



# Southwick-Tolland-Granville Regional School District School Committee

Tuesday, December 20, 2016

TIME: 6:00 PM

LOCATION: Southwick Regional School Auditorium, 93 Feeding Hills Road, Southwick, MA

**\*\*NOTE Location\*\***

## MINUTES

The listing of matters are those reasonably anticipated by the Chair which may be discussed at the meeting. Not all items listed may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law

### **I. ROUTINE**

#### **A. Attendance**

The meeting was called to order by the Chairperson of the School Committee, Mr. Houle at 6:02 pm

The Following were present:

School Committee:	Jeffrey Houle, Chairperson
	George LeBlanc, Vice Chair
	Theodore Locke, Secretary (Tolland Rep.)
	Kelly Clendenin
	Pamela Petschke (Granville Rep.)
	Maria Seddon – left at 6:43 pm, returned at 6:55 pm, left at 7:45pm
Administration:	Jennifer Willard, Superintendent
	Stephen Presnal, Business Manager
	Amy McLaughlin, Recording Secretary
Student Representatives:	Margaret Drohen
News Media:	Southwick News, Westfield Evening News, 22 News
Observers:	approx. 40

#### **B. Opening Ceremony – Pledge of Allegiance**

Mr. Houle opened the meeting by welcoming everyone in attendance and reminding them of the rules of Public Comment which were displayed on the presentation screen.

#### **C. Secretary's Report**

12/05/2016 Meeting Minutes: Accepted as written

Motion by LeBlanc, seconded by Locke 6/0/0

#### **D. Warrants - Circulated**

#### **E. Correspondence**

Mr. Presnal received some correspondence from the Department of Transportation regarding recent state initiatives to permit use of marijuana for "recreational" purposes. Mr. Presnal reported that there is no change to the policies of marijuana as a banned substance.

Superintendent Willard received correspondence from Commissioner Mitchell Chester and the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education regarding an initiative from Governor Baker for Graduating Seniors.

The state will help graduating seniors save an average of 40 percent off the cost of a traditional bachelor's degree if students can attend college full-time and graduate within four and a half years. Through the Commonwealth Commitment, students start at one of Massachusetts' 15 community colleges, then transfer to a state university or UMass campus and continue full time. Students who enroll receive a 10 percent per-semester rebate, a tuition credit worth an average of \$1,200, and a freeze on mandatory fees — leading to an associate degree and a bachelor's degree at an average cost of \$28,618 before financial aid.

### **II. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mr. Ted Sussman, Granville, stated that he feels that the class size focus has been lost in the discussions of the Best Use of Facilities study. He was a member of the building committee and prior to that project the District had trouble recruiting teachers because teachers want smaller class sizes. He wants to hear how plans will positively impact the kids.

**III. STUDENT ADVISORY REPORT**

No student advisory report

**IV. EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATION**

Mr. John Kennedy and Ms. Anna Cross, both of NESDEC, presented the final version of the Best Use of Facilities Study. Mr. Kennedy and Ms. Cross both thanked the Committee and the Community for their assistance and participation in developing the study.

Ms. Petschke asked if the presentation had changed from the previous version. Mr. Kennedy responded that essentially the presentation did not change. Some data had been changed for clarity and slides removed to streamline the presentation.

Mr. Houle asked about the source of the birth data on slide 13. Mr. Kennedy responded that the birth data for 2015 is provisional because that is all that is currently available from the state until they finalize the numbers.

Ms. Petschke asked how the projected enrollment estimates for 2016 were arrived at for Slide 15. Mr. Kennedy responded that a 3 year average for births is the typical procedure to calculate projected enrollment. Any home sales and construction data would factor in as well appropriate.

Mr. Houle thanked Mr. Kennedy for his work and presentation. Mr. Houle notified everyone in attendance that the January 10, 2017 meeting would feature Superintendent Willard's presentation of how the study options would be implemented in the District. Mr. Houle invited everyone to attend the meeting which would take place in the Southwick Regional School Auditorium at 6:00 pm.

**V. ACTION ITEMS**

**A. Move to approve Home School Application HS1617-31**

A motion was made to approve:

Motion by LeBlanc, seconded by Locke 6/0/0

**VI. REPORTS**

**A. Superintendent - none**

**B. School Business Manager - none**

**C. Sub Committees and Liaisons**

- *Negotiations:* Transportation Negotiations next meeting scheduled for 1/3/2017.
- *Finance:* L.P.V.E.C Bd. Gov and Bd. Dir: no report
- *Policy:* no report
- *School Building Committee:* no report
- *Technology:* no report
- *Curriculum and Instruction:* no report
- *Legislative Liaison:* no report
- *SPED Liaison:* no report
- *Southwick Capital Committee:* no report

**D. Policies – A meeting needs to be scheduled**

**VII. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Note: All comments are made in reference to the NESDEC Best Use of Facilities Study.

Ted Sussman, Granville, stated: That the Best Use of Facilities Study was the worst report he's ever seen, the report offers no solutions and it was supposed to provide options to utilize space and minimize costs. He stated that it seems unlikely we will save all the money mentioned in the report. Mr. Sussman said it

seems like comments from townspeople were ignored. He said there are errors in population that were not corrected. Mr. Sussman stated that the well and fuel tank at the Granville Village School are not an issue.

Steve Cook, Granville, stated: There are multiple problems with the Best Use of Facilities Study had multiple problems and questions if it fulfills the RFP. He stated that the report was supposed to provide strategies to keep the school open and because it doesn't, the study should not be accepted by the Committee. Mr. Cook questioned how data was interpreted. He stated that aggregate data looks at trends and they make it say what they want. He stated that K-2 enrollment has risen every year in the past three years.

Mr. Sussman, Granville, stated that he predicts growth in the Southwick population in the future based on the new sewer project.

Danielle Sullivan, Granville, stated that the decision of the Best Use of Facilities Study is going to be made by 7 people and will impact thousands. She stated that she is concerned because all of the Committee members have not been present at all of the meetings.

Meg Putnam, Granville, stated the definition of "feasibility" and that the study did not meet that.

Julie Clifford, Granville, stated that she did not understand how it is possible to estimate population. She also stated that the bus price doesn't match because in one slide it estimated the cost of a new bus as \$50K and another at \$80K. Ms. Clifford stated that all of the numbers in the study are wrong. She also stated that Granville has a town green, not a common.

David Ripley, Granville, stated that the study doesn't cover what is laid out. He stated that there is no accurate annual savings or capital investments. Mr. Ripley stated that the decision is not based on fact.

Ms. Putnam, Granville, stated that she hopes no one on the Committee sleeps again.

Leon Ripley, Granville, stated that the costs to operate the Granville Village School are not accurate and neither are the costs to capital improvements. He stated that real numbers are needed.

Mr. Sussman stated that he has never officially heard of a one campus concept for the District. He stated that he has always believed it is supposed to be a four school District.

Mr. Cook stated that the birth data is incorrect.  $83+83+86 \neq 82$ . He stated that there are educational implications to class sizes and cited the Star Study from Tennessee as well as the score card report that came home from the District.

Matt Brown, Granville, stated that Massachusetts is projecting 17% increased growth in the next few years. He stated that he has witnessed that growth in his own business and the school board should not want that growth to result in an overcrowding situation.

Mr. Leon Ripley, Granville, stated that the Committee should think about Southwick too. If population numbers increase there will be overcrowding and students will be back in trailers.

Mr. Brown, Granville, stated that he was part of the committee and that during Regionalization, funds were promised for windows, etc...

## **VIII. COMMITTEE DISCUSSION**

### **A. Old Business**

#### Best Use of Facilities Study

Mr. Houle stated that the Committee is carefully listening to everything that is being said. He stated that there is a Q&A fact sheet on the homepage of the District website. Mr. Houle stated that there have been references to promises made by previous committee members during various phases of Regionalization but no one has knowledge of those. Mr. Houle stated that the School Committee will hear the presentation by Superintendent Willard in January and they have meet with the Towns to go over budgets.

He stated that there are no "savings" and this is understood under the concept of foundational budgets and minimum contributions. It is the Committee's responsibility to manage spending.

Ms. Petschke stated that the Committee needs to carefully consider all of the letters received on the topic of the study, especially those from Steve Cook. She stated that Mr. Cook has some points to consider. Ms. Petschke reminded the Committee that the NESDEC study is just one piece of the puzzle and expects Superintendent Willard's presentation on January 10, 2017 to clarify unknowns.

Ms. Petschke handed out a DESE enrollment data sheet used during regionalization that showed enrollment in 2014 was projected to increase. She stated that according to this document, any decrease in enrollment in the District was temporary. This study was correct about the decrease, but also an increase in 2015.

Ms. Petschke reminded the Committee that any decision impacting the future of the Granville Village School would be a permanent one.

#### B. New Business

##### Net Metering

Superintendent Willard and Mr. Presnal reported that they had just received updated news on the Net Metering investment that the District participates in. Ms. Beth Greenblatt, District advisor, told them that the solar fields in Whatley, MA and recommends altering our contract to eliminate Whatley and move to an investment at Hancock Shaker Village. Based on the tight timeframe to make a decision, the Committee authorized Superintendent Willard to make changes to the account on behalf of the District.

#### IX.

##### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

1. Move to go into Executive Session to discuss the deployment of security personnel or devices or strategies with respect thereto; and to reconvene in Open Session
2. Move to go into Executive Session to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel; and to reconvene in Open Session.
3. Move to go into Executive Session to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigation position of the public and the chair so declares; and to reconvene in Open Session.

At 7:30 p.m., a motion was made to adjourn to Executive Session and not return to open session.

With the members Jeffrey Houle, George Leblanc, Theodore Locke, Pamela Petschke, Kelly Clendenin and Maria Seddon being present and voting individually and unanimously, the motion passes.

Motion by LeBlanc, seconded by Locke 6/0/0

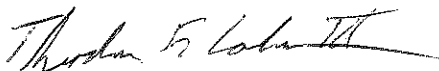
At 8:31 p.m., motion was made to adjourn to Executive Session and not return to open session.

With the members Jeffrey Houle, George Leblanc, Theodore Locke, Pamela Petschke and Kelly Clendenin being present and voting individually and unanimously, the motion passes.

Motion by LeBlanc, seconded by Locke 5/0/0

Meeting adjourned at 8:31 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Theodore Locke, Secretary

##### **STAFFING**

###### Appointments

- |                      |                           |
|----------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Shannon Cavanaugh | Behavioral Specialist PMS |
| 2. Sean Riley        | Paraprofessional PMS      |
| 3. Nicole Larriu     | Kindergarten TA           |
| 4. Kelsey Dana       | JV Cheerleading Coach     |

###### Resignations

###### Retirements