



School Committee

Provincetown School Committee Meeting

**PROVINCETOWN HIGH SCHOOL
ELMER I. SILVA LEARNING CENTER
12 Winslow Street
PROVINCETOWN, MA 02657**

**Thursday
January 20, 2011
5:00 p.m.**

Members Present: Kerry Adams, Cass Benson, Peter Grosso,
Shannon Patrick, and Lory Stewart.

Members Absent: none

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

The meeting was called to order at 5:06 p.m.

AGENDA

Public Comments

David McGlothlin, a teacher and resident of the town, thanked Cass Benson, Lory Stewart, and Peter Grosso for their help in the past couple of days. – Tuesday night they asked questions and he hasn't seen the responses to his list of questions. He agrees that the numbers of students are shrinking and the personnel have to be adjusted; however, he disagrees with how it was arrived at. He found out about his position on January 7th by looking at the budget. The Superintendent did apologize for that but it was a bit of a surprise. The other thing is that there is another person who is going to be teaching 5th and 6th grade social studies and he was surprised. David continued saying - it's often said that we have to do what is best for students and that is not an accurate portrayal. Frankly he thinks he's one of the best social

studies teachers you've ever had and then he spoke of his credentials. He concluded by saying that he has developed 5 new curriculums in the last 5 years – thus he questions - “we are doing what is best for students?”

At this point Peter made the following motion:

Motion: Move to take the responses to David's questions out of the regular agenda and address them now.

Motion: Peter Grosso Seconded: Kerry Adams Vote: 5-0-0.

PSC Comments

Question #1 regarding “head teacher position.” This has a draft job description and it's still pending. Any teacher is eligible to apply regardless of FTE's.

Question #2 concerning some positions being further reduced. Simple answer is less high school classes and students equal less need. Lory said that she is used to having guidance counselors overseeing 200 students and she feels the position should be cut even more; she doesn't think .60 is fiscally responsible.

Question #3 – yet more about guidance counselor now having to work with the middle students (6th & 7th graders) this still translates to a very small number of students.

Question #4 about why some staff are not being reduced and others are. The answer was based on sections not numbers of students, the total students may be the same but the teacher may have more sections assigned to their responsibility.

Question #5 concerns Title I Math position increase. This was based on the low test scores amongst the students we have.

Question #6 related to the qualifications of the Chemistry teacher. Since the chemistry teacher is not certified to teach chemistry the course has been changed to environmental chemistry. It will suffice for college entry for the students and – in answer to Kerry's question – environmental chemistry is more an application of chemistry to the environment. Bottom line: it is a better alternative and a better match for our staff. Lory said that it's not chemistry and they are really not prepared - she feels it's watering down the curriculum.

Question #7 David feels that with enrollment dropping in the high school there should also be cuts made to the Academy or Science classes as we have seen in

English and Social Studies. The assignments questioned have K-12 assignments. There are no cuts in Academy.

Question #8 was an unclear question that remained confusing. Part of the target of the question was the Community Project Tuesday Program. Kim tried to answer the dubious question by stating that we wanted to create opportunities for the children to go out into the community and learn about their world. The main objective of the Tuesday happening is to broaden the children; it is accomplished by collaboration of staff. Planning is required for three groups.

Question #9 questioned not seeing a drop in the paraprofessional positions. Answer: Student need has not dropped and that's why the reductions have not happened as yet.

Question #10 wondered about the SPED Director position being eliminated and why can't someone pick that up? Beth said that she is the only one with the licensure for this position and she has taken the position since July. She also stated that she needs someone aware of the needs of SPED to assist her with the daily nitty-gritty stuff. Beth further said that she followed the model for the Assistant to the Principal for the SPED Coordinator. As we change to Head teacher, we also need to change to Team Leader.

Question #11 – Beth answered to the best of her knowledge:

“Are all teachers fully endorsed/certified in their current positions?” Yes.

“Are any staff being reduced and replaced by teachers not endorsed?” No.

“Why are teachers fully certified being reduced?” Because there aren't as many classes for them to teach. Beth further explained that she has to file state reports and in one of the reports K-5 is detailed and in the other 6-12 are reported. She will look into whether the reports can be adjusted.

David wanted to know the name of the person/people who set up this rule and Lory suggested that he take a personal day and go to Malden to research this requirement.

Question #12, once again the reasoning behind the reductions was raised. Kim answered that we looked at the students' transcripts and we looked at what they needed to graduate and for college entrance; then we looked at math courses, social courses, and we asked students what they were interested in. They have to get what they need first. We have 11/12 class and we'll be offering some combined

11/12 classes. They take core classes and they're left with only one elective; we're trying to make the best of a difficult situation.

Question #13 referred to student course selections. Beth said that we will not be making final course selections until spring. There is flexibility built in to accommodate changes if it should happen. The list of options will be based on reasonable choices. We will not offer courses to only 2 or 3 students.

Peter Grosso concluded the David McGlothlin discussion by saying that during the budget process – Kim & Beth presented a budget draft and we didn't take "Mary Jones" and see how we can cut her on this project – it had to do with needs and numbers. Thus, if you want to point a finger and blame someone – it's a collective blame – all members of the PSC had input.

Unfinished Business:

FY-12 Budget

Peter asked the group if they had any concerns. Shannon said that she had concerns about not having enough money in the budget. Peter said that the problem with the heating system is like the problem with the VMES roof. In lieu of an emergency – putting money in the budget won't be approved. Lory said that the way to get a line item in under Capital Improvements is to have a proposal – then go to the town with a specific proposal and a specific amount. Beth thinks we should do that. Kerry was talking about minor repairs – so shouldn't there be a line item for emergency repairs? Short answer is no.

Beth feels that these concerns should be discussed at Monday's meeting with the BoS and the FinCom. Peter said that perhaps an article in the warrant might be the way to go. Peter said the main problem in the high school building regarding heat is due to the amount of glass in the building – just look at the size of the windows.

Beth will be talking to Mr. Scarlotta on Monday and she will raise the heating issue with him and then ascertain if his heating engineer has a proposal.

Shannon asked, "Whatever happened with the generator for the high school?"
Answer: We're waiting to hear back from David Gardner regarding the FEMA grant. FEMA is waiting for the building analysis Mr. Scarlotta has done and is presenting Monday to BoS.

Motion: Move to adopt the FY 12 budget as presented.

Motion: Shannon Patrick Seconded: Kerry Adams

(This motion was seconded for the sake of discussion which follows:)

Before the final FY12 budget vote was taken, Lory still revisited the guidance counselor's job - saying you're talking about grades 6-12 and next year that number is going to be only 29 students. Lory would like it cut more. The position is a .8 now and we want it cut to .6. Shannon wants it reduced to less than a .6. Kerry asked if the school social worker and school guidance are being duplicated? He feels that they tend to be same jobs. Kerry said - so the school social worker can't do the guidance counselor's job? Answer: No, there is some overlap, but academic counseling post high school planning belongs to guidance solely. Cass doesn't want to take anything more away from the kids. This position is going to be gone in 2 years anyway.

Peter said that below .6 position you lose your benefits.

Beth said that our student body is not organized enough for this. Less than .6 is not recommended.

Kim said that the students in grades 7 and 8 need time for transitioning to a high school as well.

The motion following was repeated:

Motion: Move to adopt the FY 12 budget as presented.

Motion: Shannon Patrick Seconded: Kerry Adams Vote: 5-0-0.

**NEXT MEETING
TUESDAY
FEBRUARY 1ST, 2011
5:00 P.M.**

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Evelyn Rogers Gaudiano

Approved by the School Committee on February 1, 2011

Peter Grosso, Chairperson