

Voted: to adopt the recommendation, unanimous.

Superintendent's Report

Recognition of Retirement of School Department Counsel Attorney Ed Lenox, Jr.

Superintendent Smith announced that Attorney Ed Lenox, counsel to the Brockton Public Schools, has retired after 35 years of service and School Committee would like to recognize his service at tonight's meeting. Attorney Lenox retired in June of this year, Mrs. Smith said he was always a gentleman who dealt with people fairly and equitably.

Mayor Carpenter asked Attorney Lenox to come forward to allow members the opportunity to say a few words to him.

Vice Chair Minichiello said it has been a privilege and a pleasure to work with Attorney Lenox, they worked together on many unique issues and he admired his great judgement and his exceptional ability to negotiate. Mr. Minichiello said that Attorney Lenox is the type of attorney that attorneys want to emulate.

Mrs. Sullivan said she had the pleasure of meeting Attorney Lenox during negotiations, she called him a friend and always professional, she thanked him for his service.

Mrs. Joyce said it has been an honor and a privilege working with Attorney Lenox, that Brockton Public Schools has been fortunate to have had Mr. Lenox as counsel. His advice was always thoughtful and always for the benefit of the children.

Mr. Robinson said he spent a lot of time sitting next to Attorney Lenox during negotiations this year. He said Mr. Lenox was someone he trusted, who brought a great amount of knowledge and experience, and with his departure a lot of institutional knowledge is leaving us. He told Attorney Lenox he was fortunate to have worked with him.

Mayor Carpenter said he was fortunate to have worked with Attorney Lenox, he admired the depth of knowledge of municipal and educational law he possessed, and his ability to make that knowledge understandable to all. He said he always had great trust in Attorney Lenox and he will be missed.

Mayor Carpenter, Superintendent Smith, and Vice-Chair Minichiello presented Attorney Lenox with a certificate of appreciation and a gift on behalf of School Committee. Mr. Lenox then took a moment to speak to the Committee.

He recounted his start with the Brockton School Department, beginning in 1980. He said he has been through eight mayors and eight superintendents, has worked with a large group of very talented people who he regarded as friends, through some very difficult issues—the implementation of the Ed Reform Act, three recessions, and numerous other challenging situations. Mr. Lenox said throughout all of that, people were always professional and patient, Brockton has a special place in his heart. He closed by saying he is leaving the district in good hands and it has been an honor and pleasure to work with the district.

Opening of Kindergarten

The Superintendent reported that 1,451 kindergarten children are now registered, the highest class size is 26 at the Huntington School, and the echoing concern from parents is that they want their children to go to kindergarten where they will spend the next five years. She said there was great excitement at the schools, she had the opportunity to visit the Barrett Russell Kindergarten Center and it was a terrific opening day. As far as the rest of the grades, things are still settling down and at the October 6th meeting she will have a more accurate report on enrollment and class sizes. Deputy Superintendent Thomas is keeping an eye on transportation.

Mayor Carpenter said he was able visit kindergarten today and agreed that there was a lot of excitement, he said many of the children were being brought to school by grandparents. He said that although Brockton does not have the space or the money, he remains committed to a K1/K2 program that would enroll four-year-olds. He said that one year makes a huge difference for many children and this is something school committee has discussed for years, New York City recently implemented universal preK and he wants to see it in Brockton as well. The Superintendent commented that the district has had discussions about connecting with families with preK children.

Presentation – Raymond School

Superintendent Smith invited Raymond School Principal Carol McGrath to talk about some of the new initiatives at the school. Principal McGrath used a power point presentation to highlight the school day, included were pictures of children in their new uniforms. She reported that total enrollment is 745, down from 1,020 last year, there are some empty

rooms which have been used already for professional development trainings. The extended learning hours include 20 extra minutes in the morning every day, and on Monday and Tuesday the school day is two hours longer, dismissing at 4:10 p.m. Mrs. McGrath said the extra time in the morning has allowed for a more relaxed breakfast in the classroom. She also reported that 70% of students are participating in the new uniform initiative, she said it definitely makes a difference in the way children feel about themselves, she has received very positive feedback from parents and staff. In closing, Principal McGrath invited School Committee to come and visit the school.

Mr. Jordan asked if there was opposition to uniforms, Mrs. McGrath responded she had only received a few calls from parents whose only complaint was they had already purchased school clothes before being notified about the uniforms. *Mr. Henningson* said he has received great, positive feedback from the community, other schools have expressed an interest in uniforms. He commended Principal McGrath for doing a great job during a tough transition. *Mrs. Sullivan* asked Mrs. McGrath about issues with parents and the longer hours, Mrs. McGrath responded that one student transferred to a different school, these hours are actually better for working parents. *Superintendent Smith* said that many hours of planning were put in over the past year to make the transition successful, now with the empty middle school classrooms at the Raymond the district has bought itself a little more time with respect to space. *Mrs. Joyce* asked if class size has been affected, Principal McGrath responded that there are empty classrooms, but that does not affect class size; she currently has up to 28 in grade 5.

Presentation – Plouffe School

Principal Nessralla opened by saying she has started her seventh year at the Plouffe Academy. She said tonight her video presentation would highlight the most recent trip to Washington, DC, which gave students a unique opportunity to learn about the history of the United States. She thanked staff members Allisha Darling and Kelly Walsh for coordinating and chaperoning the trip and School Committee for the opportunity.

Mr. Jordan asked what the most popular site they visited was; Ms. Darling responded the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History. *Mr. Minichiello* asked how they felt about World Strides, Ms. Darling responded she is really happy with World Strides; they have been reliable and handle all of the arrangements. *Mr. Minichiello* asked Principal Nessralla if her plans for this year, she responded that she is considering a trip to Philadelphia and will bring details to School Committee for approval when they have them. Principal Nessralla thanked Mrs. Joyce for doing her "due diligence" during the first trip approval process, she said it gave her a better understanding of student safety and well-being issues.

Education Delivery Institute (Edi)

Superintendent Smith reported she was pleased to be able to attend an Edi event in Washington, DC, where Deliverology in Practice was released. She said the district plans to purchase books for district use. Edi has been working with Brockton for a year to support the implementation of our districtwide strategic plan using the deliverology method, and she has been very pleased with the results. The Superintendent announced that while at the event she was informed by EDi that Brockton will receive additional funding to continue with another year of support.

Ratification of MOA with School Custodians

The Superintendent invited Mr. Minichiello, Chair of the Custodian Negotiations Subcommittee, to talk about the memorandum of agreement. Mr. Minichiello said he was

very pleased with the agreement, he feels it is fair to both sides. He said it was a long process that took almost two years, and three-quarters of the way through the custodians' representation changed to Teamsters Local 653. He thanked all of the involved parties, on both sides of the table, who worked long and hard to resolve some major issues—the crossing guard issue is resolved, positions have been categorized, an affordable increase over the next three years was negotiated, and he highly recommends that the committee adopt this MOA. Mr. Minichiello asked Mayor Carpenter to allow Mr. Brian McElhinney, from Teamsters Local 653, to address School Committee.

Mr. McElhinney introduced himself as a proud product of the Brockton Public Schools. He said the negotiations process was very professional, and the resulting agreement benefits both members and the school department. He said the relationship was not adversarial, but more of a partnership, he thanked payroll and human resources for their assistance during the process. He said he is proud of the agreement that is fair to all groups in the union--custodians, outside groundskeepers and craftsmen.

Mayor Carpenter extended his appreciation to Mr. McElhinney and committee members. He said it was a difficult task because the contract was very complex and much of the former contract was no longer relevant and had to be rewritten. He said he felt Mr. McElhinney definitely helped to move the negotiations along. He said all non-certified positions are critical to the success of the district. The Mayor then asked for a motion.

Mr. Minichiello moved to adopt the Memorandum of Agreement between the Brockton School Committee and Teamsters Local 653, Brockton School Custodians, for a three-year period from July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2015.

Voted: to approve the motion, unanimous.

Staffing Update - The Superintendent reported there are still 13 teacher vacancies, she continues to work closely with the BEA to ensure the contract is followed, she is keeping an eye on specialist coverage for elementary teachers.

Rosh Hashanah – The Superintendent reported this is the first year that school is in session during the Rosh Hashanah holidays; letters went out to principals to ensure that no new content will be introduced and students have an opportunity make up the work. She reported that there are just over 30 teachers in the system who are observing the holidays; principals are making accommodations.

Baker School Principal Ryan Powers - The Superintendent announced that Ryan Powers has accepted the position of Assistant Superintendent in the Bridgewater-Raynham School District. She said administration has begun a transition plan for the Baker School, this is a huge loss for Brockton but we wish him well.

Director of Communications - The Superintendent announced there were 31 applicants that were narrowed down to nine who were interviewed. Three candidates received a second interview. From those three, Michelle Morgan-Bolton was selected, offered the position and has accepted. Ms. Morgan-Bolton is currently in the process of coming on board.

Unfinished Business

Mr. Minichiello reminded members to complete their Superintendent evaluation forms; he would like to schedule the evaluation at the next school committee meeting. Superintendent Smith asked School Committee to postpone the scheduled September 26th retreat until after her evaluation is completed; she said it makes sense to discuss superintendent goals after she has been evaluated. There were no objections.

With respect to the evaluation tool, Mrs. Joyce said the Baseline Edge process was very cumbersome and did not work well with multiple people evaluating, this is part of the reason it is taking so long. She said Michelle Conners and Carrie Copp have been instrumental in helping members work through the problems that are inherent in the program. Ms. Conners was present, and the Superintendent asked her to speak to the committee about Baseline Edge. Ms. Conners said Mrs. Joyce's concern was something she and Mrs. Copp anticipated could be a problem. She told committee members that the feedback they are giving to her is crucial and she is sharing these issues with Baseline Edge. Ms. Conners reported that Baseline Edge is changing to HTML, which could help with the issue of multiple forms but she can't say it will make the process easier. Ms. Conners said she agrees with Mr. Jordan's suggestion, that a dedicated training for school committee members should be planned, just as it has been done for all Brockton educators.

New Business

Election of Voting Delegate for Annual MASS/MASC Conference

Mayor Carpenter called on Mr. Minichiello to take up this issue. Mr. Minichiello announced that each year a voting delegate should be elected by the School Committee to represent Brockton at the annual MASC/MASS Business meeting, November 4 – 7, 2015. This year, there are only two members attending, Mr. Minichiello and Mr. Jordan.

Mr. Minichiello nominated Ossie Jordan to serve as delegate.

Voted: to approve the nomination, unanimous.

BHS Opening Football Game - The Superintendent announced that this Friday, September 18th, is the first home football game, well over 100 students will participate not only as players, but as part of the half-time show and working at food tables.

The Superintendent shared that she received a very nice note from Mike Bolger on behalf of Holbrook schools, thanking Brockton for allowing them to use Marciano Stadium for two football games while they are in the midst of building a new school. She said they were thrilled and very thankful to play in such a beautiful venue.

Mr. Minichiello thanked Mrs. Joyce for serving on the interview panel for the Communications Director. He said he felt she has the most experience on the committee and because she is leaving the committee, she would be very independent and open-minded. Mayor Carpenter said he was pleased with the appointment as well, Michelle Morgan-Bolton has always been extremely professional and is highly qualified and fair, and will be a good fit for the district.

Seeing no further New Business, Mr. Robinson moved to adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen A. Smith, JD
Secretary

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