

**Pelham School Committee Meeting  
Thursday, October 13, 2016  
Community Room, Pelham Library**

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Tara Luce, Chair	Mike Morris, Acting Superintendent
Cara Castenson	Sean Mangano, Finance Director
Emily Marriott	Debbie Westmoreland, Recorder
Trevor Baptiste	

**1. Call to Order and Approve Minutes 4:30 p.m.**

Ms. Luce called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m. She asked for nominations for Vice-Chair, and both Ms. Marriott and Mr. Baptiste nominated Ms. Castenson, whose nomination was unanimously approved. Ms. Luce noted that the Committee will enter Executive Session for the purpose of reviewing the status of the May 5, 2016 Executive Session minutes. By unanimous roll-call vote, the committee entered Executive Session at 4:40 p.m. The committee returned to open session at 6:08 p.m. Ms. Luce reported that the Executive Session minutes will not be released because the purpose of the Executive Session has not been completed. Ms. Marriott moved to approve the minutes of June 8, 2016 and Ms. Castenson seconded. After discussion, it was decided that Mr. Baptiste will email some corrections to Ms. Westmoreland, and the minutes will be tabled until the next meeting.

**2. Announcements and Public Comment 6:10 p.m.**

There were no announcements or public comments.

**3. Acting Superintendent's and Principal's Update 6:10 p.m.**

Mr. Morris noted that the Roger Wallace Award Dinner is this Sunday and Deb Jacque, retired Pelham Kindergarten teacher, will be honored as this year's recipient. Ms. Desjarlais reported that the gardens are flourishing, noting that the sixth graders will be picking them for sale at parent pick-up. Proceeds will go toward next year's plantings. The Pelham PGO is doing some information sharing about Ballot Question 2, encouraging voters to vote no. On October 24, Grupo Folklorico Tradiciones will be coming to do dances with students. This Saturday is the Picturing Pelham event, which will feature local art work and highlight the work of students. Also on Saturday, a group of five fourth and fifth grade girls are presenting a workshop to other girls on building digital portfolio websites. Ms. Desjarlais and some Pelham teachers are attending a social justice workshop this Saturday as well. The School Climate Team has been meeting consistently, including working on bullying curriculum, and the kick-off anti-bullying assembly with students will be November 14. Mr. Baptiste noted that SEPAC has several events coming up and he will share the list with the community members in attendance if they provide their email.

**4. New and Continuing Business 6:21 p.m.**

**A. Resolution Against Lifting the Cap on Charter Schools (Ballot Question 2)**

***DOCUMENT: Resolution Against Lifting the Cap on Charter Schools***

Mr. Morris reviewed the resolution that the School Committee is being asked to approve regarding ballot question two, which would lift the cap on charter schools in Massachusetts if approved. Ms. Marriott moved to vote in support of the resolution against lifting the cap on charter schools. Mr. Baptiste seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

**B. FY16 End-of-Year Budget Update**

***DOCUMENT: Pelham Public Schools FY2016 Final Budget Report***

Mr. Mangano briefly reviewed the highlights of the final FY16 budget report, noting that the year ended with a small surplus of \$2,840. Those funds will be returned to the School Choice fund.

**C. FY17 First Quarter Budget Update**

***DOCUMENT: Pelham Elementary School FY17 Operating Budget First Quarter Budget Report***

Mr. Mangano reviewed the highlights of the FY17 first quarter budget update, noting that the year is off to a difficult start with payroll tracking \$30,000 over budget and a projected charge of \$4,700 against the Pelham

budget for two students who have withdrawn to attend charter schools. Ms. Luce asked what the total Pelham portion of the Superintendent settlement is. Mr. Mangano reported that it is \$11,700. Mr. Mangano answered brief clarifying questions for the committee, particularly regarding school choice reserve funds. Ms. Desjarlais reviewed the current enrollments, including the school choice numbers. Ms. Luce asked about the small class size at second grade. Ms. Desjarlais reported that the class had a difficult time last year so it was decided to keep the class small to help ensure this will be a good year for the students.

#### **D. Policy BBBE: School Committees Unexpired Term Fulfillment**

Ms. Luce noted that the committee is being asked to reaffirm Policy BBBE, which was first approved in 1982. Ms. Luce moved to reaffirm the policy with no changes and Ms. Marriott seconded. After brief discussion, the motion was unanimously approved.

#### **D. Interim Superintendent Discussion**

Ms. Luce noted that she is recusing herself from the discussion due to her position in the Amherst Public Schools. Ms. Castenson took over in her role as Vice-Chair. Mr. Baptiste noted that he wants to discuss whether Amherst and Pelham want to share a superintendent, what Pelham wants to see in a Superintendent, and whether to suspend an interim superintendent search since Mr. Morris is willing to move from Acting Superintendent to Interim. Ms. Marriott noted that the Union's role is to hire the Superintendent. Mr. Baptiste noted that the Union does not exist without a Superintendent unless the Amherst School Committee and the Pelham School Committee agree to have a Union. Ms. Marriott noted that her opinion is that the committee should definitely continue with the Union for the Interim Superintendent position. If the board wishes to investigate making a change, she would prefer that it be done with the permanent superintendent search. Mr. Baptiste agreed, noting that he is not arguing against having a superintendency union, but he does not want to give away the committee's agency to make that decision. Ms. Castenson noted that she does not believe the discussion needs to take place at this meeting since the Union 26 members each have a vote. Ms. Marriott noted that the Pelham School Committee will need to reorganize at the joint meeting with the Select Board to appoint a new member to the open seat. Ms. Westmoreland will include that on the agenda. Mr. Baptiste noted that MGL Chapter 71; Section 63 covers School Unions and members agreed they will read it.

#### **E. Legal Counsel Discussion**

Mr. Baptiste noted that he believes Pelham School Committee needs to change lawyers because he does not believe the current firm is representing the committee well. Ms. Marriott asked what the next steps are to pursue an open process to find a firm that best represents the needs of the committee. Ms. Luce noted that the complicating factor is that Pelham currently shares a firm with the other two districts and shares those costs with them. She noted that it will probably make financial sense to look for a new firm with the other districts. Mr. Morris noted that the two major uses of the law firm are for School Committee representation and for special education needs. He noted that this would be a logical time for the School Committees to have an open process since the attorney for the School Committees is new with the former attorney transitioning out. Mr. Morris noted that, in addition to financial implications, it could be complicated to have different attorneys for the different districts when issues cross districts. Ms. Marriott suggested bringing this issue to the Region first. After discussion, it was agreed that this topic will be discussed at the Region first.

#### **5. School Committee Planning**

**7:19**

##### **p.m.**

November 2 is the next meeting. Agenda items will include a discussion with Bill Diehl from The Collaborative, legal counsel discussion, FY18 budget discussion, SIP/DIP in December

#### **6. Adjourn**

**7:23 p.m.**

Ms. Marriott moved to adjourn at 7:23 p.m. Mr. Baptiste seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Debbie Westmoreland