

TOWN OF PROVINCETOWN

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes of March 14, 2000

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Members Present: Lois Borgesi (Chair), Frank Wills (Vice-Chair), Dana Berry, William Rogers

Members Absent: Adrienne Duncan (Secretary)

Others Present: Mr. Marino (PHS Principal), Mr. Rokicki (VMES Principal), Ms Katherine Slivka (Director of Student Services), Student Representative Justin Smith, Town Manager Keith Bergman, Wastewater Consultant John Goodrich, Rachel Crosby (Recording Secretary), parents, students and staff.

Call to Order: Chair Lois Borgesi called the Meeting to order at 7:09 P.M.

REGULAR SESSION

VISITORS' STATEMENTS

- Ms Nelson spoke about the positive reaction to the booth at the Year-rounders' Festival.
- Mr. Marino also spoke about the response and participation at the Year-rounders' Festival.

MINUTES

February 22, 2000, Regular Session – *Frank Wills moved to approve, Dana Berry seconded and it was so voted, 4-0, 1 absent (Adrienne Duncan).*

February 28, 2000, Regular Session – *Dana Berry moved to approve, Frank Wills seconded and it was so voted, 4-0, 1 absent (Adrienne Duncan)*

March 2, 2000, Regular Session – *Dana Berry moved to approve with minor amendments, Frank Wills seconded, and it was so voted, 3-0, 1 abstain (William Rogers), 1 absent (Adrienne Duncan).*

COMMUNICATIONS:

- Finance Committee Meeting, 3/15/00 @ 5:00 P.M. – Dr. Fleming announced that the location of the meeting had been changed to the Annex and that the meeting will focus on the Capital Improvement article and on the Operating Budget Article, as well as the Building Project. In response to a question from William Rogers, Dr. Fleming explained that the Finance Committee had requested the meeting as a result of reviewing cost projections disseminated by Dana Berry.
- Fiddler on the Roof Tickets – free tickets are available
- Public Hearing on Capital Improvement – scheduled for March 21st.
- Letter of Intent to Retire – sent in by Mr. Russell Pratt.
- Public Notice, Zoning Board of Appeals – sent to Schools as abutter to subject property
- VMES Newsletter, dated Thursday, March 9, 2000.
- Division Seven Association of School Committees meeting on Thursday, March 23rd.
- Letter from Independence House concerning the March on Domestic Violence.
- A letter from CARE, a group of parents and educators who feel that the MCAS is an unfair assessment system.

EDUCATIONAL UPDATE:

- VMES Student and Family Handbook – Mr. Rokicki explained the purpose of the Handbook. The School Committee expressed their appreciation to Mr. Rokicki for the work on the Handbook and Mr. Rokicki confirmed that it had been approved by the School Council.

Dana Berry moved to take to take agenda item 8.2, Sixth Grade Out-of-Town Trip Request, next, Frank Wills seconded and it was so voted, 4-0.

William Rogers left the meeting for a few minutes.

NEW BUSINESS

Sixth Grade Out-of-Town Trip Request – Mr. Rokicki explained the trip to Boston and how it was financed (primarily by parents). *Dana Berry moved to approve the request, Frank Wills seconded, and it was so voted, 3-0, 2 absent (William Rogers, Adrienne Duncan).*

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Building Project Update –

- *Proposal to hook Schools up to Waste-Water system* – Dr. Fleming explained the background of the proposal and referred to memos from the Town Manager and other materials. In response to a question from William Rogers, Mr. Bergman confirmed that the school parking lot was no longer being considered as a potential leaching field. Mr. Bergman also provided details of the wastewater project as it is currently designed. William Rogers discussed the school’s septic system and its future. Mr. Goodrich discussed how the school could hook up to the sewer system in the future. All of the above parties discussed the possibility of a change in use of a school building and what the septic capacity might be.
- *Support of K-12 School System Building Project* - Dr. Fleming distributed and read a memo, dated March 14, 2000, from Dr. Fleming, Mr. Rokicki, Mr. Marino and Ms Slivka to the School Committee, with the subject being: “Support of K-12 School System: Importance of Building Projects”. Dr. Fleming commented that the Nauset School Superintendent had expressed surprise that the discussion of closing the High School was taking place at a time when so much progress was being made. William Rogers asked if was possible to have students from both schools attend Town Meeting as an educational experience. Frank Wills discussed his own positive educational experience at a small high school. Dana Berry commented that the School Committee should be very careful to avoid the appearance of using students for political purposes. Mr. Rokicki confirmed that students have attended Town Meeting for the past several years.
- *\$6.5 Million project: Debt Service Guidelines* - Dr. Fleming discussed her conversations with the State around funding and said that the State tries to pay back the funding over the same period that the loan is bonded. Dr. Fleming confirmed that, if the school building was no longer used by the student population for which it was renovated, the funding reimbursement would probably stop. The Commissioner does have some discretion in this matter. The Town would not have to repay monies already received if the school building use changed. The School Committee will decide at a later date whether the funding requested will be repaid over 10 or 20 years. The School Committee discussed the pros and cons of the different funding terms, including the Finance Committee’s proposal that the Schools find, in the Operating Budget, half of the debt service for the first few years.
 - ◆ School Building Law: M.G.L. 70 Section 70 – Dr. Fleming referred to copies of this statute.
 - ◆ Dr. Fleming reported that the Foxboro School District had given a favorable review of the work done by the Maguire Group. Dr. Fleming confirmed that the architect and their cost estimator would attend Town Meeting.

VMES School Day Hours – Dr. Fleming referred to a memo sent to parents and distributed a memo from Mr. Rokicki to the School Committee concerning his analysis of changes needed to ensure compliance with Time-on-Learning requirements. Mr. Rokicki explained his memo and the attached chart.

FY 2001 School Budget Overview – Dr. Fleming reviewed a spreadsheet entitled “Budget Comparison from FY 1997 to FY 2001”. Dr. Fleming pointed out that approximately \$700,000 was currently going into the Town General Fund from educational sources and said that the percentage of the Town’s total budget represented by the School Budget was decreasing.

Town Meeting Articles:

- **Special Town Meeting: Articles 14 & 15** – Article 14 will be presented by the Chair of the School Building Committee (Burt Wolfman) and Article 15 by Chair Lois Borgesi.
- **Annual Town Meeting: Article 2, Section 6** – will be presented by Lois Borgesi.

Other –

- None

NEW BUSINESS

Line Item Transfers –

- PHS Request for \$1,000 transfer – from Instructional Technology Software to Instructional Technology Contracted Services. *Frank Wills moved to approve the request in the amount of \$1,000, Dana Berry seconded, and it was so voted, 4-0, 1 absent (Adrienne Duncan)*
- VMES Request for \$300 transfer– from Maintenance of Grounds to Teaching Supplies, Copiers - *Dana Berry moved to approve the request in the amount of \$300, Frank Wills seconded and it was so voted, 4-0, 1 absent (Adrienne Duncan).*

Other –

- Lois Borgesi referred to copies of the Massachusetts School Committee Code of Ethics distributed to each School Committee member and suggested that each member read the Code. In response to a question from Dana Berry, Lois Borgesi said that that it had been suggested that he had violated the Code. To clarify her comments, Lois Borgesi read sections from the Code and Dana Berry said he felt it was his duty to inform the public of certain facts and that he did not see that as a violation of the Code of Ethics.
- Dr. Fleming commented that she would prefer that information requests about school operations go through her and that she be kept informed of information disseminated to others. Dana Berry confirmed that he intended to make a “vigorous argument” before the Finance Committee to separate the Building Project Special Town Meeting article. The School Committee discussed Dana Berry’s rationale and intentions and discussed the meaning of the Code of Ethics. Dr. Fleming said she did not think it was within the power of the Finance Committee to separate the articles. Dana Berry said that the Town By-Laws provide that 10 registered voters may present the Town Meeting Moderator with a petition to separate an article. Dana Berry said he was viewing his actions as being similar to giving a minority report. The School Committee discussed Dana Berry’s cost-per-student projections and reviewed arguments which refute the projections. William Rogers commented on the progress the School Committee had made and said he took Dana Berry’s actions it as a personal affront.

EXECUTIVE SESSION for Collective Bargaining Discussion– Session postponed because the teacher contracts had not been submitted for ratification by the teachers’ union. The para-professional contract is still being negotiated.

CLOSING STATEMENTS

➤ None

ADJOURNMENT

Dana Berry moved to adjourn at 8:58 P.M. and it was so voted unanimously.

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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