

DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Approved minutes of the meeting of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee
Wednesday, January 9, 2019, Shepherd Hill Regional High School, 68 Dudley-Oxford Road, Dudley, MA 01571, 7 p.m.

In attendance were members of the School Committee:

- Mary N. Antocci, Vice Chair
- Pauline J. Aucoin, Chair
- Cathleen Carmignani
- Catherine M. Kabala
- Elaine M. Rabbitt
- Stephanie A. Reed at 7:01 p.m.
- Jamie L. Terry

Celeidgh O’Brien, Student Representative

Also in attendance were Kristine E. Nash, Ed.D., Interim Superintendent of Schools; Richard J. Mathieu, Director of Finance and Operations; district administrators Lorinda C. Allen, Karen A. Ares, William Chaplin, Jennifer Desto, Barbara Marderosian, Diane Seibold, Christopher Starczewski; Sean Burke, Athletic Director; Dudley-Charlton Teachers Association President Kevin Foley; Charlton resident Stefan Sage; media representatives Rich Earle, audio visual coordinator; Sandra Sullivan, recording secretary.

I. Call to Order

The chair called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Approval of Minutes

Minutes of Regular Meeting of Wednesday, December 12, 2018

A motion by M. Antocci, seconded by J. Terry to approve the minutes of the meeting of Wednesday, December 12, 2018, as amended was approved by unanimous vote.

IV. Approval of Warrants

The following warrants were distributed for signature:

Payroll Warrant		Subcommittee Warrant		Accounts Payable Warrant	
Warrant #	Amount	Warrant #	Amount	Warrant #	Amount
1253D	\$462,281.03	65	\$47,985.04	74	\$6,400.00
1253P	\$1,235,224.25	66	\$15.00	75	\$15.00
1261D	\$7.68	67	\$640,691.67		
1261P	\$96.00	68	\$580,000.00		
1263D	\$464,719.84	69	\$15.00		
1263p	\$1,224,815.59	70	\$440.00		
		71	\$286,218.03		
		72	\$57,662.70		
		73	\$45.00		
Total	\$3,387,144.39		\$1,613,072.44		\$6,415.00

Mrs. Antocci expressed concern about an item on Warrant 74, in the amount of \$6,400 payable to TD Garden from the athletic supplies line item. Mrs. Antocci said she learned that this is to pay an entry fee for the Shepherd Hill Boys Basketball Team to compete in the Good Sports Tournament. The team needed to sell 400 tickets to offset the cost of the entry fee. Mrs. Antocci asked if the 400 tickets were sold, and whether there will be any funds returning to the district.

Mrs. Rabbitt asked why this expense was not planned for and paid for through another means, and why it was not presented to the school committee for its approval similar to band and chorus trips. She asked if this sum could be charged to the student athletic account, which is not part of the revolving athletic fund.

Athletic Director Sean Burke responded that the idea behind the tournament was to give the kids an opportunity to play on the parquet floor at the Garden. Soccer players were given a similar opportunity several years ago to play at Gillette Stadium. Mr. Burke said the athletic department attempted to follow the same procedure by selling the tickets during lunch times, and giving each player a packet to sell as the word spread throughout the community.

Mr. Burke said the process ended up being a perfect storm of bad luck. The tournament was a week after Christmas, with the game 8 a.m. on Sunday, and the contest did not generate the same popularity as the Gillette contest. It was much more difficult to market and sell, and as a result, half of the tickets were sold. Mr. Burke said roughly \$3,200 will be returned to the district, with the remainder could be taken from the Athletic Revolving Account.

Mr. Mathieu asked whether committee would like to offset the entire amount taken from the ARA the \$3,200 can be moved to the Athletic Revolving Account or the entire amount taken from the general fund the entire amount and move it to ARA. Do we want to offset the money were received or the entire amount.

Mrs. Kabala asked if it really matters as it is the same money in the end.

Mr. Mathieu said the revolving account was developed to deposit fees and be used each year to offset expenditures, as the budget does not cover everything.

Mrs. Rabbitt said the committee needs to have a bigger conversation. The Budget and Finance Subcommittee has discussed extra-curricular activities and the fee structure and how it impacts the general budget. Mrs. Rabbitt said the same rules should apply as to the music department regarding competitions. Mrs. Rabbitt asked whether the music department competitions are paid through the operating budget or are they self-sustaining. Mrs. Rabbitt said the committee needs more information before applying guidelines across the spectrum.

Dr. Nash said athletics are funded by the budget and pays for coaches, transportation, and referees. Monies raised by parent group monies should come as a donation and be accepted by the committee and be accounted for.

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by J. Terry to apply the money raised through ticket sales to offset the general fund and fund the remainder through the Athletic Revolving Account balance, was approved by a vote of 5-2. Voting in favor of the motion were Mrs. Aucoin, Mrs. Carmignani, Mrs. Kabala, Mrs. Reed and Mrs. Terry.

Opposed were Mrs. Rabbitt and Mrs. Antocci.

Mrs. Antocci asked if the athletic department typically has a back-up fund or insurance policy for such occurrences. Mr. Burke said the athletic revolving account is sufficient.

Mr. Mathieu reported there is a balance of \$100,000 in the revolving account.

Mrs. Rabbitt said the Budget and Finance Subcommittee has requested information about the athletic budgets, and said the information has not been supplied in the past. Mrs. Rabbitt requested that information be presented to the full committee. Mrs. Rabbitt said the tournament was not presented to the school committee for its approval as are other trips.

Mrs. Kabala disagreed saying it is not the school committee's job to micromanage the sports program. We don't do that for other departments.

Mrs. Rabbitt said the committee was not informed about the line item in our athletic budget and was not told it funded tournaments, only supplies.

Mrs. Kabala moved the question, reiterating she was not going to micromanage the department.

Dr. Nash said there needed to be detail when presenting the budget.

D. Athletic Director Report – Sean M. Burke

Mr. Burke offered the committee an overview of the athletic program, saying great things are going on in Shepherd Hill athletics.

Mr. Burke spoke about the fall sports season and the winter season that is underway. Offerings include the unified basketball team, cooperative ice hockey team, indoor track and wrestling.

Mr. Burke said Shepherd Hill's Summer Sports Academy has been offered since 2012, offering clinics to students in grades 2-8 in soccer, baseball, arts and crafts, and adventure course. Mr. Burke said the athletic department purposely conducts very little fundraising as not to compete with other school clubs and activities which do. The sports academy is the department's largest fundraiser. Student athletes are hired to work as student coaches.

Mr. Burke said the athletic program has 800 roster spots that are filled by 600 students.

Mrs. Carmignani thanked the sports academy staff who worked diligently to take care of all the students during last summer's heat wave, and to make sure all were taken care of.

Mrs. Terry mentioned the Shepherd Hill Ski / Snowboarding Club, which is open to middle school students and travels to Wachusett Mountain Ski Area on Wednesdays from December through February.

Dr. Nash spoke about the unique role of the athletic director in the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District. Mr. Burke is a .6 full time equivalent teacher, and a .4 FTE AD. Dr. Nash said this is very unusual for a district this size. The role can present challenges, such as in the spring when winter weather interferes with the spring game schedule.

V. Student Representative Report – Ceilidgh O'Brien

Miss O'Brien reported that the Ski/Snowboard Ski Club began its season on Wednesday, January 2. Students from both middle schools and the high school travel to Wachusett Ski Area for the evening, and return to the school by 8 p.m.

Student Brian Santos-Ramos captured second place in the country in the 50 meter dash.

Ms. O'Brien reported on the upcoming drama club production, mid-terms, and report cards issued on January 25. On February 1 and 2, the Shepherd Hill hosts the Central Massachusetts Show Choir Festival featuring Illusion, Fantasy, and T-Tones.

The Shepherd Hill Band raised \$2,400 to buy an Adams Xylophone.

Miss O'Brien reported on events happening throughout the district: The Mason Road School Kindergarten Concert Jan. 15, at Dudley Middle School; the Heritage School After the Bell Program is underway; Dudley Middle School is conducting its first annual shoe drive called Soles 4 Souls. The Dudley Cub Scouts collected 350 items for local food pantry.

VI. Citizens' Forum

No one spoke at this time.

VII. Communications

1. Dr. Nash read a letter from Gerald Millette, head custodian at Shepherd Hill Regional High School, announcing his retirement effective June 30, 2020. In his letter, Mr. Millette thanked everyone for the opportunities provide for him to work for the district throughout the years.

The committee responded with thanks to Mr. Millette for his dedication, saying the custodial staff is the reason the buildings are in such great condition.

Dr. Nash said she will be sending a letter to Mr. Millette accepting his notification.

2. Dr. Nash reported on a letter received from Dudley Elementary School Principal Diane D. Seibold, concerning two cultural grants received from the Dudley Cultural Council. Art Teacher Cindy Rawson wrote the grant to allow fourth graders to visit the Worcester Art Museum, and to provide local artist will complete a residency and will leave a large mural.
3. Charlton committee members were invited by the Charlton Town Administrators to a meeting Tuesday, Jan. 8 to share a variety of thoughts and questions regarding what is working and not working so well.

Mrs. Reed said the meeting ended up being a board and council meeting to discuss the different things going on in town. Representatives Peter Durant and Paul Frost were in attendance.

Mrs. Reed said the Charlton officials talked about scheduling a joint financial planning meeting. Charlton officials spoke about the redesigned town website, its efforts to find sites for pumping stations that will ultimately provide water to Charlton Elementary School and Heritage School.

VIII. Superintendent's Report

A. Special Topics Report: MSBA Statement of Interest Opening

The window for submissions has opened and will close in February (Accelerated) and April (Core Program). The district has mostly applied for Accelerated Repair program consideration.

Dr. Nash asked the committee what consideration they have for submitting for either one of these programs. Dr. Nash said by reading the rejection letter from last year, it is clear that the result would be the same this year. She asked the committee if it wishes to submit an application for the CORE program. This program looks at the need for additions, renovations or new buildings. If the district submits, a community of stakeholders may wish to renovate, but this is not the committee's decision. MSBA would make the decision.

Mrs. Antocci asked if there is a downside to submitting for either one of the programs.
Dr. Nash said the Shepherd Hill roof is not yet 25 years old, which is the baseline for consideration.

Mrs. Rabbitt said due to excellent maintenance of the buildings, it is unlikely we will raise to the level of requirements. A submission for the CORE program would result in waiting four to five years to rise to the top for consideration. Mrs. Rabbitt asked if there is a building that would garner greater attention vs the high school.

Dr. Nash and Mr. Mathieu agreed to study this suggestion. Both agreed the middle schools do not need attention other than the roofs, and there is no call for roof replacements at the elementary schools, but there are for repairs. Charlton Elementary School, Dudley Elementary School and Mason Road School are the oldest buildings in the district, but were renovated in the same year at the middle schools were built. Heritage School opened in 1989.

The committee agreed if Shepherd Hill is the priority school to pursue the CORE program to keep it in the cycle. At some point there will be a need.

A motion by M. Antocci, seconded by C. Carmignani to approve the superintendent's recommendation to complete an application with the Massachusetts School Building Authority to pursue consideration for the CORE program, was approved by unanimous vote.

Mrs. Terry agreed with the recommendation, but said the windows and doors of the elementary schools have not been altered since 1989 (Heritage School) or 2000.
We will come back by the deadline.

IX. New Business

A. Director of Finance and Operations Report *(Vote Required)*

1. Mr. Mathieu presented several donations for the committee's approval:
To Dudley Middle School from the Dudley Little League, an offer to purchase an indoor batting cage
To Dudley Middle School, 40 Everlast Reusable Smart Notebooks

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by M. Antocci to accept the donations as presented, was approved by unanimous vote.

2. Mr. Mathieu reported that the initial two-year rental contract for the athletic field bleachers will be complete in June 2019. The district needs to inform MARR Scaffolding of its intentions. At this time, Mr. Mathieu said the bleachers are not part of the initial phase of capital planning. The procurement has three remaining options years at a cost of \$37,089, \$38,644, and \$39,338. Mr. Mathieu said given the circumstances, he requests the committee authorize the additional three options years.

There was no planning for bleachers when the turf field was built in 2015, and rental bleachers were procured,

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by S. Reed to authorize the additional three options years for the Shepherd Hill Turf Field Bleachers at a cost of \$37,089, \$38,644, \$39,338, was approved by unanimous vote.

Mrs. Rabbitt said at the time the field was built, she raised the possibility of continuing the fund raising for bleachers. She asked if there has been any interest in fund raising, saying to continue renting the bleachers is not cost effective. She said the district needs to decide whether to seek a permanent solution, or continue renting.

Dr. Nash suggested getting a cost estimate to determine whether the community needs to be involved in fund raising.

Mr. Mathieu agreed to reach out to the project manager to see if there were drawings for bleachers and get updated costs.

3. Mr. Mathieu reported on the results of the FY 20 FREC oil bid. The low bidder was Peterson Oil at a rate of \$2.0675, which is a minor increase above FY 19. Mr. Mathieu recommended the committee's approval.

A motion by M. Antocci, seconded by S. Reed to accept the FY 20 Oil Bid from Peterson Oil at the rate of \$2.0675, was approved by unanimous vote.

4. Mr. Mathieu said the FY 19 School Choice figures were released in December. The district is on track to receive \$891,021, including all Special Education incremental costs. The amount on the state Cherry Sheet he was \$930,562, equal to the district's revenue last year. This would be the second year in a row that the district is coming up short in expectations from projected to actual – each year by \$40,000. The district budgeted \$985,000 for FY 19. MR. Mathieu said to manage the situation, he will recommend principals freeze all but essential expenditures.

Mrs. Terry said principals are accustomed to hearing this message and must heed it in a time when there is nothing to cut as there are no non-essential purchases when providing a positive learning environment.

B. Budget and Finance Subcommittee Report *(Vote May be Required)*

Mrs. Rabbitt reported the December meeting was canceled due to scheduling issues. The subcommittee discussed meeting during the day instead of just before the regularly scheduled school committee meetings. This makes for an especially long day for the superintendent and finance director during this time when other subcommittees are meeting.

Mrs. Rabbitt and the subcommittee members of Mrs. Kabala and Mrs. Reed agreed to meet on second and third Tuesdays of each month at 8:30 a.m.

C. Superintendent's Search Committee Update

Mrs. Rabbitt reported the search committee is in the process of conducting preliminary interviews. There is a meeting scheduled for January 10 for deliberations. The search committee will bring finalists forward at the committee's meeting of January 23.

D. Request for Additional Staffing, 0.4 FTE Instructional Assistant *(Vote Required)*

Special Education Director Lorinda Allen provided a memo explaining the need for additional staffing. The committee approved two 1.0 FTE positions in December for students returning from out of district placements; however, when a student moved out of district, the assigned instructional assistant was shifted to this role and the new position was not posted. Mrs. Allen is requesting that that 1.0 position now be filled as a .4 FTE.

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by S. Reed to post the position as a .4 FTE Instructional Assistant, was approved by unanimous vote.

At the next meeting Dr. Nash and Mrs. Allen will discuss the long range vision for delivery of special education programs and personnel. It is a multiple year plan which dovetails with recommendations made through the budget process.

E. Consideration to Amend Policy GCG, Substitute Teachers, First Reading *(Vote Required)*

Mrs. Antocci, chair of the Policy Review Subcommittee presented a draft of amendments to Policy GCG. Mrs. Antocci said the subcommittee tried to simplify the policy while updating it to attract qualified substitutes. Mrs. Antocci said the policy clearly defines the caliber of individual the district seeks in substitutes. The attached rate structure is competitive at a time when many local districts have experienced a shortage of substitutes.

Mrs. Kabala expressed concerns that the amended policy does not state that daily rates are approved by the school committee. Mrs. Kabala also stated the rate structure does not reward those with advanced degrees. Mrs. Kabala asked if college students would be eligible to work under this policy.

Dr. Nash said this can be addressed under item D to state the student should be in his/her third year of college and completed a practicum.

Mrs. Kabala said the amendments omits language about providing health benefits to long terms substitutes. Mrs. Kabala asked if this is legal to not offer benefits. Mrs. Kabala also inquired about an increase for those who substitute for a consecutive year for the same person.

The committee discussed the proposed rates.

Mrs. Rabbitt asked if the committee agreed with the two rates for degreed and certified individuals.

Mrs. Rabbitt reviewed the changes requested by members. The subcommittee will review them at the next policy review subcommittee.

The committee agreed to maintain three base rates for a two year degree, a four year degree, and certified individuals, and raise the proposed rates by \$5. The committee agreed to offer an increase after 30 days.

The long term rates are proposed at \$110 and \$130.

X. Next Meeting Dates

School Committee:

Wednesday, January 23, 2019, Charlton Middle School, 2 Oxford Road, Charlton, 7 p.m.

Budget and Finance Subcommittee:

Tuesday, January 22, 29, February 12, 26; from 8:30 to 10 a.m. , Shepherd Hill Regional High School, 68 Dudley-Oxford Road, Dudley.

Negotiation Subcommittee:

Thursday, January 10, 2019, Shepherd Hill Regional High School, 4-6 p.m.

Thursday, January 24, 2019, Shepherd Hill Regional High School 4-6 p.m.

Policy Review Subcommittee:

Thursday, January 17, 2019, Charlton Middle School, 10 a.m.

XI. Future Agenda Items –

FY 20 Budget, Policy Review Subcommittee Report, Superintendent Search Update, Request to increase driver education program fees; request to increase nurse substitute rates, executive session Special Education Budget, transfer amount for TD Garden follow up.

XII. Adjourn

A motion by S. Reed, seconded by J. Terry to adjourn the meeting was approved by unanimous vote at 9:53 p.m.

Items used for this meeting include:

Agenda for meeting of Wednesday, January 9, 2019	Minutes of meeting of Wednesday, December 12, 2018	Superintendent’s Report Special Topics: MSBA Core and Accelerated Repair	Superintendent’s Report: New Business Items
Report of the Finance Director	Minutes of the Budget and Finance Subcommittee Meeting of November 14, 2018	Current Policy GCC Policy GCG Amendments Substitute Teacher Rates, current and proposed	Request for Additional Staffing – .4 FTE SpEd Instructional Assistant
Overview of SpEd staff hiring			

Respectfully submitted by Sandra Sullivan, recording secretary