

**Provincetown School Committee Meeting
Veterans Memorial Elementary School
Library Media Center – Room #73
2 Mayflower Lane
Provincetown, MA 02657**

Tuesday
October 27, 2009
5:00 p.m.

Members Present: Peter Grosso, Shannon Patrick and Debra Trovato.

Members Absent: Kerry Adams and Carrie Notaro (both excused)

Staff: Dr. Beth Singer, Superintendent
Kim Pike, District Principal (excused)

The meeting was called to order at 5:09 p.m.

AGENDA

Public Comments

Brittany DiPinto, a new student representative to the School Committee, spoke to the group. She told about different happenings in the elementary school. When asked her source of information, she said she obtained it from her brothers and sisters. This was her first school committee meeting.

The superintendent asked the student about what is going on in the high school? “Anything big happening this week?” Then Beth stepped in and talked about the banquet being planned as well as the Friday night opening at the PAAM for the 3rd and 4th graders from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. Beth is hoping that the faculty will do an exhibit later. Shannon asked if the banquet is open for anyone to go? David McGlothlin said that it was open but reservations had to be made by today. Beth told Shannon - consider yourself invited.

Minutes:

Minutes of October 6, 2009

Motion: Move to approve the minutes as amended.

Motion: Peter Grosso Seconded: Debra Trovato Vote: 3-0-0.

Superintendent’s Update:

• **Truro Tuition**

Beth began by saying - as you know, last year the contract agreement with Truro was rewritten and a new tuition was set. Last year Provincetown estimated \$265K for this school year. The actual tuition from Truro is \$180K. This shortfall relates to a combination of issues i.e., fewer students – this year there are 16 high school students and last year there were between 25 and 27/day. The new rate is based on a grade level with the rate changing every year. That is approximately an \$80,000 shortfall. This tuition goes directly to the Town. The figures have just become actual.

• **School Choice Reimbursement**

In 2009 – 43 students “chose” Provincetown Schools. In 2010 – 37 students “chose” Provincetown Schools. We will, therefore have less Choice money to spend in the 2011 Budget. This will be approximately \$30,000 less in FY-11. It is also less than anticipated in FY-10. We have a deficit of about \$43,400 this year in Choice spending. Beth will bring back to the school committee a plan for this

Peter asked if there is any feel where this deficit may be coming from. Beth said that maybe we'd have to look at grant money; she hasn't looked at the possibilities to deal with this. She will bring her \$43K options to the next meeting.

- **MASS/MASC Conference**

November is the MASS/MASC joint conference month. Beth ran off the work shop schedule. She was asked if this were a requirement for the new school committee members. Beth said you can do it either way. The form enclosed in the packet is for whoever the official delegates will be? Beth said that she will be attending - it's in Hyannis and you don't have to commit for the entire 3 days. She feels they'll find some things that might be of interest. She'll probably go to the Wednesday night session as well.

- **PHS MAC Lab Clarification**

At the October 6th meeting, Laurie Stuart (under Public Comments) asked about the new MAC computers and how they were going to be funded and if they had been included in the FY 10 budget. The query is satisfied as follows:

The cost of the MAC lab at the high school is contained in 3 annual lease payments; the first payment of \$14,666 is due on July 1, 2010 thus it will be contained in the FY 11 budget. One option to pay for this will be through recovery money and next year the amount will be more than enough. We can also use school choice money to pay for the MAC lab and as we develop the budgets for FY 11 we'll develop several scenarios. The important thing to stress is that this is NOT coming out of this year's budget.

Unfinished Business:

Job Descriptions:

Teacher: 2nd Reading

Deb had a question about mentoring and grade books. Beth said that most of the questions that Deb raised could be satisfied in the course syllabus and further thought that the School Committee may want to establish a policy regarding universal grading, i.e., % for class participation, % for tests, % for homework assignments, etc. Beth said that no matter how it's done it should be clear to all. Deb continued by saying that she would like standards for grades in black and white with no assumptions.

Motion: Move to accept the Teacher job description as written.

Motion: Debra Trovato Seconded: Shannon Patrick Vote: 3-0-0.

(Deb would request at some time in the future that more information will be contained in the job description.)

Athletic Director: 2nd Reading

Deb wondered if this position would cover the duties of the site coordinator. Peter explained that the site coordinator and the athletic director were different people and now we're trying to meld them.

Beth said the revolving athletic account will pay for any problems in coverage and Deb's worry wouldn't happen because Kim or I would cover if no one else were available. Beth said she didn't want to create 2 different positions.

Deb also objected to #11 on the job description and said that there's a Booster Club out there supervising ticket sales, etc. Beth said that all income for the #11 needs to come through the athletic revolving account. Next #15 could replace the transportation director. Beth said the transportation director does more than athletic transportation, but it might be something to look at.

Motion: Move to accept the Supervisor of Athletics job description as written.

Motion: Debra Trovato Seconded: Shannon Patrick Vote: 3-0-0.

Library Media Specialist: 2nd Reading

Deb has one question – every description had a synopsis regarding the job and this one doesn't.

Motion: Move to table the Library Media Specialist job description.

Motion: Shannon Patrick Seconded: Debra Trovato Vote: 3-0-0.

Assistant to Principal: 2nd Reading

Motion: Move to accept the Assistant to Principal Job description as written.

Motion: Debra Trovato Seconded: Shannon Patrick Vote: 3-0-0.

New Business:

Coverage for School Nurse Leader

Beth said that what you have in your packet is a contract you agreed to in 2008. Also, there's a history of payments to subs. As you probably recall in 2008 the School Committee engaged in a 5 year essential school health grant. This grant pays for the VMES school nurse. In the contract it clearly states that "we agree that the grant hours have to be related to health issues and the school nurse leader will have final approval on all budget matters." That means our nurse leader would have the final o.k. on the rate paid to the subs. The grant would pay for the difference and there are not a lot of days but it does set a precedent and it has to go before the School Committee. She spoke to the granting office which said that if we don't agree to the nurse leader having the full budget O.K. then the contract may be nullified. Beth recommends authorizing that we pay nurse substitutes \$120/day **contingent upon grant fund availability**. The school nurse leader is mandated to go to many meetings and that's why subs may be necessary. Our nurses cover each other whenever possible, reducing the need for substitutes.

This can't be voted on today. We will bring it back for a second hearing and vote.

Future Planning

Several School Committee members have shared concerns about our future and this is on everybody's mind. Peter said – "What is our future and how do we prepare for the inevitable? What is the breaking point? What is the easiest way to facilitate any transition?"

Beth said we need to establish a process for future planning and these things don't happen overnight. What kinds of things do we want to do – short term – long term – and we need to have time set aside to discuss these issues. The meetings could be informal and there are many options for how we

structure the process, but until we have a HOW it doesn't happen.

Shannon would prefer personal discussions. Deb said it has to be a town-wide discussion; it has to be discussed together.

Beth asked – Should we have a meeting of the School Committee. Also, she asked, how would you like the meeting to run? Peter said it's a discussion that should be had all by itself, i.e., what happens if we do this and what happens if we do that.

Beth would like direction on what data to gather.

Peter said that the thought of regionalization has to be thought out. When the numbers get down to the breaking point what would we do? Should we combine in one building and that would probably be the elementary school?

Beth thinks the short answer is within the next 5 years. She's trying to plan a process. Deb said that she needs a timeline and it has to be soon that we should be having meetings. The town hall floor is the piece that needs to change. Peter said that the town is going to be looking for numbers. If we regionalize what will it cost. Deb said that it's not about the money.

Beth said that in talking with the FinCom, they're not expecting an immediate answer to this but want a direction and a plan. Nobody wants to see the school close but they're looking for responsible planning.

Peter said that when he talked to Sharon – he asked, “What are you looking for?” They want to know our direction and what kind of impact it will have on kids, money, and town.

Beth said that these are the things that we should be talking about and then include the community; we could do some forums and invitations to the interested parties. This is a very emotional conversation for everyone.

Shannon thinks we should talk about the emotional impact on our children.

Beth said to call her naïve - but she can see us as viable with 2 schools.

Shannon said that we should be trying to make this school the best school on the Cape.

There had been a survey of townspeople and Donald Murphy said that some of the comments in the survey were very eye opening. Beth thought that perhaps we should repeat the survey but Deb doesn't think we have that kind of time. Shannon said that people in general don't want the school to close; people just want their ideas to be heard.

Beth said a faster way to do it would be holding an open forum so why don't we talk about scheduling the 1st session with some basic groups to get something moving - the sooner we get these meetings on our calendars the better.

Shannon worried that we're going to have to open this up to the public. Beth said meetings have to be open and posted. Peter suggested scheduling meetings every Tuesday and alternating two School Committee meetings and the others for planning.

As the meetings will be open to the public, Beth said that then it will fall to us to pay close attention to what we say and how we say it; she suggests sitting around a big round table. Peter would like to stick to 5:00 p.m. meeting time. Beth said – we want to establish a process and for the 1st meeting not even touch on solutions but just the process to facilitate discussions.

PSC Comments:

Shannon said that there is a 4Cs program where representatives come to speak to high school students. They come wearing their jerseys from wherever they went to college and their pitch is that every one can go to college and achieve.

Beth said we already have a dual enrollment relationship with 4Cs and they send college reps to meet with students and do on the spot admissions. Also, Beth is arranging for our own alumni to come back and talk to the existing students. We will pursue the 4C program as well.

Peter mentioned that he had seen Jane Evans and she told him that the flu clinics have been done – seasonal flu. November 24th is the next flu clinic and it will be for either the 2nd round of seasonal or H1N1 if it's here.

Shannon is involved in a Support the Troops rally and they will be doing a pancake breakfast on December 5th. Donation boxes have been set up and she is in on the planning.

There will be a special town meeting on December 7th at the elementary school. The purpose will be to take the police out of Civil Service.

Deb asked about the AP courses for the teachers. Beth said that there are two varieties; one day long and then a week long. The week long happens in the summer. We are planning for teachers who have not done it before.

Deb said that “virtual high school” keeps coming up did Beth have experience with it? Beth said that these are electronic courses. Some were done with distant video equipment that we don't have. They're interactive cameras and you could take Chinese, for example, but you still need an adult with skills. Also there are people who have their courses up on line which is less appropriate for high school students. Beth said we can't do the distance one because we don't have the equipment. Usually it's through a collaborative that we bounce signals. The last time she looked into it the cost was \$8K for 4 students. There are also online courses for credit recovery. It's an answer for some people but not for everyone.

Beth said you shouldn't just go shopping but it should be looked at if there's a specific need or interest. Beth would like to see it done through the academy.

Public School Committee meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Executive Session:

Discussion with respect to collective bargaining

Discussion with respect to non-union personnel

Respectfully submitted,
Evelyn Rogers Gaudiano

Approved by the School Committee on November 10, 2009

Peter Grosso, Chairperson