

## DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Approved minutes of the meeting of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee held Wednesday, April 12, 2017 at Shepherd Hill Regional High School, 68 Dudley Oxford Road, Dudley, MA, 7 p.m.

In attendance were members of the School Committee:

Mary N. Antocci  
Pauline J. Aucoin, Chair  
Raymond J. Chalk, Vice Chair  
Catherine M. Kabala  
Joseph M. Pietrzak  
Elaine M. Rabbitt  
Stephanie A. Reed

Jack A. Cederberg, Student Representative

Also in attendance were Gregg J. Desto, Superintendent of Schools, Richard J. Mathieu, Director of Finance and Operations; district administrators: Lorinda Allen, William Chaplin, Dean Packard, John Paire, Robin Parmley, Diane Seibold; teachers David Deremian; Dudley Town Administrator Greg Balukonis, Dudley Selectman Jon Ruda, members of the Dudley Middle School Show Choir; media representatives Deb LaPlaca, Telegram, 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, March 22, 2017*

A motion by M. Antocci, seconded by R. Chalk to approve the minutes of the meeting of Wednesday, March 22, 2017, as corrected, was approved by unanimous vote.

*Minutes of Executive Session of Wednesday, March 22, 2017*

A motion by J. Pietrzak, seconded by R. Chalk to approve the minutes of the executive session of Wednesday, March 2, 2017, was approved by unanimous vote.

*Minutes of Public Hearing, Wednesday, March 29, 2017*

A motion by J. Pietrzak, seconded by M. Antocci to approve the minutes of the Public Hearing on the FY 2018 Budget was approved by a vote of 6-0. Mr. Chalk abstained.

### **IV. Approval of Warrant**

The following warrants were distributed and signed by a majority of members without further comment or questions:

<b>Warrant #</b>	<b>Amount</b>
55	\$51,770.29
56	\$9,486.16
1123Dadj	\$10.92
1125D	\$437,192.62
1125P	\$1,162,304.35
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,660,764.34</b>

**V. Citizens' Forum**

No one spoke at this time.

**VI. School Spotlight – Dudley Middle School**

Mr. Paire introduced the award-winning Dudley Middle School Prestige Show Choir which performed selections from their 2016-2017 show.

**VII. Communications**

Mr. Desto had two items:

1. Mr. Desto received a letter from Ben Schumaker, the founder and director of The Memory Project, which matches art students with photos of children from around the world who have faced substantial challenges. The art students create portraits of the children to help them feel valued and important, and serve as special memories for them in the future. Recently, 11 Shepherd Hill art students provided portraits of children from Bolivia. Mr. Schumaker thanked the students for the quality and heart of their portraits. The Memory Project will provide a video of the portraits being delivered to the children of Bolivia.

2. Mr. Desto received a letter from Senator Anne M. Gobi, in response to the letter he wrote on behalf of the committee concerning the FY 2018 budget and the lack of state aid. Senator Gobi said she shares the district's concern and has with her colleagues submitted a letter to Senator Karen Spilka, Chair of the Senate Ways and Means, and Representative Brian Dempsey, Chair of the House Ways and Means advocating for \$55 per pupil in Chapter 70 funding.

The senator has co-sponsored a bill to modernize the foundation budget in support of the Foundation Budget Review Commission's report that found the state is underestimating the cost of education.

Senator Gobi has sponsored a third bill that would reduce costs for school districts.

**VIII. Superintendent's Report**

1. Mr. Desto pronounced the first annual Science and Engineering Fair coordinated by STEAM Director Karen Ares and Shepherd Hill biology teacher Karin Lebeau a huge success. He thanked them and the students who created such brilliant projects.

2. As a follow up to the Joint Financial Planning Meeting held March 29, Mr. Desto has scheduled a second meeting on Wednesday, May 3, at Charlton Middle School, at 6 p.m. The conversation will continue concerning solving revenue problems. Mr. Desto said Sen. Ryan Fattman will attend.

3. Committee members are asked to confirm whether they will attend the Day on the Hill scheduled for April 25 in Boston.

4. Mr. Desto said the district-wide art show received a boost from two recent donations: Dudley-Charlton Education Foundation offered \$500, and the Henke-Sass Wolf Co., of Dudley bestowed \$1,500. Mr. Desto said the art show is an opportunity to showcase student talent.

4. Mr. Desto congratulated Shepherd Hill's Fantasy and Illusion show choirs as well as those from Charlton Middle School and Dudley Middle School for completing a successful season. The choirs are a great example of what can happen with talent and commitment.

**IX. Student Representative Report – Jack Cederberg**

Mr. Cederberg also reported on the successful Show Choir, which concluded its season in Waltham last weekend. Illusion was named Grand Champion – an honor they earned at every competition this year. The Fantasy choir is ranked 19<sup>th</sup> in the nation.

Spring sports are underway, and the foreign language students involved with the Global Awareness Program are leaving tomorrow at 1:30 p.m. for Rome, Pompeii, Florence, Austria, Munich, Nuremburg, and Prague.

**X. New Business**

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

1. Mr. Mathieu presented donations for the committee's acceptance;
- |  |         |
|--|---------|
| Charlton Arts Council, for District Art Show | \$500   |
| Henke-Sass Wolf of America                   | \$1,500 |

A motion by S. Reed, seconded by R. Chalk to accept the donations with appreciation, was approved by unanimous vote.

2. Mr. Mathieu reported that one bid was received for a two-year bleacher rental agreement for the athletic field. Mr. Mathieu asked the committee to award the bid to Marr Scaffolding of Boston at the cost of \$103,610. The first year cost is \$67,600, and the second year is \$36,010. This company is the current provider.

A motion by M. Antocci, seconded by R. Chalk to award the bid for a two-year lease of bleachers at the Shepherd Hill athletic field at the cost of \$103, 610, was approved by unanimous vote.

Mr. Mathieu said the number of seats will increase.

Mr. Pietrzak asked if the district has considered revisiting the concept of selling advertisement space at the field to support costs.

Mrs. Reed suggested holding off on the vote until more is known about the budget. The committee agreed the price may only increase.

3. The auditing firm of Powers and Sullivan has completed the end of year review, and reported no findings or discrepancies.

#### B. Budget and Finance Subcommittee Report

Mr. Pietrzak reported on the meeting of April 5 in which the subcommittee reviewed technology leasing proposals. The subcommittee agreed leasing is the only solution and recommends a four-year lease option that will provide a \$238,000 savings in FY 18.

The four-year lease provides 100 desktops, 40 laptops, 840 Chromebooks, 7 Smart Boards, 1 media cart, 47 document cameras with a full warranty. Mr. Chalk said the five-year term was going too far as new technology can arise.

A three-year lease was explored, but the four-year is more sensible.

To concerns that the lease solves the need among staff for technology at all times and not just for testing, Mr. Desto said the lease includes all the items requested by the principals.

Mr. Pietrzak said the subcommittee also discussed the idea of increasing athletic fees and adding fees for all activities as the amount brought in by fees does not cover the true costs of the athletic programs.

A flat rate activities fee was also discussed. Mr. Pietrzak said the mere fact that the subcommittee is talking about this indicates how severe the district's budget is this year.

#### C. FY 2018 Budget (*Vote May be Required*)

Mr. Desto said two items are proposed to help reduce our budget and lower the costs to the towns:

- Technology leasing
- Recommendation to decrease current health plan rates to 7.1%

The proposed FY 2018 budget has been adjusted to reflect this increase.

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by J. Pietrzak to accept the proposal to decrease the rates of current health plans to 7.1%, was approved by unanimous vote.

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by S. Reed to authorize the director of finance and operation to solicit bids for a four-year lease of technology as proposed, was approved by unanimous vote.

Mr. Mathieu asked the committee to further reduce the FY 2018 budget by \$211,902 and to approve a revised budget as follows:

Total budget of \$50,532,640, assessments to Charlton of \$12,812,845, and to Dudley of \$8,275,011.

A motion by J. Pietrzak, seconded by R. Chalk to approve a FY 2018 budget of \$50,532,640, with assessments to Charlton of \$12,812,845, and to Dudley of \$8,275,011 and approved by unanimous vote.

Mr. Balukonis approached the committee to report on the status of the Dudley town budget. Mr. Balukonis said he presented a balanced budget with a 2.6% increase in contractual and fixed costs. As part of that process, \$507,000 was included for educational purposes --an increase to the minimum local contribution. To meet the amount voted by the committee this evening, the town will need to use its reserves, further reductions and free cash.

Mr. Desto said by not meeting the committee's request for further contributions, the district budget would reflect an overall increase of .87 %. The district would need to cut another \$1.2 million in response to Dudley's figure. This would impact Charlton's contribution by an additional 2.2% increase. The district has over \$1 million in fixed costs.

Mrs. Kabala noted no staff or education is affected with the cuts made this evening.

D. Consideration of Request for Leave of Absence, 2017-2018 School Year, Article XV, Item L (*Vote Required*)

Jon Warms has requested an uncompensated leave of absence for the 2017-2018 school year to study other career possibilities.

Mr. Desto received a second request today from Shepherd Hill Science Teacher Jacqueline Govoni to extend her current leave for a second year. Ms. Govoni is pursuing options in the science field and hopes to return to Shepherd Hill in 2018.

Mr. Desto said these requests are allowable under the collective bargaining agreement, and recommended approval.

A motion by R. Chalk seconded by J. Pietrzak to approve the leaves as submitted was withdrawn.

Mrs. Antocci asked to consider the leaves separately. She said a second year to explore other career options is excessive, and asked Mr. Desto to explain his recommendation.

A motion by J. Pietrzak, seconded by R. Chalk to approve the request for a one-year uncompensated leave of absence for Charlton Middle School Grade 7 math teacher Jonathan Warms, consistent with Article XV, Item L, was approved by unanimous.

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by J. Pietrzak to extend the current uncompensated leave of absence for Shepherd Hill science teacher Jacqueline Govoni was approved by a 5-2 vote. Voting in favor were P. Aucoin, R. Chalk, C. Kabala, J. Pietrzak, S. Reed. Opposed were E. Rabbitt and M. Antocci.

Mrs. Antocci said it is not fair for the substitute teacher filling in for the employee on leave to be continually put in a one-year position because someone is pursuing another career. She said it does not make sense to hold a position open under these circumstances.

Mrs. Rabbitt questioned the employee's commitment to the district, and agreed two years are excessive.

E. Consideration to Enroll Children of Employees, Article XXII, (Vote Required)

The Agreement Between the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District and the Dudley-Charlton Teachers' Association contains a new that becomes effective in the 2017-2018 school year. Teachers living outside of the district but in Massachusetts may enroll their children or stepchildren in district schools. The school committee determines the number and location of openings.

There are three requests:

- 2 Kindergartners at Mason Road School
- Grade 3 at Heritage School.

Mr. Desto said class sizes are favorable and recommended approval. These students are not considered School Choice students, but it is as if they are full tuition students.

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by R. Chalk to approve the enrollment of the three children of district employees, as presented, was approved by unanimous vote.

F. Consideration of Shepherd Hill Course of Study, 2017-2018 (Vote Required)

Mr. Chaplin presented additions to science, math, English and world languages. He said there is a big need for advanced graphics programming. Journalism and creative writing will return to the English department, and a course will teach students how to be film critics. The foreign language department is combining Latin 3 and 4, and providing an independent study with Rosetta Stone. Mr. Chaplin has included Virtual High School at a cost of \$450 per seat, which has been budgeted in the guidance line item. This cost may be reduced if a district teacher teaches online) or juniors and seniors and not classes that are offered here.

Course changes were made to AP English Language and Composition.

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by S. Reed to approve the changes to the 2017-2018 Shepherd Hill Program and Studies, was approved by unanimous vote.

G. Consideration of Requests for School Admission, Residency, JF (*Vote Required*)

*1) Temporary Non-Resident*

Mr. Desto presented the request by a family in Dudley who must move out of district in early May, and is asking that their children be allowed to complete the 2016-2017 school year in the district. Mr. Desto recommended approval.

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by J. Pietrzak, to approve the request as submitted, was approved by unanimous vote.

2) *Foreign Exchange Student*

A family in Charlton is requesting to enroll an exchange student from Sweden at Shepherd Hill for the 2017-2018 school year. Mr. Desto said the student meets all the policy requirements, and said the district has worked with the exchange program in the past. He recommended approval.

A motion by M. Antocci, seconded by J. Pietrzak to accept the enrollment of a foreign exchange student at Shepherd Hill for the 2017-2018 school year, was approved by unanimous vote.

H. Consideration of Request for One-year Stipend, *Girls Who Code Club (Vote Required)*

Mr. Desto requested to establish a \$1,500 stipend for a teacher who offers a coding club at Charlton Middle School after school. The course is open to all district students although current participants are from Charlton. The course fosters interest in STEM pathways and careers.

Mr. Desto said the stipend would be only for this year.

A motion by J. Pietrzak, seconded by M. Antocci to approve the stipend was tabled.

Mrs. Kabala said the request is being presented incorrectly and should have been negotiated in the collective bargaining agreement. To approve a contract outside of the contract would set a precedent.

I. Consideration to Authorize Superintendent to Submit Statement of Interest, Massachusetts School Building Authority (*Vote Required*)

The chair read the motion, which was moved by C. Kabala, seconded by R. Chalk, and approved by unanimous vote.

Resolved: Having convened in an open meeting on April 12, 2017, prior to the closing date, the Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee of Dudley-Charlton, in accordance with its charter, bylaws, and ordinances, has voted to authorize the Superintendent to submit to the Massachusetts School Building Authority the Statement of Interest dated April 7, 2017, for Shepherd Hill Regional High School, which describes and explains the following deficiencies and the priority category(s) for which an application may be submitted to the Massachusetts School Building Authority in the future.

- *Priority #5: Replacement, renovation or modernization of school facility systems such as roofs, windows, boilers, and heating and ventilation systems, to increase energy conservation and decrease energy related costs in a school facility;*
- *Priority #7: Replacement of or addition to obsolete buildings in order to provide a full range of programs consistent with state and approved local requirements.*

And hereby further specifically acknowledges that by submitting this Statement of Interest form, the Massachusetts School Building Authority in no way guarantees the acceptance or the approval of an application, the awarding of a grant or any other funding commitment from the Massachusetts School Building Authority, or commits the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District to filing an application for funding with the Massachusetts School Building Authority.

**XI. Next Meeting Dates**

School Committee Meetings:

- *Regular meeting* – Wednesday, April 26, Charlton Middle School, 7 p.m.
- *Budget and Finance Subcommittee* – Wednesday, April 26, 2017, Charlton Middle School, 5:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, May 3, Charlton Middle School, 5 p.m.
- Joint Meeting May 3 Charlton Middle School, 6 p.m.
- *Regular Meeting* – Wednesday, May 10, Shepherd Hill, 7 p.m.

**XII. Future Agenda Items** – FY 2018 Budget, Posting of 2017-2018 Essential Positions, list of leave of absences, approved in the past.

The chair entertained a motion to enter executive session.

**XIII. Executive Session** – *“To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel and to conduct contract negotiations with nonunion personnel.”*

The motion was approved by unanimous roll call at 8:36 p.m.

The chair stated the committee will reconvene in open session for a vote if necessary, and to adjourn.

The committee returned to open session at 10:13 p.m.

***Salary Range, Dudley Elementary School Principal:***

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by R. Chalk to approve a salary range for the Dudley Elementary School Principal as \$90,000 to \$103,000, was approved by unanimous vote.

**Superintendent’s Contract**

The committee previously approved a three-year contract for the superintendent with a rollover provision.

A motion by R. Chalk, seconded by S. Reed to approve a 2% increase to the superintendent’s 2016-2017 salary of \$150,000 for the 2017-2018 school year for a total of \$153,000, and to replace his ability to carry over five unused vacation days with a provision to buy back up to five unused vacation days at the rate of \$500 per day, was approved by a vote of 6-1.

Voting in favor were: M. Antocci, P. Aucoin, R. Chalk, C. Kabala, J. Pietrzak, S. Reed.

Mrs. Rabbitt was opposed, and explained that she preferred to reward the superintendent financially through other means.

**XIV. Adjourn**

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by R. Chalk to adjourn the meeting was approved by unanimous vote at 10:16 p.m.

Items used for this meeting include:

Agenda for April 12, 2017	Superintendent's Report of April 7, 2017	Minutes of regular meeting of March 22, 2017
Minutes of Executive Session of March 22, 2017	Minutes of Public Hearing of March 29, 2017	FY 18 Budget Memo #4
Dudley-Charlton Regional School District Drug and Alcohol Report	Enrollment of Children 1718	Finance Director's Report
NAMI Parent Presentation	Shepherd Hill Program of Studies	

Respectfully submitted by Sandra Sullivan, recording secretary