

TOWN OF PROVINCETOWN

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes of March 9, 1999

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Members Present: Lois Borgesi (Chair), Frank Wills, William Roger, Adrienne Duncan.

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Dr. Susan Fleming (Superintendent), Michael Marino (PHS Principal), William Rokicki (VMES Principal/Director of Student Services), parents and staff.

REGULAR SESSION

Chair Lois Borgesi convened the Regular Session at 7:04 PM. All four members of the School Committee were present.

VISITORS' STATEMENTS

Hunter O'Hanian, Director of Provincetown Fine Arts Work Center, along with Molly Lovelock from Lower Cape Cod Community Development Corporation, spoke about Campus Provincetown.

MINUTES

- January 27, 1999 - Adrienne Duncan moved to approve as written, William Rogers seconded, and it was so voted, 4-0.
- February 9, 1999 - Adrienne Duncan moved to approve with corrections, William Rogers seconded, and it was so voted, 4-0.

COMMUNICATIONS

Dr. Fleming presented the following:

- Massachusetts Department of Education publication, Board in Brief: Summary of Minutes (2 issues) ;
- Resignations from Austin Baker and Wendy Christern. Mr. Rokicki said that he truly regretted Ms Christern's

- resignation and detailed some of her contributions to the school;
- Keith Bergman Memo/Rec. Dept. Office Space (see Unfinished Business) ;
- Finance Committee Meeting: March 16, 1999 @ 5:00 PM ;
- Letter to parents from Dr. Fleming ;
- Letter of Acknowledgment - to Molly Perdue ;
- March 23rd Provincetown School Committee and Truro School Committee Joint Meeting @ 6:30 PM ;
- Current VMES Newsletter;
- Letter from Dr. Fleming to Dr Joseph Gilbert, Superintendent of Schools, Harwich, concerning the success of the Harwich/Provincetown ice hockey cooperative program;
- Memo from Dr. Fleming concerning personnel vacancies in the district;
- Dr. Fleming and Lois Borgesi met with the union on custodian and cafeteria staff issues.

Lois Borgesi inquired how they were managing with only two days of nursing help. Dr. Fleming and Mr. Rokicki replied that it was difficult and that they were widening the circle of advertisement and were going to try for a full-time nurse. Mr Ferrick asked about advertising in a nursing newsletter and Lois Borgesi said that the group she was a member of did not have a newsletter. Lois Borgesi said she would announce the vacancy at the next nursing meeting.

Lois Borgesi presented a communication from the Provincetown Domestic Violence Program asking for participation in a march.

Dr. Fleming asked Mr. Marino if anything had been done about participation in the Yearrounders Festival and Mr. Marino replied that Peggy Sheehan had not been able to complete plans due to a family emergency.

EDUCATIONAL UPDATE

Summer Institute: District Improvement Grant: Dr. Fleming distributed a concept paper put together with the Principals and the National Faculty. This year's Institute will focus on science and math. All the math and science teachers have signed up as well as most of the VMES staff. Institute will be in July for seven or eight days. The National Scholars will visit next year.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

PSC Policies: IA, IB, IC, ID - Second Reading:

Policy IA, Instructional Goals - Dr. Fleming distributed copies of the old policy and said she felt the old policy was more definite and not as vague. By consensus, the School Committee postponed discussion. The School Committee discussed the possibility of re-forming the Policy Sub-Committee.

Policy IB, Academic Freedom -By consensus, the School Committee postponed discussion.

Policy IC/ICA School Year/School Calendar - By consensus, the School Committee postponed discussion.

Policy ID, School Day - By consensus, the School Committee postponed discussion.

Dr. Fleming announced that a current copy of the Policy Manual, with dates of revision for all but section I, was now available for public inspection.

Review Superintendent's Job Description/Evaluation Form - Dr. Fleming said she felt it was important to review the job description and evaluation instrument material and commented that William Rogers had previously said he felt it should be more specific. She suggested a scoring methodology. Lois Borgesi noted that the evaluation was scheduled to be completed by March 15th and said that it was clear that the evaluation would not be ready by the scheduled time. Dr.

Fleming said the School Committee also had to adopt job description for the Superintendent and the High School Principal. William Rogers commented that they had discussed the job descriptions in the autumn of 1998, had completed a first reading, but had not finished the review. He suggested that the School Committee look at the evaluations and job descriptions in light of the MASC publication on the subject(s). He said they should also should look at how other districts evaluate their superintendents. Dr. Fleming reviewed the history of the evaluation/job description process. William Rogers suggested they try and make the instruments more pertinent to the Provincetown School System, that they needed fine-tuning. Dr. Fleming said the proposed job descriptions mirror the areas that the State wants superintendents to be responsible for, that she clearly understands all the items and knows what is expected of her.

Dr. Fleming suggested they form a sub-committee to refine the job descriptions, that she has done revisions three or four times and that there are still questions. William Rogers volunteered to make copies of the MCAS publication for all members. Lois Borgesi said they would then start with a job description. William Rogers said he did not want to go through an exercise in vagueness, that he just wanted to see if the description could be more tailored to the superintendent's duties in Provincetown. William Rogers volunteered to be on the sub-committee. Frank Wills asked for the material showing what the State says is required in a job description. Adrienne Duncan also volunteered to be on the sub-committee.

FY 2000 Budget Review: Dr. Fleming mentioned a packet of material the Finance Committee had received and said that the School Committee members also had the same material. She then reviewed the material. Lois Borgesi commented that the material was very thorough and encouraged all members to attend the meeting with the Finance Committee on March 16th.

Other

William Rogers said he was very pleased by the participation of the teachers in the National Institute, stressing how important their commitment was to future of the school system. Dr. Fleming said she would be eventually doing a press release.

Dr. Fleming distributed documents on the Building Consolidation Project. She then reviewed the material, going over in detail the five items in her cover memo. Of especial interest was the possibility of transferring the Recreation Department and its activities to the School Department's property via a Town Meeting article. She said the School Committee needs to discuss this potential change, because Town Meeting will expect the School Committee to take a position when this article comes up for a vote. Frank Wills suggested meeting with the Recreation Department personnel and Lois Borgesi commented that there was only one more School Committee meeting before the start of Town Meeting. Lois Borgesi said that the schools could probably provide office space, but that the recreation programs, especially those that occur during the day, would be impossible - that after-school programs would be definitely possible.

William Rogers commented on the Town Meeting article requesting that the Annex be conveyed to the Housing Authority and inquired as to the School Committee's rights in dealing with these initiatives, expressing his extreme displeasure. Dr. Fleming said she had done some research in conjunction with School Counsel and said that in order for a building to change hands there, (1) had to be a successful Town Meeting article, and, (2) the building's custodial body had to vote in favor. The School Committee is the custodial body for all school buildings. William Rogers said that he had only considered consolidation in exchange for improvements. Dr. Fleming said she had discussed with School Counsel the possibility of a conditional School Committee vote to declare the Annex surplus if there was also a commitment to redesign/refine the other school buildings. School Counsel said such a vote was possible. Dr. Fleming suggested the School Committee read through the appropriate sections of the Massachusetts General Laws.

Frank Wills asked which specific after-school hours are generally acceptable for use of school buildings by others and Dr. Fleming replied with an overview of possibilities for each building. Dr. Fleming said that if the Recreation Department is moved, the Town will have to redefine the mission of the Recreation Department, that it will have to be a primarily youth program. Lois Borgesi raised the possibility that the Recreation Department could wind up being put in the School Budget. The Committee discussed possibilities of when they could find time to discuss this issue. Dr.

Fleming suggested that they could simply say the issue came up too late for the School Committee to take a realistic and considered position. If the Town votes for the article, they will be doing so without a definite sense of the future of Recreation Department. Lois Borgesi and Dr. Fleming said that they felt the Selectmen had bowed to public pressure and put these articles on the warrant at the last minute. Frank Wills agreed he felt it was too much too soon and too complicated.

Mr Ferrick (in the audience) asked about the steps necessary for conveying a town building and why the Selectmen are asking the School Committee for their position on the article to convey the Community Center. Dr. Fleming explained that the issue was where the Recreation Department would then be housed. Jessica Waugh (audience) asked about the article to repair the Court Street drainage and why the Selectmen were supporting initiatives (moving the Recreation Department and/or turning the Annex into affordable housing) that would put more housing in the area of the Court Street problem.

Lois Borgesi suggested that Dr. Fleming write a reply to the Selectmen saying that the School Committee needed more time to consider the issue. Frank Wills suggested that Lois Borgesi sign the letter and Lois Borgesi said she would. Dr. Fleming said moving/changing the Recreation Department was a very big decision and Frank Wills said that it might be an opportunity for some creative thinking. Dr. Fleming said that if the article on the Community Center passes, final action would still require a vote of the Selectmen. Lois Borgesi commented that after nine months working on the consolidation project/study no conclusion regarding the consolidation had been reached. William Rogers said that the School Committee had not been the ones to initiate that project, that the children were his number one priority and that other issues were secondary. The other School Committee members agreed with Mr. Rogers.

Dr. Fleming said that the loss in the situation was that the revenue from selling the buildings would not be available to redesign and improve the schools. Mr. Ferrick (audience) asked if the School Committee had advance copies of the Town Meeting articles and Dr. Fleming explained that the Town Manager had included copies with his memo. Dr. Fleming said there was another article proposing the sale of the Heritage Museum.

Lois Borgesi brought up the issue that arose at the last School Committee meeting concerning her ability to make or second motions. School Counsel has confirmed that the Chair can make and second motions, especially when only three members are present. Lois Borgesi said she also had the right to respond to correspondence. Lois Borgesi then distributed a draft letter of response to the Selectmen concerning their inquiry about the VMES letter/sticker issue. Ms Borgesi asked for the School Committee's approval before sending the letter.

Frank Wills moved to approve sending the letter as written, William Rogers seconded and it was so voted, 4-0.

NEW BUSINESS

Review Draft 1999-2000 School Year Calendar

Dr. Fleming reviewed the calendar and said she would be distributing it to the staff and that the School Committee could vote on it at their next meeting.

PSC Policies: IE, IGA, IGB, IGBE, IGBH - First Reading - postponed.

Other

Dr. Fleming referred to a line item request transferring \$1,700 from Superintendent's Contracted Services Administration to Superintendent Administration Technology for the purpose of updating the Administrative Assistance computer to handle new software for personnel and payroll. Adrienne Duncan moved to approve the request, William Rogers seconded, and it was so voted, 4-0.

Frank Wills suggested adding an agenda item as soon as possible to set the School Committee's meeting schedule. By consensus, the Committee agreed to wait until April to set the meeting schedule.

Dr. Fleming said that the Administration and the School Committee needed to have a work session after the April 13th meeting, when the demographic study was presented.

CLOSING STATEMENTS

None

ADJOURNMENT

Adrienne Duncan made a motion to adjourn at 9:05 PM and it was so voted unanimously.