

Record of the Marblehead School Committee Meeting
January 26, 2017
Village School

Members Present: Meredith Tedford, Susie Pratt, Kate Lipsitz,
Jennifer Schaeffner, David Harris

Also: Maryann Perry, Superintendent
Dr. Bradford Smith, Assistant Superintendent
Amanda Maniaci, Director of Business and Finance
Ken Lord, Exec. Dir. Of Technology and Operations
Monica Visco, Director of Human Resources

Members Absent:

I. Initial Business

A. Call to Order

Ms. Tedford called the meeting to order at 7:00PM.

B. Commendations

Ms. Perry noted that this evening's meeting will not be aired live but will be aired Thursday, February 2nd at 7pm and Friday, February 3rd at 12:30pm.

Mr. Harris recognized the Superintendent, Principal Satterfield, Mr. Lord, teachers, parents, students, the police and all those involved in helping and coordinating the move of students during the Gerry School oil spill.

Ms. Tedford recognized Brooke Pendleton who was the winner of the 2017 Marblehead Festival of Arts logo contest. She was chosen out of 68 entries. Two other MHS students landed in the top 10 this year and they were Freshman Leo Wilkins and Catherine Bontaites.

Ms. Tedford thanked Mr. James Maroney for filming this evening's meeting.

C. Public Comment

None

D. Student Representative

Melissa Kordha, student representative.

- Noted that Jim Nye of the National Grand Bank served bagels at the HS during mid-terms
- The Juniors are selling "Spirit" products
- Parents and students continue to plan the Junior Auction

II. Consent Agenda & Action Items

None

III. Teaching/Learning-Superintendent of Schools

A. District Reports and Updates

1. Village School Presentation

Superintendent Perry asked Principal Bauer and Principal Murphy to speak on the partnership between the Village School and the High School. Mr. Bauer explained that he was approached with a detailed proposal by Carolyn Arthur, a student at MHS and Coach Madden. The proposal was a Student-Athlete Mentor program for 4th grade students where student-athlete mentors are paired up with elementary students. It fosters a relationship between student-athletes at the High School and 4th grade students at the Village School where they help students with reading, homework, skills and concepts, and life lessons.

Currently there are 44 high school students and 35 4th grade students. Mr. Bauer noted that he hopes the program expands to include the 5th and 6th grade.

Village School Presentations consisted of reports on Family Immigration; 4th Grade tile mosaic; 5th grade technique called the “flip classroom” and 6th grade “Design Thinking Project.”

SC took a 5 minute recess at 7:42

SC returned from recess at 7:45

2. Kindergarten Tuition for 2017-2018

Ms. Tedford noted that this is presented this evening for discussion and will not be voted on tonight. Ms. Maniaci noted that in January 2015, the school administrative finance team conducted an in depth analysis of the district kindergarten tuition rate. It was decided that there would be an annual review in order to keep the tuition current with expenses. We no longer are entitled to a State Kindergarten grant thus presenting more of a strain on our operating budget. With this in mind, the school administrative budget and finance team is recommending a 3% increase for the 2017-2018 full day kindergarten tuition rate. This would set the annual rate at **\$3,362**, an increase of \$98 over school year 2016-2017. The recommended increase directly aligns with the COLA increases of the collectively bargained School Department Unit Contracts for school year 2017-2018. Kindergarten tuition revenue pays kindergarten professional teaching and support staff and associated fringe insurance, and a 3% increase will keep pace with salary increase expenses. The district will continue to offer sliding scale financial aid, installment payment options, and appropriate discounts for twins/siblings, second year students.

As in past practice, a vote to set the FY18 Kindergarten tuition rate will be reflected pro-rata to set the Pre-School peer-model tuition rate for FY18. An increase relative to the recommended Kindergarten tuition rate, or 3%, for FY18 would be an annual Pre-School peer-model tuition rate of **\$2,100**, an increase of \$60 over school year 2016-2017. We are presenting this to the Committee this evening and will ask for a vote on the tuition at a later meeting in February.

3. Rental Facilities for 2017-2018

Ms. Tedford noted that this is presented this evening for discussion and will not be voted on this evening. Ms. Maniaci explained that history of rental facility fees show that the rates have not been increased in eleven years. She noted that last fiscal year we exhausted our funding within the Building Rental Revolving account in its entirety. Funding supported auditorium theater stipends, custodial and maintenance staffing salaries and overtime, and relevant contract services and supplies expenses pertaining to building maintenance and renter usage. The facilities contract rates did not increase this school year. During the fiscal 15 discussion to set the facilities rental rates, School Committee budget liaisons at that time requested an annual review of potential COLA increase across the rate structure to keep pace with contracted bargaining unit agreement increases as well as general cost of living and inflation adjustments for relevant contracted and vendor services, supplies, telephone charges and transportation costs.

To that end, a recommended 3% increase across the fee structure for school year 2017-2018 would capture increasing costs in salary/stipend/overtime contractually binding payments as well as increases in general maintenance contracted services and supplies. As we continue our plan of long term budget strategy and sustainability, facilities rental revenue is a viable source to address rolling maintenance needs pertaining to building, athletic facilities and grounds/fields projects.

4. Student Activity Fees 2017-2018

Ms. Tedford noted that this report was presented to the Committee at the December 7th meeting and before it is voted on this evening she asked Ms. Maniaci to give a brief update and then will open it for discussion.

The User Fee study is a part of a systematic and paced review of revenue sources in an attempt to balance revenues to specific programmatic expenses. This review is a part of the district's strategic long term budget planning and sustainability efforts. In that report, four scenarios were presented as recommended options for the Student Activity User Fee Rate for school year 2017-2018. As a recap, the rationale for the increase in the user fee structure comes from the specific need to fund coaching stipends, as defined by contractually bargained Unit A, appendix C. In the past ten years, the increase in coaching stipends has forced stipend funding to be sourced increasingly through the operating budget in lieu of the User Fee account.

Ms. Maniaci noted that a user fee rate study and history was presented at the December 7th SC meeting allowing for a generous timeframe for follow up discussion, questions and community input. These fees had not been reviewed in over ten years and several scenarios were presented. At the December 7th, 2016 School Committee meeting, the Committee was provided with a financial analysis and history of the Student User Fee rates, revenue and expenses. Since then, she has received community input, met with individual school committee members, met with central admin, and answered any appropriate questions. When asked for a recommendation, central administrators felt Scenario #1 was the best option as it did close the gap and had incremental increases similar to what the board did eleven years ago when they last raised rates.

Ms. Pratt made motion to increase the Student Activity Fees for 2017-2018 to \$440.00 for Athletic teams or Performing Arts unlimited; for clubs meeting weekly \$270.00; for clubs meeting bi-weekly \$135.00; for Flag Football which is senior girls only, \$60.00 and a maximum family cap of \$580.00. The motion was seconded by Ms. Lipsitz.

Ms. Tedford asked for questions and Mr. Harris noted he had a suggestion to present. Ms. Tedford explained that she felt any discussion or presentation of an idea in email is considered deliberation which is why he is presenting it this evening during an open meeting.

Mr. Harris suggested that the budget be built beforehand to see if these increases are needed or if the costs could be absorbed by the budget.

Secondly, he would like to put in procedures and controls to make sure we are collecting all fees from all students in all areas. Thirdly, he applauds the effort that Principal Bauer is making by meeting with the Athletic Director and coaches to determine how the fundraising funds are used. He noted that Ms. Maniaci drafted a document that will go into the student handbooks on defining the objectives and considerations of fundraising; what fundraising proceeds will fund; what they will not fund; fund management guidelines and auditing. Lastly he noted that Ms. Maniaci is working on identifying the expenses in every one of these areas and feels this is a definite push in the right direction. He asked that the Committee hold off on voting tonight.

Discussion followed and Superintendent Perry noted that when Mr. Harris remarked on how we are trying to get controls on the fees collected she explained that it's not that the fees are not collected but rather it's that we are trying to find a way to record this in Aspen so we know exactly how many students are doing a sport, or a club or both. Once the process of identifying students' attendance in athletics or clubs is finalized, she is certain it will not generate \$20 to \$30,000 because we are certain that fees are being collected, it's the housekeeping of how we're tracking it that needs to get better. Ms. Maniaci again explained that it's an Aspen tracking issue that they are working on. She said the athletics are 100% getting collected because they are not allowed to play without paying and the same is true for Veterans and Village. It's the clubs and bi-weekly clubs that we need to make certain we receive rosters for so students can be marked as paying an individual fee or other. Ms. Schaeffner asked if we are tracking all students and Ms. Maniaci said we are definitely tracking and logging every single student who is playing a sport. She noted that when Mr. Bauer met with the advisors, they stated that a student is listed for a club and they know that student plays a sport. Our tracking is to log this into Aspen on the student record

so we clearly know each activity they partake in. Ms. Pratt asked if a student paying the athletic fee then needs to also pay the club fee. Ms. Maniaci explained they do not. It's one fee. The athletic fee includes any and all clubs as well. Ms. Lipsitz asked about a student paying a club fee then choosing to do a sport. Ms. Maniaci noted that if a student joins and pays for a club fee but then decides to do a sport, he would only pay the difference. Ms. Maniaci noted that we are collecting all the fees, what we are trying to do is capture the count of those doing clubs. When SC asked for the number of students doing athletics and clubs, we know the exact count for those doing athletics, it's capturing the count for clubs that we need to tighten up, not collecting the monies. Ms. Schaeffner stated that Scenario #1 of a \$96,000 increase in revenue is to close the coaching stipends by raising the user fees. Ms. Maniaci noted that not only does it need to cover coaching stipends but also advisor fees. Ms. Schaeffner asked how this affects the performing arts budget. Ms. Maniaci stated that it does not affect the performing arts budget as the user fees are for Unit A coach and advisor stipends. The operating budget in a small way funds the performing arts. Ms. Tedford commented on fundraising versus the operational budget. She noted that fundraising should be supplemental and the budget should cover the hard costs of running the programs. Ms. Schaeffner noted that currently, fundraising is used to cover important needs for teams like uniforms and suggested that due to this we don't know the actual cost of athletics. Superintendent Perry noted that the athletic budget has \$22,000 for uniforms so fundraising is not going towards buying uniforms. She said that if a team fundraises for warm up uniforms, that's fine. It's not part of the uniform but yet enriches their sport. However she noted that \$15,000 a year is spent to recondition the football helmets. What is need for education or to run an athletic program should come from the budget. It will take time to educate the community as it was done with PTOs. Instead of them funding items that should be in our budget, they now are funding beneficial supplemental events. Ms. Schaeffner and Ms. Pratt said they would personally prefer to raise the fee and not do fundraising. Ms. Pratt asked that if we don't have enough money in the athletic budget, is the money we are using to pay for this coming out of monies we would use for curriculum or other areas? Ms. Maniaci noted that it would. Ms. Harris noted that this past collective bargaining contract did not raise stipends and Ms. Maniaci stated that is so. He then stated that in the next collective bargaining agreement, if an increase is asked for in the stipends, it would become part of the increase covered by the Town. Ms. Maniaci stated that it would but that it was not included in the increases in the past years. Mr. Harris noted that it then sounds like this increase in fees will not go directly to the athletic budget. Ms. Maniaci said that they have not yet seen the athletic budget but if it warrants an increase of let's say \$50,000 to continue to update uniforms each year then that's where it would go. Mr. Harris noted that he point is that this vote should come after the Committee sees the budgets.

Ms. Tedford reminded the Committee that we are running very lean in many areas and feels that the known deficit in the athletic area could be correctible. Ms. Schaeffner asked how we are at a deficit if in June we balance out at zero. Ms. Maniaci noted that the Finance Committee was willing to work with the School Department last year because they showed and proved to them a ten year deficit which is definitely an unsustainable model. Ms. Maniaci noted that if we had not received circuit breaker extraordinary relief last year, we would have been in the red. This year if we had not received additional students in, we would be running in the red. Superintendent Perry then noted that the additional \$68,000 from the operational budget which went into the coaching line was cut from other areas such as curriculum, assessment, and maintenance. Ms. Schaeffner asked if this could wait until later in the budget season. Ms. Maniaci noted that we already know we have a deficit in that budget line. Ms. Pratt stated that we are running at a deficit and having been a budget liaison she knows how hard Ms. Maniaci worked to cover the missing funds by taking it out of other budget lines. Ms. Pratt noted that she would prefer paying an extra \$100.00 then spending the money on fundraisers where she never knows where the money went to. Ms. Schaeffner stated that her concern is if the athletic fees are raised and there is still pressure for the fundraising. Ms. Maniaci noted that if we leave this area as it is, we will again be short in

the athletic budget and will not have the needed funds to buy the uniforms which will then again promote fundraising to supply this need.

Mr. Harris went on the record to say that he wants to point out that in our scenario 1, we have a family cap that is, other than towns that have no athletic fee, the only Town with a cap that is not at least equal to two students, or in some cases three or four students, and he did ask if we could identify how many students were under the cap and what the impact would be but we're still trying to identify that. He noted that he is a proponent of raising fees but wants to make sure we understand where the fees are coming from and the numbers and how it's needed and how they're going to be used and in the end we did not even raise the family cap equal to the individual raised at 29% and the family cap raised at 21% and the clubs are going up 50%. He suggested that this seems to be some random inequity and compared to other teams that play in the Cape Ann League that were identified in the packet that's a gross inequity that exists right now and going forward we're making it even more of an inequity by taking a 21% increase and raising all the other fees at a higher rate.

Ms. Tedford noted that there was a motion on the table and asked the committee to vote. The Committee **VOTED** Ms. Lipsitz-yes; Ms. Tedford-yes; Ms. Pratt-yes; Mr. Harris-no; Ms. Schaeffner-no. The motion passed, 3-2.

5. School Committee Meetings 2017-2018

Superintendent Perry presented next year's SC meeting date calendar and reminded the Committee that the meetings containing an asterisk after the date means that the meeting will take place at one of the schools. The dates follow closely to what was voted on for this year and as always, if an additional meeting is needed during budget season, one will be scheduled.

Ms. Schaeffner made motion to approve the School Committee meeting calendar for the 2017-2018 school year. The motion was seconded by Ms. Pratt. Discussion followed.

Mr. Harris asked that the Town Meeting SC meeting be added to this calendar since one is posted each year.

The Committee **VOTED** 5-0 in favor for the calendar of dates presented pending the addition of the date for a SC meeting the evening of the Town Meeting.

Superintendent Perry also noted that at the next SC meeting on February 9th, the 2017-2018 school calendar will be presented. She explained that the calendar was set in cooperation with the Union and community members in order to take everyone's concerns in consideration. This calendar did not eliminate any religious holidays but moved some professional development days toward later in the fall and also tightened our parent conferences. The first day of school is typically dedicated to the Superintendent's opening of the schools but this year this will be done at the October professional development day. This will be a pilot year for this calendar.

IV. Finance Organizational Support

1. Schedule of Bills

| | |
|--------------|---------------------|
| #14464 | \$ 1,500.00 |
| #14466 | \$ 920.99 |
| #14472 | \$ 23,528.97 |
| #14502 | \$298,167.28 |
| #14503 | \$ 1,105.00 |
| #14505 | \$ 5,759.33 |
| #14506 | \$ 29,151.01 |
| Total | \$360,132.58 |

Ms. Lipsitz recused herself due to a perceived conflict of interest.

Ms. Schaeffner made motion to approve the schedule of bills in the amount of \$360,132.58. The motion was seconded by Mr. Harris and the Committee **VOTED** 4 in favor, 0 against, 1 recused. The motion passed.

V. School Committee Communication and/or Discussion items

1. Gerry update

Mr. Harris noted that they will meet with the MSBA on February 15th at 10:00am. We then have a School Committee meeting scheduled for February 16th and a Gerry School Building Committee meeting scheduled for March 2nd.

VI. Closing Business

A. New Business

Ms. Schaeffner noted that she requested several reports from Superintendent Perry and thought they might be helpful when budget season begins. These were generally employment reports such as general trending of adds and leaves to staff, how it affects the salary line, and monthly reports. Ms. Schaeffner asked that class enrollment reports be more frequent rather than only a few times a year.

Superintendent Perry congratulated and commended the Bell School. The Bell School will be receiving an award at the State House on Wednesday, February 1st for having gone from a Level 2 to a Level 1 school and for having closed the achievement gap. Superintendent Perry will be attending this commendation along with Principal Donna Zaeske and several teachers from the Bell School.

B. Correspondence

Ms. Tedford noted that she will send a thank you note to the Village School.

C. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made and the meeting adjourned at 9:02PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Kate Lipsitz, Secretary
Marblehead School Committee

Meeting Documents:

- Kindergarten Tuition for 2017-2018*
- Rental Facilities for 2017-2018*
- Student Activity Fees 2017-2018*
- School Committee Meetings 2017-2018*
- Schedule of Bills*

Approved 3/2/17