

**BLACKSTONE-MILLVILLE REGIONAL
DISTRICT SCHOOL COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING**

April 29, 2010

The Blackstone-Millville Regional District School Committee met in the library/media center of the Frederick W. Hartnett Middle School commencing at 7:00 p.m. with the following members present:

Charles K. Singleton, Chairman
Ann M. Lesperance, Vice Chairperson
Lynn M. Landry, District Treasurer (arrived at 8:05 p.m.)
Catherine A. Robinson, Assistant District Treasurer
Steven J. Tringali, District Secretary
Michael J. Buckley, Member
John J. Eldridge, Member
Diane C. Robin, Member

Also in attendance at the meeting were Kimberly B. Shaver-Hood, Superintendent of Schools, Harold Gould, Esquire, Student Representatives Luke Perreault and Amanda Chamberlin.

Consent Agenda

It was moved by Mr. Buckley, seconded by Mr. Eldridge and **unanimously voted** to approve the Consent Agenda which includes warrants and field trip requests for May 11th and June 9th.

Student Representatives

Amanda Chamberlin stated that a wonderful time was had by all at the prom on Thursday night. There are 16 days of school left for seniors. The induction ceremony for NHS will be held on May 20th and the sophomore semi-formal on May 21st.

Luke Perreault spoke on the third annual band aid concert held on Thursday, April 1st. Luke mentioned that over school vacation the Anatomy Class did a community clean up.

The following is a list of Senior activities and dates:

Senior Parade and last day of school for seniors – May 21st

Senior Class Trip to Block Island – June 1st

Senior Banquet – June 2nd @ 7 pm – Village Haven

Awards Night – June 3rd @ 7pm

Senior Breakfast – June 4th @ 8:00 am and Graduation @ 6 pm - front of school

Appointments

Advisor, Denise Morell and senior Ethan Hardy gave information on plans for the senior class trip. They are planning on going to Block Island for the day. Ethan stated that seniors will not have to pay for the trip. The senior banquet will be held at Village Haven and will be at no cost to the students. The senior cookout will be held on May 20th and the senior parade on May 21st. Mrs. Morell stated that since they have been able to hold profitable fundraisers, the seniors will not have to pay for their caps and gowns. If there are any funds left over, they may be put into the Andrew Bibeault Memorial Scholarship Fund. It was mentioned that Ethan Hardy will attend Harvard University next year. The last person to attend Harvard from BMR was accepted 23 years ago.

Jeanne Sheridan, Food Service Director did not attend the meeting this evening. She would like to be placed on the agenda for the next administrator's meeting. Mr. Buckley asked if they are all set to go forward with the POS system in the cafeterias. Ms. Shaver-Hood stated that they are ready to go with the system in June. A letter will be sent home to parents prior to the start of the system. The District has paid for the system but when the books are closed out, the funds will be returned to the District with funds from the cafeteria account.

Mr. Singleton would like to attend the opening day of the POS system and invited the other School Committee Members to attend also.

Report of the Superintendent

Ms. Shaver-Hood mentioned that Jason Briggs has requested an outside locker at the Middle School to place a first aid kit. Mrs. Lesperance stated that she may have an issue with this. Mr. Tringali stated that all of the baseball fields have them and they have been there for many years. Mr. Eldridge stated that they may want to document how they will handle it. Mr. Buckley does not believe they have them at the High School where it is regionalized and the school maintains them. Mr. Buckley is hesitant to add something that the school does not control. Mr. Eldridge would like to have Jason Briggs come to a meeting to give the Committee more information on what they will do and who will maintain it. Mr. Singleton wants to know if there is any liability for the School District.

Superintendent Shaver-Hood stated that the expense ledgers were in the members' packets. She has been through it for the last three weeks and is looking to encumber all funds to see if there is a surplus which can be released. She feels they have identified any funds that have not been spoken for and they have released these funds.

Motion: It was moved by Mr. Eldridge, seconded by Mrs. Lesperance and **unanimously voted** to authorize Kim Shaver-Hood to pre-purchase items in the amount of \$80,000 and will come back to make the rest of the purchases at a later date provided they have the funds to do so.

Superintendent Shaver-Hood mentioned that her secretary Barbara has put together a packet with the different events going on in the District from April through August and the requests for use of facilities during that time.

The FY11 calendar was enclosed for review by the School Committee. The change in the calendar is that they will make 6 of the professional development days half days. We now have 183 school days and will be going to 182 school days.

Motion: It was moved by Mr. Eldridge, seconded by Mrs. Lesperance and **unanimously voted** to approve the FY11 School Calendar with the change in school days from 183 to 182.

Superintendent Shaver-Hood stated that the last day of school will be June 22nd for all schools except the High School. Due to a boiler problem the High School had one extra day to make up.

Celeste Langlois, Chairperson of the Blackstone Parks and Recreation and Jim Laren spoke. They are requesting that the recently renovated soccer fields at the JFK/AFM Complex not be used. They are trying to grow grass on this field and if people are constantly walking on it the grass will never take seed. They are asking that everyone stay off this field until it is up and running in the fall. They will send this request to the new Athletic Director, Tim Johnson.

Ms. Langlois mentioned that they would like to send home flyers in the students backpacks at certain times of the year. For instance, they recently had an Easter egg hunt that was not well attended probably due to the fact that the students did not know about it. The problem is that the Superintendent has to keep control of this or there would be too many items being sent home and parents were complaining that it was overwhelming. At this time only the Parent Organizations are allowed to place flyers in the students' backpacks. Superintendent Shaver-Hood feels that placing it in the school newsletters might be better than sending it home in the backpack or placing it at the front desk of the school. She will look into this for them. Mrs. Lesperance stated that it would need to be a small item in the newsletters since it is at capacity.

Harold Gould, Esquire spoke at 8:00 p.m. on legal matters.

Attorney Gould spoke on amending the agreement to allow the District to move students from one school to another. He stated that the agreements drafted by the Towns have items left out and are pretty much fatal at this point. Words were left out of the document which make it impossible to approve. Mr. Buckley stated that this is not the first time that this has happened. Attorney Gould stated in his letter to the Towns that the documents need to be typed as stated but this was not done. It will need to go back to another town meeting to be rectified. It will probably not go through for the upcoming year but will need to for FY12. Millville will need to have a special town meeting as early as June and will need to reinsert the corrected document at that time.

In another matter, Attorney Gould spoke on the asbestos situation at the BMR High School. Testing will be done twice a year and was done during April vacation.

Attorney Gould spoke on the reinstatement of Donna M. Giguere who was an English teacher at the Middle School until January 16, 2007. She was arrested at that time on felony charges by Blackstone police. The Attorney General's office is unwilling to proceed with the charges filed by Superior Court and she is now due back pay in the amount of \$185, 293.04 because she was not found guilty of the charges and the statute provides that all of her compensation and benefits have to be returned to her.

Mrs. Giguere's suspension has been removed. Attorney Gould passed all paperwork on to Paul Ryan the local MTA representative. He and Mrs. Giguere are in agreement with the figure. Since her suspension from the School District has been removed she is now due all back pay in full. Mrs. Giguere will not consider taking the payment over an extended period of time. There is a chance that Mrs. Giguere could be indicted again and this could start all over. She could be indicted again since the decision not to proceed was done prior to the beginning of her trial.

Attorney Gould spoke next on the on-going water issue at the Millville Elementary School. Chairman Singleton has been involved in this as he has been attending the meetings as a resident. There was a meeting yesterday at the Millville Elementary School which began at 10:00 a.m. and went until 1:00 p.m. It was attended by 20 people including Chairman Singleton, Principal Tetreault, Superintendent Shaver-Hood, Bob Therrien previous head custodian, Helen Coffin, Sherry Grant, Attorney for the town of Millville, James Paige, Chris McNamara, Richard Lanctot, current head custodian and Robert Ferrari from Water Solutions, Inc as well as Selectman Tom Petrowitz and other interested parties.

Attorney Gould stated that the problem in a nutshell is that the entire water system is suffering from a very elevated iron count due to the fact that the area where the school is located has an extremely high iron content to the point where they could not dig another well without having the same problem. If everything goes well, they will have potable water in the school by September. They will split the system so the current standpipe of 60,000 gallons will be used only for fire protection purposes and diverted into a new standpipe and a cleansing system. Once it reaches the new standpipe it will be cleaned and go into the school. It will be drinkable water at that point. The key is the well and this is a huge problem right now. The well is full of sludge and sediment. The well will have to be de-commissioned at some point for a week to give a drilling company the opportunity to take out the 200 feet of sediment at the bottom of the well.

If no other issues appear, the well will be put into operation and provide the water source. The water will be siphoned off, cleansed and placed in a new tank. Mr. Ferrari will put together an action plan which will be finished by next week and sent to the School District.

The DEP will put the Town of Millville on Administrative Consent Order. The Town of Millville will have to borrow the money for this and will need a special town meeting.

The first task is to work on the well. Because the iron content is so high a camera sent down the well only made it 80 feet. Instead of getting 15 gallons of water a minute they are only getting 4 or 5 gallons.

Mr. Buckley would like to know if this will be a recurring issue.

Mr. Singleton said that the feeling of Mr. Ferrari is that once the system is cleaned it should last about 10-15 years. However, they may want to clean the well out in about 5 or 6 years for an estimated cost of approximately \$7,500 since it is such an iron rich area.

Millville is serious about resolving this issue as is the D.E.P. since the school is currently drinking bottled water. A lack of funds is not a reason accepted by the Administrative Consent Order for not doing the work. The funds will need to be found and the work done.

They will need to close the water supply during the school day to do the testing . They will continue to use bottled water and a tanker of water will be on site for fire protection reasons.

Attorney Gould feels there is a light at the end of the tunnel. Selectman Tom Petrowitz has taken on this project and is doing a very good job with it.

The principal of the School, Eileen Tetreault has put in about 150 hours dedicated to the water issue and the head custodian is taking this seriously and taking ownership of the building.

Mr. Buckley would like the Committee to be briefed once a month on where they stand relative to what is being executed. He would like something in the School Committee packets each month.

Attorney Gould stated that Andrew Newman who represented the Blackstone Gas Company gave a survey to Mr. Porter, High School Principal. It is an agreement between the High School and the Blackstone Gas Company. It calls for bringing in a gas line from Lincoln Street to the back of the property to power items in the school.

Mr. Porter stated that the generator, boiler burners, gas stove in the life skills room, and bunsen burners are items that the new gas line would power. The cost to replace the boilers would be in the area of \$100,000. There are currently two grants available that could possibly pay for this. The cost of the generator would not be grant funded and they would need to determine where the funds would come from to supply this.

Attorney Gould feels that many things are incorrect with the agreement and it is currently on hold.

Attorney Gould sat down with Mr. Porter and Mr. Bacon, head custodian to get a sense of this matter. After sitting down with them he has a better handle on what is needed at the school.

Superintendent Shaver –Hood feels that the priority is changing the boilers on the burners.

Mr. Buckley asked if Fred Hartnett will be overseeing this. He feels if Mr. Hartnett is available it may be a good idea to bring him on board. There is a possibility of having Blackstone Gas pay for certain things that need to be done.

Attorney Gould asked the Committee how they want him to proceed with this. Chairman Singleton would like to let Superintendent Shaver-Hood handle this. He feels it is time to thank Mr. Hartnett for his service to the District but to let the Superintendent handle this matter. When asked if she can handle this project, Superintendent Shaver-Hood stated that she would do everything she could to make it work.

Mr. Eldridge is happy with all that Mr. Hartnett has done for the District but feels there should be one captain of the ship and that is Kim Shaver-Hood. Mr. Hartnett should be thanked for all he has done but it is time to let him go.

Mrs. Lesperance feels that Superintendent Shaver-Hood does not have an assistant and is only one person and it may be too much for her to take on.

Mrs. Landry feels that if Mr. Hartnett is able to save us considerable money each year that we should keep him on.

Mr. Buckley feels that we have a fairly new superintendent and if she is able to use Mr. Hartnett as a resource that she should do so since he has quite a wealth of knowledge.

Mr. Eldridge thought that Mr. Hartnett was going to finish the boiler project last year. However, it was brought to his attention that due to financial issues that was put on hold. At this point Mr. Eldridge feels that Mr. Hartnett should finish this project.

Motion: It was moved by Mr. Eldridge, seconded by Mr. Buckley to request that Mr. Hartnett pursue and finish the boiler project issue with the assistance of Attorney Harold Gould. The vote was **seven in favor, one opposed (Mr. Singleton).**

Superintendent Shaver-Hood spoke on the proposed insurance renewal rates for FY11. Other insurance companies could not match our benefits and they will continue to go with Blue Cross/Blue Shield but use the tiered program which will save the District \$321,000 over what was budgeted this year for insurance.

Superintendent Shaver-Hood stated that they will have a reduction in staff of 21 persons. There will be 15 persons reduced and 8 retiring who will not be replaced. She stated that they had no other option at this point.

Motion: It was moved by Mrs. Lesperance, seconded by Mrs. Landry and **unanimously voted** to enter into Executive Session at 10:00 p.m. for the purpose of contract negotiations and to come out of Executive Session for the purpose of adjourning the meeting. The motion was followed by a roll call vote (except for Michael Buckley who will not attend this Executive Session).

Motion: At 10:25 p.m. it was moved by Mrs. Lesperance, seconded by Mrs. Landry and **unanimously voted** to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Monique F. Simard
Recording Secretary

ATTEST: _____
Steven J. Tringali, District Secretary