



**BELCHERTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
 JOINT MEETING WITH
 SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND BOARD OF SELECTMEN
 July 26, 2016**

LOCATION: Swift River Elementary School Library

TIME: 6:00 p.m.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Ms. Dawn French, Chair (present); Dr. Thomas Laughner, Vice-Chair (present); Dr. Michael Knapp, Secretary (present); Ms. Myndi Bogdanovich, Member (present);

ADMINISTRATION: Mrs. Karol Coffin, Superintendent of Schools; Mr. Brian Cameron, Assistant Superintendent and Director of Student Support Services; Shawn Fortin, Director of Teaching & Learning; Mr. Edward Dunn, Contracted School Business Manager; Ms. Jill Pelletier, Assistant Principal CHCS

BHS STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES:

VISITORS: Board of Selectmen, Candidates for vacant School Committee Seat, various district employees, Ruthann Sterling

MINUTES

Pledge of Allegiance

- I. Call to order
 - Ms. French called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.
 - Motion: Ms. French moved to have public comments after the School Committee candidate interviews.
 - Second: Dr. Knapp
 - Vote: 4,0,0

Success for Every Student Every Day

- II. Public comment regarding items on the agenda
There were no public comments regarding items on the agenda.

- III. Interview candidates for open School Committee seat and vote
Candidates interviewed included; Paula Moran (PM), Jeff Charron (JC), Joseph Schmidt (JS), Anne Marley (AM), Woody Clift (WC), Eric Johnson (EJ), Rebecca Pease (RP), Linda Sterling (LS)

Questions;

1. (Nick O'Connor) What is your fiscal philosophy, with regard to town?
2. (Archie Archible) What is your plan for struggling students versus advanced students?
3. (Bill Barnett) What do you bring that the Belchertown School Committee will be better with?
4. (Brenda Aldrich) What do you see with the budget regarding band next year?
5. (Ron Aponte) Who do you believe, as a school committee member, your primary responsibility to serve is?
6. (Tom Laughner) What do you believe is the relationship between the School Committee and the Superintendent?
7. (Dawn French) Are you aware of the policies with regard to the School Committee and the time commitments?
8. (Mike Knapp) Different question for the candidates
9. (Myndi Bogdanovich) What specific skill set do you bring that will best serve the School Committee and the district?

Answers;

Paula Moran:

1. Every fiscal budget has to follow the schools and the child. Global future is in our children and money needs to go to the schools.
2. Has been in education for 45 years, can address the needs of all children
3. Bring knowledge and experience. Been in education for 45 years in Springfield. Has experience from teaching to admin. Ended career in admin. Has worked with unions, principals, lead admin and as teacher.
4. Held a position of booster president previously, own kids were in band, band is more than an instrument.
5. The citizens of Belchertown, the kids, staff and parents.
6. Need feedback, clarity, and experience, a 3 prong partnership
7. Has looked at all the pertinent info, is currently retired so has time available.
8. (What did it take to resolve contract negotiations in Springfield?) Balancing of funds, benefits, come creativeness to navigate. She had a wonderful staff.

9. Knowledge of DOE regulations, analyzing data, general knowledge of curriculum.

Jeff Charron:

1. Considers it a fiscal paradox, decisions could send the schools into an upward or downward spiral. It is a growth engine, it can attract families, attract and retain good teachers, or it could lose them.
2. He would support teachers and faculty, not in a position to say himself how to take care of this.
3. Retired military, Belchertown is their "forever" place. Wants to be part of making Belchertown the best.
4. Looking at it as academic, our competitive advantage over other schools, strategic to keep this a place people want to go
5. To students, best for student's needs is right for teachers
6. Was answered previously
7. Is aware of policies, time is a bigger question, currently teaching an online course but is willing to give that up.
8. (What can we do to instill leadership in student?) teachers develop leadership, starts in admin.
9. Diversity, military showed how to make good decisions. Everyone does not think alike.

Joseph Schmidt:

1. Critical services that are necessary. Town should fund all that is necessary.
2. Is not a primary educator. Medical career includes educating. Each student has a way to move forward. Support the teachers and curriculum to move forward.
3. Talk about complex operations, highlight a different skill set, has admin skills with what he does in his profession, has to deliver services in a fiscally responsible way.
4. Strong supporter, wife is currently co-president of Band Boosters, all children have been in band. Band in Belchertown is a point of pride. Diversity in kids and band is one piece of building and outstanding school system.
5. Best thing for kids is the same as best for teachers and admin.
6. School Committee to support the admin and system making a strategic plan to move forward and improve. It is advisory and structure development.
7. Reviewed policies and spent time speaking to former SC members. His job restructuring has made more regular hours for him so his schedule is more predictable.

8. (If additional funds became available what would be your first priority?) Doesn't know enough to answer, would have to look at the needs of the district.
9. Ability to problem solve on the fly, challenge critical needs with fiscal restraints.

Anne Marley:

1. Transparency, finds that lacking. You have to live in budget, common sense.
2. Concerned about both. There are a lot of programs in place for struggling students not as many for advanced. District lost a lot of para professionals which is a detriment to all the students.
3. (What are your goals in mind?) Sees a lot of contention between the schools and the town. Wants to help resolve and work together. Questions 0 in the budget for central office expenditure but there is construction going on.
4. Band is integral to Belchertown. If you cut band or sports, you get contention.
5. Students first.
6. It is checks and balances when implementing. SC is in charge of the budget. Superintendent is in charge of the day to day running of the district.
7. Yes, is aware, left a job with 35 hours and will now have time.
8. (If additional funds became available what would be your first priority?) Book buying budget at CHCS? Does not have a precise goal in mind. Potentially more paras to help out and is open to suggestions.
9. Gets along with all kinds of people. Can talk to students, parents, admin, etc. Looks for common ground.

Woody Clift:

1. Budgeting, should be reflection of values of both community and school district. Different people weigh different things. Long term returns on investment.
2. School system has responsibility to serve any student in the system. Teachers go into the profession to do this. Admin need to get the resources to the teachers to do their job. Do we access all the money available to us? Would look into that.
3. (Have you ever been involved in any program for dyslexia?) Have served students with different learning disabilities. (Are you interested in developing a program for children with dyslexia?) Not looking to start a program.
4. Hallmarks of Belchertown is band and music programs. It gives a sense of community and support in town. Funding is hard decisions to make.
5. Students are citizens. What we do to support impacts the entire community.

6. SC primary responsibility to hire executive, evaluate executive, and look and listen to the needs of the community.
7. Is aware of duties and policies. Just finished doctorate and has time now.
8. (Best way to look at equity?) Response to intervention is solid. Curriculum; start at the ground, enrichment, gaps in achievement, post-secondary needs, poverty vs achievement.
9. Good listener, managed many complex programs, makes decisions by looking at the problems before a solution, inquisitive by nature.

Eric Johnson:

1. Fiscal centers around what is most important in this town. What is the highest need and the gap in state funding? What can we do to enrich students?
2. What is working in the classroom. What is effective in policies, important programs to have that help all students. Balance playing field. Provide students and teachers the opportunities needed.
3. (Do you have something in mind for Belchertown?) Number one need in any school community is open and cooperative group to help the students. Everyone needs to be effective at listening.
4. Wife is a music teacher in district. Music is very important. Requires a solid feeder program.
5. It all starts with the students. Goal is to create a smooth running system. Student grow to be productive members of society.
6. Two fold, SC supervises/oversees and evaluates school admin. To be effective need open relations with admin and teachers.
7. Reviewed info on website. Education is extremely important to him. Whole family in education. Important to devote time.
8. (If additional funds became available what would be your first priority?) Would need to hear from the people that the funds would affect. What does the community need/want?
9. Years in the classroom, delivers instruction, studied leadership, creative outlets, new ways to see things.

Rebecca Pease:

1. Mother, wife, someone who has a budget and has to stick with it. No plan in mind but wants to work on it.
2. Experience with both. Would like to see more communication between teacher, admin, and parent.
3. No sure what she wants to do. It is not just about struggling students. Feels that teachers teach to the test. Would like to see that change.

4. Arts in general are very important. Knows several students in band and that band was very important to them. Her history is with sports. Feels both are equally important.
5. Kids, it's the reason why we're here. Keep kids happy you will keep the parents happy.
6. Have to work together. Communication needs to be there.
7. Is aware, has more time available as her kids are older.
8. (If additional funds became available what would be your first priority?) Would need to know what the problems are, what needs the money the most and as a committee discuss it.
9. As a mom, making hard decisions, no hidden agenda, do what is best for the community.

Linda Sterling:

1. Looked at the Finance budget – feels it is lacking info – need to stick to a budget.
2. Give the teachers the resources needed.
3. (What do you have to make the School Committee better?) Knows how to listen, compromise, talk to people, research, hard work, and grit.
4. Schools would not be the same without band. It helps in the community.
5. Students
6. Partnership – work hand in hand, one half should know what the other half does.
7. Well aware of the duties and time.
8. (How did you help the principal set priority?) Told her my opinions, very vocal.
9. Same as number 3, good team player, do her best for the students.

Discussion:

Mr. Archible noted that Mr. Fritsch and Ms. Bogdanovich ran unopposed in the last election and we have 8 candidates tonight. Would encourage more people to run in the next election.

Each member of the of the Selectboard and School Committee discussed their choices.

Voting was done in 3 rounds.

Archie Archible=AA

Ron Aponte=RA

Brenda Aldrich=BA

Bill Barnett=BB

Dawn French=DF

Myndi Bogdanovich=MB

Mike Knapp=MK

Nick O'Connor=NO

Tom Laughner=TL

Candidate	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3
Paula Moran	MK		
Jeff Charron	MB, DF, BB	MB, DF, RA, BB	MB, DF, RA, BA, BB, AA
Joseph Schmidt	RA		
Anne Marley	BA, AA	BA, AA	
Woody Clift	MK, TL, NO	MK, TL, NO	MK, TL, NO
Eric Johnson			
Rebecca Pease			
Linda Sterling			

Mr. Jeff Charron was voted as the winner of the election. Ms. French let Mr. Charron know he could sit in on the current meeting but would not be able to vote until he was sworn in at the Town Hall.

- IV. Introduction of new CHCS Principal – Jennifer Champagne
 Superintendent Coffin introduced Jennifer Champagne. Noted that she comes with experience, is a team player, looks to be a good partner with the staff and is a good leader. Ms. Champagne noted there is a wonderful involvement in the schools in this district. Has already spoken to someone on the PTO. She has been in education for 18 years. Grades 4-6 are her primary experience. She has teaching experience in both regular ed. and special ed. Will start officially August 9th.
- V. Special awards and presentations
 There were no special awards or presentations.
- VI. Approval of minutes (A.I.)
 A. June 21, 2016 Regular Session

Motion: Ms. Bogdanovich moved to accept the June 21 as amended

Second: Dr. Knapp

Vote: 4,0,0

Amend: time of adjournment

VII. Reports and recommendations of the Superintendent

A. Superintendent's Evaluation

Ms. French noted that Superintendent Coffin has produced data for proof of what she has accomplished to the SC. Superintendent Coffin went through the materials. Goal is to incorporate what needs work toward the goals for next year.

Ms. French explained the rating for the Superintendent;

1. Instructional Leadership = proficient
 - a. Strengths noted were; advocacy for students, student focused, knowledge of laws and policy.
 - b. Goals to work on noted were; communications, explanations, sell reasoning, relations between town and staff
2. Management & Operations = proficient
 - a. Strength; laws and policy.
 - b. Goals; bullying in schools
3. Family & Community = needs improvement
 - a. this was a split between needs improvement and proficient, the SC agreed to move forward with a needs improvement rating.
 - b. Strengths; responsive, respectful, welcoming, empowers others
 - c. Goals; communication, selling her vision, clear reasons why, improving community engagement.
 - d. There were many positive comments. SC members noted that everyone has areas that need improvement, this is an area that has the most room for improvement. Communication was an area that was noted as needing improvement. Communication on why something is important was noted.
 - e. Superintendent Coffin noted that she has been here 1 ½ years. It has been a wonderful challenging experience and there is always room for growth. Having a needs improvement on the first years of evaluation would not be a terrible thing. Communication is key.
4. Professional culture = proficient
 - a. Many of the same comments as referenced in the first standard.

B. Strategic Plan Report

Motion: Dr. Knapp moved to table the Strategic Plan Report discussion.

Second: Ms. Bogdanovich

Vote: 4,0,0

Discussion: The SC agreed to postpone the presentation to the next meeting.

VIII. Personnel update

A. Personnel update as of July 26, 2016

New hires include Mary Roy (S/L pathologist), Kristin Burdick (.5 reading/.5 title 1 teacher SRE), Jennifer Champagne (CHCS Principal), Karen Cousland (JBMS Assistant Principal), Frances Frederick (BHS School adjustment counselor)

Dr. Knapp noted he was not aware they were interviewing for the JBMS position.

Superintendent Coffin noted that a committee was formed of parents, teacher, staff, and Director of Teaching & Learning. Ms. Cousland comes from the Springfield School District where she has taught for years and was an interim admin last year. The committee voted unanimously for her.

IX. Unfinished business

X. New business

A. Approval of 2016 – 2017 Employee Handbook (A.I.)

Motion: Ms. Bogdanovich moved to table the approval to the next meeting.

Second: Dr. Knapp

Vote: 4,0,0

Discussion: Ms. Bogdanovich noted at a previous Personnel & Policy meeting it was discussed and the policy still needs updating. Ms. French questioned what the deadline was to get the policy into the handbooks. It was noted that approval at the August meeting would give enough time.

B. Approval of Declared Surplus - Technology (A.I.)

Motion: Dr. Knapp moved to declare the Hann GS surplus by recommendation of Scott Karen, to be recycled or donated.

Second: Ms. Bogdanovich

Vote: 3,1,0 (Dr. Laughner voted no)

C. Approval of Updated Food Service Job Descriptions (A.I.)

1) Cook/Manager

2) Asst. Cook

3) Food Service Prep. and Recovery Worker

Motion: Ms. Bogdanovich moved to approve the updated job descriptions 1,2, and 3.

Second: Dr. Laughner

Vote: 4,0,0

Discussion: Ms. Bogdanovich noted this was voted to recommend to the full committee at the Personnel & Policy meeting earlier in the evening. She noted that the changes were requested by staff.

D. Approval of Administrative Asst./School Year Secretary Job Description (A.I.)

Motion: Ms. Bogdanovich moved to approve the updated Administrative Asst./School Year Secretary job description

Second: Dr. Laughner

Vote: 4,0,0

Discussion: Ms. Bogdanovich noted this was voted to recommend to the full committee at the Personnel & Policy meeting earlier in the evening. She noted that the changes were requested by staff. Dr. Knapp questioned what the changes were. Superintendent Coffin noted that #9 is an addition.

E. Charter Cap Resolution (possibly will be an A.I. on August agenda)

F. Proud of WMass Public Schools Campaign (possibly will be an A.I. on August agenda)

Motion: Dr. Knapp moved to table the discussion of E and F to the August meeting.

Second: Ms. Bogdanovich

Vote: 4,0,0

Discussion: Superintendent Coffin would like the School Committee to consider supporting the resolution and campaign listed above. Dr. Knapp questioned what the School Committee previously signed regarding charter schools. Superintendent Coffin will look into the exact name of the campaign the School Committee supported. Dr. Knapp also noted to check out the Proud of Public Schools website.

XI. Reports of subcommittees/representatives

A. Curriculum & Instruction (Dr. Knapp/Dr. Laughner)

Dr. Knapp noted they have not met.

B. Personnel & Policy (Ms. Bogdanovich/Dr. Laughner)

Ms. Bogdanovich noted they met prior to the SC meeting. Items were voted on earlier in the agenda.

C. Property & Transportation (Ms. Bogdanovich/Ms. French)

Ms. French noted they have not met.

D. Finance & Budget Subcommittee (Dr. Laughner/Dr. Knapp)

Dr. Laughner noted they have met once. Discussed was the timeline and budget process needed with the Finance Committee. Also discussed was building relations with the town. Ed Boscher will be the FinCom member attending the meetings. The Finance

Committee has set up a subcommittee to look at revenue and prop 2 ½. The town will need a preliminary budget by October. Also discussed was long term budget planning.

E. Collaborative for Educational Services (Dr. Knapp)

Dr. Knapp noted the next meeting is scheduled for September.

F. Healthy & Safer Schools Advisory Committee (Ms. French)

Ms. French noted they have not met.

G. Technology Advisory Committee (Dr. Laughner)

Dr. Laughner noted they have not met.

XII. Correspondence

A. Agenda, July 26, 2016

B. School Committee vacancy letters of application

C. June 21, 2016, Regular Session Minutes

D. Superintendent's Evaluation

E. Strategic Plan

F. Personnel Update

G. 2016 – 2017 Employee Handbook

H. Declared Surplus-Technology Memo

I. Food Service Updated Job Descriptions

J. Administrative Asst./School Year Secretary Updated Job Description

K. Charter Cap Resolution

L. Proud of WMass Public Schools Campaign

M. State House News Service – Informational Only

N. Board & Administrator – Informational Only

XIII. Vote to enter into Executive Session under M.G.L. 30A, §21, Part 3 to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining and individual contracts or litigation as conducting said business in open session would have a detrimental effect on the School Committee's bargaining or litigation position. The committee will not return to open session.

School Committee voted to enter into executive session at 9:30 pm. They will not return to open session.

Vote:

Dawn French - yes

Thomas Laughner - yes

Michael Knapp - yes


Myndi Bogdanovich - yes


Respectfully submitted by,

Ramona Griffin
Non-Confidential Recording Secretary to the School Committee


School Committee members' signatures:

 _____, Dawn French, Chair

 _____, Thomas Laughner, Vice Chair

 _____, Michael Knapp, Secretary

 _____, Myndi Bogdanovich, Member

 _____, Jeffrey Charron, Member

Belchertown students, both individually and collaboratively, will be innovative thinkers, problem solvers and unique, creative contributors to their community and the world.

The Belchertown School Committee conducts its business in open session pursuant to Chapter 30A, Section 21 of the Massachusetts General Laws. The public is welcome to comment only on items on the agenda for this meeting as noted above. If you wish to address the School Committee regarding an item not on the agenda for this meeting, please contact the Superintendent of Schools at 413.323.0423 or via email at superintendent@belchertown.org to determine the best way to address your concerns (see [School Committee Policy BEDH](#)).