

**Medway School Committee
Minutes
February 15, 2007**

The Medway School Committee held a meeting on Thursday, February 15, 2007, at 7:00 p.m., in the School Committee Room, Medway Middle School, 45 Holliston Street, Medway. School committee members in attendance were: Chairperson Susan Connolly, Tina Wright, Steven Dahl, and Dawn Rice-Norton. Also in attendance were Superintendent Richard Grandmont, Director of Operations and Finance David Verdolino, and Medway Federation of Teachers Representatives Richard Flaherty, Megan Boland and Michael Regan. Student Advisory Council Representative Rachel Heller was present. The meeting was carried live on cable television.

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Connolly called the meeting of the school committee to order at 7:05 p.m., noting all members were present, except for Mr. Myers and Ms. Scheid. Mr. Myers would not be attending and Ms. Scheid was expected to arrive shortly.

B. APPROVAL OF WARRANTS

The warrants were reviewed and signed.

C. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by Ms. Rice-Norton, seconded by Ms. Wright, to approve the minutes of February 1, 2007. All in favor.

E. REPORT OF STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL

Rachel reported:

- Students were excited to have a snow day
- The Valentine's Day flowers that were scheduled for Wednesday were delivered on Thursday

F. REPORTS OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Ms. Wright reported that she attended a joint Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee budget review meeting on February 12. The town departments being reviewed that night were: Building Inspector, Animal Control, Town Clerk, Library Trustees and Planning Board. She noted that the Library Trustees indicated that, if they were required to submit a level-funded budget, they would have to use 50% of the principal of the library trust fund in order to stay open. Ms. Wright further noted that in attendance were citizens concerned about the level-funded approach to the budget process. This group of citizens asked to see level-funded budgets, level-service budgets and critical needs budgets and asked the selectmen to consider an override approach. She further noted that the next joint Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee budget review meeting was scheduled for Saturday, February 17th, at which the following town departments were being reviewed: Police Department,

Police/Fire Communications, Fire/EMS Department, Public Services, Board of Health/Solid Waste, and Water/Sewer.

Mr. Dahl reported that he recently attended a robot building workshop in Millis for students of area towns. He noted it was part of a national competition for various grade levels and prizes included scholarships. Mr. Dahl noted that if students, parents, and teachers were interested they could contact him or go to usfirst.org for further information.

G. ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATE

1. Report of the Chairman – Ms. Connolly stated that Mr. Myers would not be present for the March 15th meeting, and she would like to have all committee members to be in attendance when the committee votes on the budget amount to be placed on the Annual Town Meeting warrant. She stated that she would like to change the school committee meeting originally scheduled for March 15th to March 29th and asked if all committee members would be able to attend. After a brief discussion, it was the sense of the committee to change the date.

Ms. Connolly also stated that in past years there was only one meeting during the month of February and she would like to go back to that format. After a brief discussion, it was the sense of the committee to only have one February meeting in the future.

Ms. Connolly stated that the school committee would plan to present the school department proposed FY08 budget to the Finance Committee on Monday, March 12, at 7:00 p.m., in Sanford Hall.

Ms. Connolly noted that there was some confusion on the part of community members about the details of the “Important Information” document that went home with students and is posted on the website. She noted that the list of cuts have already been made, and they are not proposed cuts. Further, the list of critical needs is not automatically being instituted.

• **Interim Review of Superintendent’s Performance** – Ms. Connolly referred committee members to the Evaluation of the Superintendent form in their packets and asked if committee members would be agreeable to using the instrument to evaluate the superintendent this year. It was the consensus of the committee to go ahead and use the evaluation form. Several school committee members noted that there were some items that would be hard to evaluate the superintendent on because the lack of resources/funding made it impossible for him to perform those tasks. It was suggested that some of these items were up to individual interpretation and that the superintendent could be graded on intention and not performance.

Ms. Connolly asked committee members to have their evaluations back to her by April 5th via email. After asking for a volunteer to compile the evaluation results, Ms. Rice-Norton volunteered to put it into one document.

2. Report of the Superintendent – The superintendent made a brief statement regarding the false 90-minute delay reported on the WBZ TV, radio and website. Dr. Grandmont stated that WBZ was not contacted or authorized by anyone from Medway Public Schools to post that announcement. He stated that as soon as he became aware of the unauthorized announcement, he had Mr. Verdolino immediately contact WBZ to have the announcement removed; and he contacted all school principals to inform them of the situation. The superintendent then explained the protocol used when closing of schools or delays are announced.

Dr. Grandmont reported that the school department has been working with the public library since January and supplied the use of custodial services for 4 hours per week at no cost to the library by doing 4 less hours of cleaning at the middle school. He stated that, since the library will be cutting back on its hours of operation, the school department will be cutting back custodial services to 2 hours per week.

- **Graduation Rate Report** – The superintendent noted that committee members had the entire printout from the DOE and a coversheet with a comparison of the Tri-Valley towns and nearby communities. He noted that Medway does very well with a 94.2% graduate rate, which ranks Medway as 5th among these communities.

- **FY08 Budget Working Draft Document** – Dr. Grandmont reminded the audience in attendance and the viewing audience that the FY08 Budget Working Draft document is available in the superintendent's office, Monday through Friday, until the Public Hearing on March 1, 2007.

Dr. Grandmont read to the school committee and audience M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 38N, which describes how and when the school committee must make available the school department proposed budget and hold a public hearing. Dr. Grandmont noted that the notice of a public hearing was placed in the local newspapers and that copies of the proposed budget were made available to the town administrator, all members of the board of selectmen and finance committee. He encouraged community members to attend the public hearing, whether they are for or against the proposed budget.

- **School Nurse Health Services Website** – The superintendent reported there is a new addition to the Medway Public Schools website entitled, School Nurse Health Services, which can be accessed on the Students and Parents page. He noted that hard copies from the site were included in committee members' packets for review. He thanked School Nurse Coordinator Linda Corridan for preparing the information.

- **2007 Junior Central District Music Audition Winners** – Dr. Grandmont offered congratulations to seventh grader Rachel Yates (alto) and eighth grader Taylor Brown (soprano) for being winners in the 2007 Junior Central District Music Audition. He announced that they will be singing at a concert to be held at the Blackstone-Millville Regional High School on Saturday, May 5, 2007, at 4:00 p.m.

Mr. Flaherty congratulated the high school hockey team for winning the Tri-Valley League Championship, which was the first time in 22 years.

H. DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Budget Discussion – Dr. Grandmont referred committee members to the draft of the FY2008 Working Draft Budget Summary in committee members' packets, noting this document was prepared based upon a subcommittee meeting of members from the school committee, board of selectmen and finance committee. He stated that, after the school committee reviewed the document, he would prepare a short narrative and then place the information up on the website and also submit it to the board of selectmen to be placed in the Annual Town Meeting booklet.

Mr. Verdolino reviewed the document and answered questions.

After minor revisions were discussed, it was the sense of the committee to have the superintendent prepare the document for the website and the Annual Town Meeting booklet.

Dr. Grandmont stated that he would like the school committee members to review it over the weekend and, if they had any further suggested revisions, to contact the chair, who would then report those revisions to the superintendent.

2. Other – None.

I. ACTION ITEMS

1. Staffing Update – Ms. Connolly noted the staffing sheet in school committee members' packets.

2. For Consideration: Approval of the Last Day of School for Seniors – Ms. Connolly stated that on September 7, 2006, the school committee voted in accordance with Massachusetts Department of Education regulations to set Sunday, June 3, 2007, as the graduation date for Medway High School seniors. She noted that seniors may be provided with less than the full 990 hours, if a district elects to schedule early graduation and they can be released on the 168th day of school. The superintendent recommended that the school committee vote to approve Wednesday, May 30, 2007, as the last day of school for seniors.

Moved by Ms. Wright, seconded by Ms. Scheid, that the school committee set the last day of school for Medway High School seniors as Wednesday, May 30, 2007, as recommended by the superintendent. All in favor.

3. Other – Ms. Connolly noted that Town Counsel has reviewed and revised the Agreement Relating to the Construction by Private Party of a Building on Town-Owned Property, (known as the "Coakley Building".) The Sponsor Corporation and Board of Selectmen have executed the document.

Moved by Ms. Scheid, seconded by Mr. Dahl, that the school committee accept the Agreement Relating to the Construction by Private Party of a Building on Town-Owned Property, (known as the "Coakley Building"), and authorize the chairperson to execute the agreement on behalf of the school committee, as recommended by the superintendent. All in favor.

J. INFORMATION ITEMS

Ms. Connolly noted the various information items in committee members' packets.

Dr. Grandmont noted a letter to the board of selectmen requesting funding from the Finance Committee Reserve Account to pay for two invoices for the cost of the work done to the high school gym wall. He noted that, at its recent meeting, the board of selectmen and finance committee voted approval of this request.

K. COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Connolly noted the various communication items in committee members' packets.

L. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Ms. Connolly noted the following future agenda items:

- **Budget Discussion**
- **Public Hearing on 2007-2008 School Department Budget**

M. NEXT MEETING – All meetings are scheduled to begin at 7:00 p.m., in the School Committee Room (across the corridor from the Superintendent's Office), Medway Middle School, 45 Holliston St., Medway, unless otherwise noted. The next school committee meeting will be the Public Hearing on the Proposed FY08 School Department Budget on **Thursday, March 1, 2007**, at 7:00 p.m. The regular meeting will immediately follow the public hearing.

N. ADJOURNMENT

As there was no need for an executive session, at 8:30 p.m., moved by Ms. Rice-Norton, seconded by Ms. Scheid, that the school committee adjourn. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol A. Villa
Secretary

Approved: **March 1, 2007**