

TOWN OF PROVINCETOWN

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes of June 13, 2000

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Meeting Held in the High School Annex

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

Members Absent: None.

Others Present: Dr. Fleming (Superintendent), Mr. Marino (PHS Principal), Mr. Rokicki (VMES Principal), Kathleen Slivka (Director of Student Services), Rachel Crosby (Recording Secretary), parents, students and staff.

Call to Order: Dr. Fleming called the Meeting to order at 7:03 P.M.

REGULAR SESSION

VISITORS' STATEMENTS

- Brian Williams spoke against the termination of Brenda Silva's teaching contract.
- Ms Silva spoke against the termination of Brenda Silva's teaching contract and presented letters to the Committee.
- Mrs. Trovato read a prepared statement in opposition to the termination of Brenda Silva's teaching contract.
- Custodio Silva Jr. spoke against the termination of Brenda Silva's teaching contract and asked why he had not received any direct word from the School Committee concerning their intentions in this matter.
- Ms Priolo spoke against the termination of Brenda Silva's teaching contract.
- Emily Anderson read a prepared statement concerning compliance with State statutes and requested documentation of a related investigation.
- Brian Williams spoke again concerning the termination of Ms Silva's teaching contract.

Dana Berry moved to consider agenda item 6.1, FY 2001 Budget, Staffing Updates, next, Frank Wills seconded and it was so voted, 5-0.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- FY 2001 Budget, Staffing Updates– Dr. Fleming explained the reasons for the proposed change in the music instrument teacher position (to one requiring certification). Dr. Fleming said that the Administration was not comfortable going ahead with advertising for the certified position without knowing that the School Committee was going to support the transfer of funds to pay for the certified position. Lois Borgesi affirmed that the School Committee does not get involved in the hiring and firing of any other than a few specific school personnel. She also said that if the matter involved a job description change, then the Union would need to be consulted.

Mr. Marino said that he had previously assumed that Ms Silva was a certified teacher. He explained the proposed configuration of the new certified position (60% or three, seven hour days). Mr. Marino said he was, at this point, uncomfortable going ahead with the proposed change. Mr. Rokicki said he also favored a reversal of the recommendation to change the position. Frank Wills said that it was his understanding that the music teacher position was not the only one in which certification was a issue. Frank Wills said that whatever the decision on the music teacher position was, that it needed to be clearly stated, given that other people and teaching positions were involved.

Lois Borgesi reminded the Committee that the District would be soon facing the accreditation challenge and, if a certified teacher was required in the Music Department, then the Department needed to be reorganized to meet the

accreditation legal requirements.

William Rogers commented on his perceived need for the Superintendent to be more accountable and to communicate issues like the one involving the music teacher to the School Committee.

Dana Berry said that if the Principals were prepared to rescind the recommendation and, if the Superintendent was in agreement, the change to a certified position would not take place. Dr. Fleming said she supported rescinding the recommendation and said that the District needed to look at the larger issue of certification of teaching personnel and, in particular, the configuration of the Music Department. Mr. Marino repeated that he was open to reconfiguring the Music Department, including retaining Brenda Silva as music instrument instructor. Mr. Marino said he would apologize to Brenda Silva for any offense he may have given.

Frank Wills moved to table the discussion on the line-item transfer of funds to the Music Department, Terese Nelson seconded and it was so voted, 4-1 (William Rogers).

The Committee discussed whether the motion to table meant that Brenda Silva would continue in her position. Lois Borges stated again that the School Committee does not get involved in personnel hiring and firings, rather that accreditation issues were the Committee's concern. Dr. Fleming said that the music teacher issue would be discussed again as a programmatic decision.

MINUTES

April 25, 2000, Regular Session – previously approved.

May 23, 2000, Regular Session – *Frank Wills moved to approve as written, William Rogers seconded and it was so voted, 5-0.*

COMMUNICATIONS:

- The Net Newsletter
- Superintendent's Newsletter
- VMES Newsletter of June 1, 2000
- City and Town Newsletter, May 2000
- Licensing Board Public Hearing Notice
- Town Manager Memo re: Special Town Meeting on June 26, 2000
- Elliot E. Tocci Memorial Dedication Invitation
- Letters of Retirement: Patricia Reid and Joan Oliver
- Letters of Congratulation to National Honor Society Officers
- Summer Schedule Date
- Proposed FY 2001 Pay Periods – waiting for reply from Union
- Newspaper articles on the Academy of Arts, Science and Technology
- MASC/MASS bulletin on increasing public confidence in school leadership
- Dana Berry distributed a Topical Index for the School Committee Policy Manual

MISCELLANEOUS

Dr. Fleming replied to a request from Dana Berry that he be allowed to observe the negotiations on the Truro Tuition Agreement, saying she was concerned that Dana Berry's presence would make the negotiation meetings subject to public meeting laws. After discussion, Dana Berry said he would like to talk to School Counsel about the issue.

EDUCATIONAL UPDATE:

- ◆ **Publicity for FY 2000** – postponed until next meeting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. FY 2001 Budget, Staffing Updates– Dr. Fleming reported that the District was still looking to fill several positions. Mr. Marino commented on his difficulty in filling the position of Administrative Assistant position at the High School. Lois Borges affirmed that the position is still defined as being for an Administrative Assistant.

Terese Nelson asked about the staffing configuration for the SPED summer program at VMES. Mr. Rokicki said he was also having great difficulty getting these positions filled. Terese Nelson asked why there had been a delay in advertising the SPED positions and Dr. Fleming replied that advertisement had taken place at the same time as in previous years, but that the pay rate was lower than that being offered in nearby school districts. In

response to a question from Terese Nelson, Mr. Rokicki and Ms Slivka commented that an increase in the pay would not necessarily bring more interest. Mr. Rokicki said, however, that he advocated upping the pay rate. The Administration will discuss the issue further.

Dr. Fleming said she felt that the changes in the Alternative School and its staffing had been made clear to the School Committee and the Committee members agreed. The Committee and the Superintendent discussed the issue of communication between the Administration and the School Committee.

2. Superintendent's Job Description and Evaluation Tool – Dr. Fleming referred to materials distributed to the Committee members. ***Frank Wills moved to approve the Superintendent's Job Description and Evaluation Form, Dana Berry seconded and it was so voted, 5-0.*** The Committee decided, by consensus, to hold a workshop with Dr. Fleming on June 28, 2000 at 6:00 P.M. to discuss her progress toward goals. The Committee will fill out the Evaluation Forms after the workshop.
3. FY 2000 Budget Update – Dr. Fleming distributed a new SPED line item transfer request. Ms Slivka spoke about this and previous SPED line item transfers, explaining they were due to unexpected needs for psychological evaluations. Ms Slivka said she would be looking into improving ways to budget funds.
4. Line Item Transfer (SPED), from Teacher Salary Professional Home/Hospital to Psychological Contracted Services Evaluation - ***Dana Berry moved to transfer the sum of \$2,200, Frank Wills seconded and it was so voted, 5-0.***
5. Line Item Transfer (VMES), from Text Books to Curriculum Enrichment - ***Frank Wills moved to transfer the sum of \$800, Dana Berry seconded and it was so voted, 5-0.***
6. Review of PSC Rules of Procedure – The Committee discussed rewording or eliminating procedure #6 concerning public participation in the discussion on agenda items. Frank Wills agreed to rewrite procedure #6 and to bring the revised procedure back for approval.

Dana Berry suggested adding a procedure providing for a “Questions for the Superintendent” (from the public and in writing) session at each School Committee meeting, provided the questions were submitted a week in advance. William Rogers requested that School Committee members also be allowed to ask questions. Dr. Fleming asked that questions (and answers) be limited to 25 words or less and that the questions be signed. By consensus, the Committee agreed to not add the “Questions” as a PSC Rules of Procedure. The idea will be discussed at the next meeting.

7. VMES Staffing – Dr. Fleming reported that there is one new appointment. William Rogers said he had received comments from parents about changes at VMES. Mr. Rokicki reported on a letter, signed by several parents, he had received concerning Mr. Coehlo(?). Mr. Rokicki said that that it was a moot point because Mr. Coehlo was going to remain a Teacher's Assistant. The Committee again discussed the degree to which the School Committee could or should get involved in personnel issues.
8. Other
 - None

NEW BUSINESS

1. Bid Awards FY 2001 – ***Dana Berry moved to approve the successful bidders for the Milk, Bread, #2 Fuel Oil and Boiler Room Maintenance and the School Physician FY 2001 contracts, Frank Wills seconded and it was so voted, 5-0.***
2. PHS/VMES School Hours 2000-01 School Year – The Committee discussed a recommendation in made in a memo from Mr. Rokicki to Dr. Fleming to increase the VMES school day to 6.5 hours, from 8:00 A.M. to 2:30 P.M. ***Dana Berry moved that the VMES school day start at 7:55 A.M., Frank Wills seconded and it was so voted, 4-1 (William Rogers).***
3. Other
 - Grant Deficits – Dr. Fleming explained that two FY99 grants had run deficits totaling \$85.23 and explained, referring to her memo of May 23, 2000, that it was her recommendation to take the funds from School Choice. ***Frank Wills moved to transfer the funds from School Choice, Terese Nelson seconded and it was so voted, 5-0.***
 - Dana Berry recommended that every School Committee member receive a copy of the current Policy Manual.

CLOSING STATEMENTS

- None

Frank Wills moved to go into Executive Session at 9:32 P.M. for the purpose(s) of (1) hearing complaints against employees, (2) discussing compensation for Non-Union Personnel and (3) Pending Litigation, Terese Nelson

seconded and it was so voted in a roll call vote of those School Committee members present.

Chair Lois Borgesi reconvened the Regular Meeting at 11:39 P.M.

ADJOURNMENT

Frank Wills moved to adjourn at 11:40 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