

TOWN OF PROVINCETOWN

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes of March 23, 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), Truro School Committee members, (Chair Kenneth Oxtoby, Susan Roderick, Tim Dickey, Michelle Jarusiewicz, and Bruce Cagwin), Dr. Nicholson (Superintendent of the Truro School System), parents and staff.

JOINT MEETING

Provincetown School Committee / Truro School Committee

Chair Lois Borgesi convened the Provincetown session of the Joint Meeting at 6:37 PM. All four members of the School Committee were present.

Chair Kenneth Oxtoby called the Truro session of the Joint Meeting to order at 6:37 PM. All five members of the Truro School Committee were present.

VISITORS' STATEMENTS

None.

EDUCATIONAL UPDATE

PROVINCETOWN HIGH SCHOOL: MICHAEL MARINO - Mr. Marino expressed his pleasure at working with the students in the High School. He commented on his sense of an "emerging identity" for the High School. He stated that he hopes to create a showplace school for the entire Cape - that he is striving to foster a positive identity among all members of the school community. Mr. Marino said that he felt the MCAS was presented to the students in too scary a way by the State, that the negativity has to be erased. The curriculum also needs work, i.e., more rigor. He is making the development of public speaking skills a priority and perhaps a requirement for juniors. Academic rigor and challenge should be in place for every student. The distance to Cape Tech discourages some students in choosing a trade career path - Mr. Marino is going to promote a new program at PHS, maintaining the core curriculum, but with emphasis on trade training opportunities.

Dr. Fleming praised Mr. Marino for his establishing the Recognition Assemblies. Mr. Marino expressed his desire to recognize every student for some sort of excellence. The Recognition Program and the Weekly meetings are popular with students.

DR. NICHOLSON - TRURO CURRICULUM UPDATE - Dr. Nicholson distributed a 1998-1999 Curriculum Update handout and spoke on the various new initiatives and expansions of existing programs. He said that they are trying to keep the training at the elementary level in line with the High School's programs so that the students are able to make a smooth transition when they leave the elementary school.

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

William Rogers asked Dr. Fleming to report on the three-year Professional Development program, which will establish a series of summer institutes coordinated with the National Faculty. Virtually all pertinent staff have signed up for the 1999 Math and Science Institute.

Truro Chair Kenneth Oxtoby thanked those attending for their commitment and participation and for the opportunity for information sharing.

TUITION AGREEMENT

Dr. Fleming praised the work of the sub-committees in reaching a draft agreement. She then discussed the details of the agreement. Per pupil cost calculations have not yet been approved by the State. Dr. Fleming distributed handouts showing comparison of costs between FY 1997 and FY 1998 and explained how the calculations worked.

Susan Roderick commented that, as a member of the sub-committee, she could support the draft agreement.

Tim Dickey moved to accept and ratify the Tuition Agreement by the Truro School Committee, seconded by Michelle Jarusiewicz and it was so voted, 5-0.

Frank Wills moved to accept and ratify the Tuition Agreement for the Provincetown School Committee, William Rogers seconded, and it was so voted, 3-0, 1 abstain (Lois Borgesi).

OTHER

Frank Wills commented that he had not known that Stormy Mayo had been the person who kept the cooperative relationship between the two school committees going and that he was glad that they were still able to work together.

ADJOURNMENT

Adrienne Duncan moved to adjourn the Provincetown session of the Joint Meeting at 7:15 PM and it was so voted unanimously.

Susan Roderick moved to adjourn the Truro session of the Joint Meeting at 7:15 PM, Tim Dickey seconded and it was so voted unanimously.

REGULAR SESSION

Chair Lois Borgesi convened the Regular Session at 7:27 PM. All four members of the School Committee were present.

VISITORS STATEMENTS

Noreen Baring asked if the Recreation Department discussion could be moved up earlier on the agenda.

Terese Nelson read from altered lyrics of a Joni Mitchell song, "Big Yellow Taxi".

Kristie Murphy spoke about the Community Center history and praised its function as a good place for kids.

Adrienne Duncan moved to take up the discussion of the Recreation Department as the next item on the agenda, Frank Wills seconded, and it was so voted, 4-0.

NEW BUSINESS

RECREATION DEPARTMENT/SCHOOL - Dr. Fleming distributed a handout detailing Town Meeting articles on the disposition of Town properties and discussed in detail the two articles on the School Annex and the Community Center. Frank Wills reminded those assembled that the articles did not originate with the School Committee. He reported on the Selectmen's meeting on the articles, saying that the Selectmen did not appear to take a definite stand or make a recommendation on these articles.

William Rogers repeated his previous position that he was opposed to transferring any building out of the School Committee's control without some guarantees that doing so would further the children's good. Lois Borgesi reviewed the previous discussion on these issues. The School Committee and Dr. Fleming discussed the various ramifications of the two articles and whether they were compelled to take a position on either of them.

Candy Silva asked whether if either article passed at Town Meeting, would it take effect immediately. Frank Wills said that he believed the Selectmen had amended the articles so that implementation would not take place for eighteen months.

Dr. Fleming reported on her discussion with the Town Manager on the Community Center article, in which he implied that it could result in the elimination of the Recreation Department.

Jessica Waugh spoke about MGL limitations on how school buildings can be used. She recommended checking to see if the Recreation Department could even be put in a school building. Dr. Fleming clarified that the MGL stated that school purposes have first priority in use of school buildings. She further stated that, from her discussion with the Town Manager, she understood the Town's intention would be to change the entire focus of the Recreation Department to youth.

Frank Wills said that confusion also arose with the Selectmen and they concluded that both articles have to be considered independently. Dr. Fleming said the Housing Authority was not in favor of the article if there was no place to put the Community Center.

Mr. Rokicki said he wanted to go on record as being strenuously opposed to abolishing the Community Center.

Paul Ferrick suggested sending a letter to the Selectmen expressing the School Committee's opposition.

Deb Trovato said the Town could, despite the School Committee's opposition, still get rid of the Recreation Department. Lois Borgesi said that the Town Meeting vote would only require a simple majority.

Noreen Baring asked how Article 18 was generated. Lois Borgesi explained that Article 18 came directly from the Selectmen and Article 19 was from a private group. The School Committee may be asked for a statement on the articles at Town Meeting. Adrienne Duncan said the Town Meeting booklet will show how many Selectmen voted in favor/opposition on each article.

Dr. Fleming reminded those present that the original impetus came from the Town's decision to do a Consolidation Study last year. Initially, the Recreation Department, the Library and the School had gotten excited about the prospects, because of the possibility of improving services with the revenues from selling the buildings. However, conveying the buildings to the Housing Authority would not generate any revenue.

Frank Wills stated that he felt that some of the original motivation came from the Finance Committee. William Rogers said that he felt the Finance Committee had thrown away \$30,000 in doing the Study because the buildings are not worth as much as anticipated due to septic/sewer constraints.

William Rogers asked what the School Committee's responsibility would be if Article 18 passes and Lois Borgesi replied that the School Committee was not required to do anything. Adrienne Duncan said that the School Committee should take an official position for the benefit of the voters.

Adrienne Duncan moved that the School Committee not support Article 18 because it does not support the quality of programs and services for the children, William Rogers seconded. William Rogers expressed amazement that the Selectmen had even proposed Article 18. After discussion, the School Committee voted, 4-0, to pass the motion.

Adrienne Duncan moved to take the agenda item on "Discussion on Town Meeting Articles" next, Frank Wills seconded and it was so voted unanimously.

Lois Borgesi said they were definitely not ready to declare the Annex surplus. Dr. Fleming said that if the Town offered money for improvements in exchange, the School Committee could consider declaring the Annex surplus

. Adrienne Duncan moved that the School Committee go on record as not being in favor of Article 19 because it does not support our children and it is premature, Frank Wills seconded. After discussion, the School Committee voted 4-0 to approve the motion.

Dr. Frank Wills commented that the Selectmen had voted to recommend other school-related articles.

MINUTES

Postponed by consensus.

COMMUNICATIONS

Dr. Fleming presented the following:

- A Guide for Schools: Protecting Students from Harassment and Hate Crime ;
- VMES Newsletter;
- Town Educational Trust Funds - referred to a short memo from Town Treasurer concerning these funds;
- A letter from Center for Coastal Studies concerning possible use of rooms in the Annex;
- Final copy of the Maguire Report;
- The District's law firm will be doing an on-site workshop for staff on SPED issues, on student records, and on sexual harassment. School Committee members can also attend;
- City and Town Newsletter.

EDUCATIONAL UPDATE

SPECIAL EDUCATION:

Report from School Superintendents -

Dr. Fleming distributed and commented on a report of a two year study done by the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents' Task Force on Special Education.

Report from Building Principals -

- Mr. Rokicki distributed two documents - the VMES Status Report on Special Education (dated 3/23/99) and a memo (dated 3/10/99) from him to the School Committee on the DOE Coordinated Program Review Report and Response. Mr. Rokicki explained details of the two documents and of the SPED program.

Dr. Frank Wills asked about the Birth-to-3 situation in Provincetown and Mr. Rokicki explained how Provincetown responded to such situations. Lois Borgesi asks if Provincetown has a Birth- to-3 program and Mr. Rokicki said they do not have formal program.

Dr. Frank Wills also offered to become involved in the SPED programs in terms of providing contacts and in other non-conflict-of-interest activities. An audience member questioned whether Dr. Wills could participate and Mr. Rokicki and Frank Wills clarified the degree of participation allowed.

- Mr. Marino distributed two documents: one concerning a Special Education Teacher/Specialist Survey of Programs, and the other a memo from him (dated March 22, 1999) to the School Committee concerning the Status of Special Education at PHS 1998-1999. Mr. Marino then explained details of the documents and of the SPED program. He also went through a list of concerns.

William Rogers asked if the system has established methods for measuring the effectiveness of the SPED program. Mr. Rokicki said there were PSC policies on the issue. William Rogers also asked if Mr Boxer was still responsible for SPED at the HS. Mr. Marino said Mr Boxer was overseeing the day-to-day activities, but that he, as Principal, had general responsibility. Mr. Marino clarified that Mr Boxer was answerable to Mr. Rokicki. William Rogers asked several more detailed questions about the SPED requirements and program.

Dr. Fleming said that the SPED staff has received lots of training in the past several years, but that their skills need to be continually updated. Dr. Fleming also clarified the reporting relationship between Mr. Marino, Mr Boxer and Mr. Rokicki. Mr. Marino must sign the IEP's and is committed to attending the necessary meetings. William Rogers said that he did not believe it was Mr. Marino's responsibility to become so totally involved in the SPED program. Mr Rogers then proposed several ideas for establishing job descriptions, defining boundaries, and for evaluating staff performance.

Peggy Sheehan asked what are the specific methods the system is using to measure the SPED program's effectiveness. Lois Borgesi reviewed some of the history of the issue and expressed some confusion about reporting lines and areas of responsibility/accountability. William Rogers also emphasized that they were trying to determine if the SPED program was getting enough help and Lois Borgesi agreed that the School Committee had previously been very concerned that there was too much work for one part-time SPED director. She explained that Mr Boxer's position had been split between guidance counseling and SPED activities to provide more help for Mr. Rokicki. Lois Borgesi emphasized that the School Committee was trying to determine if there was possibly a need to create a separate SPED Director position.

Jessica Waugh asked if there were a specific guide for SPED requirements and suggested establishing a SPED resource library where all materials were assembled. She asked if the Chapter 76 statute was very specific. Frank Wills responded that the statute was specific on some things, but not on others.

Peggy Sheehan read from the Chapter 76 regulations from DOE, stating that the School Committee was responsible for establishing a three year program plan and that the State can withhold funding if there is no plan. Mr. Rokicki clarified

that the word "School Committee" in the statute also meant their Committee's designee. Mr. Rokicki clarified that in 1997 they had a three year program review and that they had submitted a new three year plan in May 1998. The three year plan has to be signed by the School Committee and copies are available. In between each three year plan, the school must submit annual updates. The frequency of evaluations by the State was also clarified.

In response to a question from Lois Borgesi, Mr. Rokicki said that the SPED program is working at this time, assuming nothing unusual develops. Dr. Fleming said that having a full-time HS Principal is very important in that Mr. Marino knows every student's IEP before he signs off. She asked if it would not be better to have a part-time staff person whose sole focus would be SPED and that such a possibility should be kept on the agenda, especially in terms of the FY 2001 budget. Lois Borgesi agreed that the current arrangement had been put in place with a "wait-and-see" attitude and that the SPED staffing issue needed to be kept open.

Frank Wills said that this was a good example of how the School Committee needs to be doing some long-range thinking and planning. Dr. Fleming said there was a need for a planning session/retreat to discuss this and other long-term issues after the new Committee member is elected in May. Dr. Fleming said that the SPED budget will be cut next year.

Report from Special Needs Director on Coordinated Review - Mr. Rokicki reviewed the first response to the findings of the Coordinated Review. The district is now awaiting a response from DOE. Frank Wills said that a considerable amount of the civil rights concerns was with the wording of documents and with non-English translations of documents. Lois Borgesi asked if there had been an improvement in meeting timelines and Mr. Rokicki said generally, yes, but there were still some delays in getting IEP's to parents within time limits.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

PSC POLICIES: IA, IB, IC, ID - SECOND READING:

- **Policy IA, Instructional Goals** - *Frank Wills moved to approve for the second reading, Adrienne Duncan seconded and it was so voted, 4-0.*
- **Policy IB, Academic Freedom** - *Frank Wills moved to approve for the second reading, Adrienne Duncan seconded and it was so voted, 4-0.*
- **Policy IC/ICA School Year/School Calendar** - *Frank Wills moved to approve for the second reading, Adrienne Duncan seconded and it was so voted, 4-0.*
- **Policy ID, School Day** - *Frank Wills moved to approve for the second reading, Adrienne Duncan seconded and it was so voted, 4-0.*

PSC POLICIES - FIRST READING:

- **Policy IE, Organization of Instruction** -
- **Policy IGA, Curriculum Development** -
- **Policy IGB, Student Support Services Programs** -
- **Policy IGBE, Remedial Instruction** -
- **Policy IGBH, Alternative Programs** -
- **Policy IGD, Curriculum Adoptions** -

Adrienne Duncan moved to approve PSC Policies IE, IGA, IGB, IGBE, IGBH, and IGD for the first reading, William Rogers seconded and it was so voted, 4-0.

REVIEW SUPERINTENDENT'S JOB DESCRIPTION/EVALUATION FORM -

William Rogers distributed copies of a document entitled "Superintendent's Evaluation" and copies of a document entitled "Advisory on School Governance" from the Department of Education. He said that the School Committee has a responsibility to have job descriptions that are specific to and fine-tuned to the Provincetown School District. Lois Borgesi confirmed that the School Committee never adopted a new job description for Dr. Fleming, meaning the

School Committee has to use the old description and the old evaluation form.

Adrienne Duncan moved to use the old job description and evaluation form so as to complete Dr. Fleming's evaluation in a timely fashion. Dr. Fleming distributed copies of a "Fall River Effective Teaching Rubric" and discussed same. *William Rogers seconded Adrienne Duncan's motion and it was so voted, 4-0.*

In response to a question from William Rogers, Lois Borgesi clarified the evaluation process, which culminates in a public presentation and discussion.

FY 2000 BUDGET REVIEW: Finance Committee Handouts for Town Meeting -

Dr. Fleming distributed handouts that she planned to have available for the public at Town Meeting, which are the same ones which were presented to the Finance Committee. After discussion, the School Committee decided to limit some of the analysis material. Dr. Fleming reported that the Finance Committee was very supportive of the School's budget.

Adrienne Duncan moved to continue the meeting past 10:00 PM, Frank Wills seconded and it was so voted, 4-0.

1999-2000 SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR -

Adrienne Duncan to approve the 1999-2000 School Year Calendar, William Rogers seconded and it was so voted, 4-0.

OTHER -

Frank Wills reminded the Committee of the need to set the summer meeting dates. The next School Committee meeting is currently scheduled for March 13th, but there may be a conflict with Town Meeting. Various other dates were discussed. Tentatively, the next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, March 13th, with a back-up date of Wednesday, March 14th.

NEW BUSINESS

RECREATION DEPARTMENT/SCHOOL - discussed earlier in the meeting.

DISCUSSION: TOWN MEETING ARTICLES -discussed earlier in the meeting.

OTHER - None

CLOSING STATEMENTS

None

ADJOURNMENT

Adrienne Duncan made a motion to adjourn at 10:07 PM and it was so voted unanimously.