

TOWN OF PROVINCETOWN

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

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Meeting Minutes of April 10, 2001

Meeting Held in the Veteran's Memorial Elementary School Multi-Purpose Room

Members Present: Frank Wills (Vice-Chair), Terese Nelson (Secretary), William Rogers, Debra Trovato, Dana Berry

Members Absent: Representative from the PHS Student Advisory Council

Others Present: Dr. Fleming (Superintendent), Mr. Rokicki (VMES Principal), Katie Slivka (Director of Student Services), Rachel Crosby (Recording Secretary)

Call to Order: Vice-Chair Frank Wills called the Meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

REGULAR SESSION

Frank Wills read several excerpts from the Open Meeting Law, outlining various regulations covering such meetings. Frank Wills also read from the School Committee's Rules of Procedure, stating that each visitor's statement would be limited to three minutes. Frank Wills emphasized that School Committee members do not normally engage in dialogue with speakers during public statements.

VISITORS' STATEMENTS –

- Mary Cabral read from a letter in support of Mr. Marino that was sent to the Banner.
- John Perry Ryan spoke eloquently in support of Dr. Fleming.
- Jonathan Roberts spoke with concerns about the possible outcomes of the situation and in support of Dr. Fleming and raised the possibility that Mr. Marino had met in private with parents and offered to stay as High School Principal if Dr. Fleming were forced to leave.
- Genevieve Martin spoke in support of both Dr. Fleming and Mr. Marino.
- Esther Czyoski spoke with concerns about the financial implications of a buyout of Dr. Fleming's contract.
- Ms _____ (an older woman) spoke in support of Dr. Fleming.
- Mr. Lauritsen spoke with general concerns about educational costs and standards.
- Paul Trainor spoke negatively about the possibility of an offer to buy-out Dr. Fleming's contract.
- Steven Roderick spoke in support of Dr. Fleming and criticized members of the School Committee for their unethical and unprofessional behavior.
- Nancy Flasher expressed hope that the situation could be settled amicably.
- Phoebe Butler spoke about the improvements in the High School climate, but complained about the lack of information concerning the current crisis.
- Cynthia Luster Patrick spoke with concerns about the effects of the current situation upon the students and criticized Mr. Marino for his unprofessional behavior.
- Mark Ford spoke in support of the concept of trying to keep both Mr. Marino and Dr. Fleming as administrators.
- Mr. Cabral spoke in support of changing superintendents.
- Rose Kennedy spoke in support of Mr. Marino and about the lack of information provided to parents and the school community.
- John Caruso spoke critically about Mr. Marino's unprofessional behavior and the need to focus on education and learning.
- Cindy Lambrou spoke about the need for more information from the administrators.
- Betty White said Mr. Marino had the capability to provide more information by opening his personnel file to

the public and pointed out that Dr. Fleming had offered Mr. Marino a contract.

MISCELLANEOUS

Dr. Fleming began a review of the history of her tenure with the School District and the various issues she has dealt with during that time. William Rogers, however, interrupted Dr. Fleming and demanded that he also be allowed to speak. As Acting-Chair Frank Wills was attempting to restore order, William Rogers said that Dr. Fleming "...is a liar." When Dr. Fleming was allowed to resume, she also clarified her current position and read a prepared statement, stressing that the School Committee needed to indicate its support for her leadership if she was to stay as Superintendent.

Dana Berry spoke about the complications and difficulties inherent in a potential buy-out of Dr. Fleming's contract. He said there were no clear reasons for a buy-out. He criticized those members of the School Committee who were in support of the buy-out.

MINUTES

March 27, 2001, Regular Session – *Dana Berry moved to approve as amended, William Rogers seconded and it was so voted, 5-0.*

May 13, 2000, Joint Meeting with Truro School Committee – *postponed until the next joint meeting of the School Committees.*

COMMUNICATIONS

1. **Public Hearing Notice** – from the Zoning Board of Appeals concerning a property at 10 Winslow Street.
2. **Note from Lois Borgesi** – thanking the School Committee for their gift.
3. **VMES Newsletter, March 29**
4. **Letter of Resignation** – from kitchen helper Joann Richado(?). A replacement worker is being sought.
5. **Building Project Update** - Dr. Fleming reported that the general contractors' bids will be opened on April 24, 2001. If the bids are considerably over the estimates, the project will be revised and put out to bid again so as to stay within budget.
6. Frank Wills reported that he had received a publication from the MASC entitled the "MASC Journal" and recommended it to other School Committee members.
7. Frank Wills also referred to Department of Education website profiles of other Cape school districts (which had been distributed to School Committee members).

EDUCATIONAL UPDATE

1. **Proposed Topics for School Committee Work Sessions** – Dr. Fleming reviewed the discussion topics listed for the following work sessions and asked for input from the School Committee.
 - May 8 – Professional Development: This Year and Next
 - June 12 – Review of Staffing ProgramDebra Trovato asked that the transportation and the physical education programs be included in a work session. Terese Nelson asked that time at the May 8 work session be devoted to student work and suggested that samples of student work eventually be displayed in Town Hall.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. **FY 2002 Calendar: Draft for Review/Discussion** – postponed until the Building Project schedule is clarified.
2. **Police Generator Discussion** – Dr. Fleming reported that the School District was on the list to get this generator, which is in good working condition.
3. **Parent Public Forum on MCAS/Policy** – Frank Wills reported that he had information on what the Chatham School District has been doing and would bring it to a future meeting.
4. **Other**
 - None.

NEW BUSINESS –

1. **Proposal for Employment of School Psychologist, FY 2002** – Dr. Fleming reported that a job opening had been posted and several strong applications had been received. She explained why it might be advisable to hire a psychologist as a school employee instead of continuing with contracted services. Dr. Fleming said she would explain the financial implications in greater detail at the meeting of April 24, 2001.

2.Other

- None

CLOSING STATEMENTS

- John Perry Ryan raised a point of order concerning whether the School Committee would return to Regular Session from Executive Session before adjourning. Frank Wills clarified that the School Committee would adjourn directly from Executive Session without reentering Regular Session and said there would be no announcement that evening concerning any decisions made during the Executive Session. In response to additional questions, Frank Wills said there would be an announcement about the School Committee's decision(s) in the near future.
- Paul Trainor asked how the School Committee's vote on the possibility of a contract buy-out would be made public and Frank Wills repeated that an announcement would be forthcoming. Mr. Trainor asked if the School Committee would consider a straw poll on the buy-out prior to Executive Session. The Committee declined to conduct such a poll. Mr. Trainor urged the School Committee to act promptly.
- Esther Czyoski thanked Dana Berry for his earlier comments on the buy-out.
- Rachel Crosby announced her resignation as Recording Secretary and expressed her extreme disappointment with the way the School Committee in general and two members in specific had comported themselves.
- Debra Trovato criticized Dana Berry for making his comments on the buy-out. She said that she thought that the School Committee was legally prevented from speaking on that issue.
- Dana Berry clarified why he had felt comfortable making his comments and explained the lack of logic in the reasons why these Executive Sessions were kept confidential.

ADJOURNMENT

William Rogers moved to adjourn into Executive Session at 8:55 PM for the purpose of discussing strategy relative to Non-Union Contracts, Debra Trovato seconded and it was so voted in a roll call vote as follows: Dana Berry – no, Debra Trovato – yes, Frank Wills – yes, William Rogers – yes, Terese Nelson - yes.

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These minutes were approved by a vote of the Provincetown School Committee at their meeting on _____, 200__

Respectfully Submitted:

School Committee Signature

Title

Rachel T. Crosby, On-call secretary