

DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Approved minutes of the meeting of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee, Wednesday, March 9, 2016, Shepherd Hill Regional High School, 68 Dudley-Oxford Rd. Dudley, MA, 7 p.m.

*The Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee held a **Public Hearing** at 7:00 PM, which will lead to a vote on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2017 during the regular meeting which follows the Public Hearing.*

The public hearing came to order at 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Desto spoke about the goals that drive the FY 2017 budget:

- Enhance safety and security
- Promote social and mental health
- Reduce class sizes, particularly in grades 1, 2 and 3
- Respond to the Strategic Plan goals of establishing STEAM, and Global Awareness curriculum
- Capital concerns
- Extra-curricular activities
- Meet contractual and health insurance obligations
- State and national standards compliance

Mr. Mathieu said the preliminary budget of \$49,870,076, represents an increase of 2.5 million, or 5%. The budget meets the costs of salary and benefits, student transportation, state assessment, special education.

The budget is affected by increased expenses, and a loss of \$600,000 in revenues to support the budget.

Revenue sources include Chapter 70, transportation reimbursement, and state building assistance. Detailed budget information will be posted on the district website, and residents' questions can be directed to the district office.

There were no questions from either the committee or the audience.

The Public Hearing ended at 7:05 p.m.

In attendance were members of the School Committee:

Mary N. Antocci

Pauline J. Aucoin, Chair

Catherine M. Kabala

Joseph M. Pietrzak

Elaine M. Rabbitt

Stephanie A. Reed

Jack Bagan, Student Representative

Raymond J. Chalk, Vice Chair, was not in attendance

Also in attendance were Gregg J. Desto, Superintendent of Schools, Richard J. Mathieu, Director of Finance and Operations; district administrators: Lorinda Allen, Karen Ares, Terri A. Caffelle, Dan

D’Arcangelo, Doris Dono, Jody A. O’Brien, Dean W. Packard, John D. Paire, Mary A. Pierangeli; district staff Brooke Beverly, Amy Marshall, Diane Seibold; Charlton resident Stefan Sage; media representatives Debra LaPlaca, Telegram, Rich Earle, audio-visual coordinator, Sandra Sullivan, recording secretary.

I. Call to Order

The chair called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Approval of Minutes

A. *Minutes of Regular Meeting of Wednesday, February 24, 2016*

A motion by J. Pietrzak, seconded by M. Antocci to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of Wednesday, February 24, 2016, as corrected, was approved by unanimous vote.

B. *Minutes of Executive Session of Wednesday, February 24, 2016*

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by M. Antocci to approve the minutes of the executive session of Wednesday, February 24, 2016, as corrected, was approved by unanimous vote.

IV. Approval of Warrant

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

Warrant #	Amount
39	\$898,011.75
40	\$705,043.62
41	00
1038D	\$43.08
1038P	\$285.00
1046D	\$442,251.40
1046P	\$1,126,330.18
1047D	\$587.02
Total	\$3,172,552.05

V. Citizens’ Forum

No one spoke at this time.

VI. School Spotlight – Dudley Middle School

Principal John Paire introduced Dudley Middle School Spanish teacher Amy Marshall, who, with seventh grade students, demonstrated Cahoots, a language learning software. Mrs. Marshall received a Dudley-Charlton Education Foundation grant to buy the software and iPads for classroom use. Mrs. Marshall said the program is used to enhance everyday activities.

The committee thanked Mrs. Marshall and the students for the demonstration.

VII. Communications

1. Mr. Desto shared a letter addressed to Shepherd Hill Principal Mary A. Pierangeli, from the New England Association of Schools and Colleges regarding the decennial report completed in the fall. Shepherd Hill gained accreditation, and the NEASC commended the school on the culture of respect, pride and ownership, as well as student-teacher rapport. The NEASC's primary recommendation is to develop a plan to address aging infrastructure and equipment. The committee thanked Steering Committee Chairs Michael Resener and Jamie Congdon.
2. Mrs. Rabbitt has joined a Task Force sponsored by the Massachusetts Association of School Committees on Social-Emotional Learning. The group met on Monday, March 7 and began to look at communication to the public, legislation, gathering resources, teacher preparation. The charge is to deliver curriculum to schools.
3. Mrs. Antocci received a communication from parents regarding the water issue. This is an agenda item for discussion later in the meeting.
4. Mrs. Kabala commended the Dr. Seuss Birthday Celebration at Mason Road School, and Mrs. Gray for coordinating the reading programs at the school.

VIII. Superintendent's Report

1. The Shepherd Hill Show Choirs were successful during their recent trip to Nashville. Over the February vacation, the students competed in the national Heart of America Festival. Illusion, the women's group, took third place, while Fantasy, the large mixed group, took sixth in the country. The school's stage crew earned Best Stage Crew of them all.

Mr. Desto said every student he has spoken to has expressed their gratefulness to perform at this level.

Mr. Desto noted that the Shepherd Hill performances swept every category at the Daniel Hand Connecticut Classic.

2. Principals searches:

Mr. Desto reported that 29 applications were received for the Shepherd Hill position. The search committee met and narrowed the field to eight. Interviews will be held Friday, March 11 and Tuesday, March 15. It was noted that these preliminary interview sessions are not open meetings.

The Mason Road School Principal Search Committee reviewed the 24 applications, and narrowed the search to five candidates. Interviews for this position will be held Tuesday, March 22 and Wednesday, March 30.

3. Parent teacher conferences for students in grades 5-12 will be held Thursday, March 10, and for K-4 Thursday, March 17.
4. Shepherd Hill will host an Open House for eighth graders Wednesday, March 16th. Student advisory committees of both the superintendent and principal have planned these events.

5. Mr. Desto has scheduled the Joint Financial Planning meeting for Thursday, March 31, 2016, at 6:30 p.m.

6. The Dudley-Charlton Education Foundation will hold an Awesome Eighties Night fundraiser Friday, April 8 at the Southbridge Hotel and Conference Center. Tickets are \$50 person.

7. The MASC's Day on the Hill will be held Tuesday, April 26 at the State House in Boston. Committee members interested in attending can contact the district office.

IX. Student Representative Report

This item was tabled.

X. New Business

A. FY 2017 Budget

Mr. Desto said he is recommending a break in tradition regarding the adoption of a final FY 17 budget this year. Instead, he recommended the committee wait until more information is available before making any reductions to the proposed budget. To date, there has been no new information, and the legislature continues to push for Chapter 70 increases and regional transportation reimbursement at 80%.

Mr. Desto said he will recommend cuts at the committee's March 23 meeting.

Mr. Mathieu provided a memo on Alternative Financing that proposed the concept of paying for some one-time expenses from one-time revenue sources.

Expense	Cost
District School Bus	\$85,000
Technology	
Wiring projects	\$89,500
Netbook and tablet carts	
Mason Road, Dudley Elem., and Dudley Middle	\$48,250
Charlton Elem,Heritage and Charlton Middle	\$48,250
Shepherd Hill	\$56,950

Mr. Mathieu noted the wiring project is eligible for partial e-rate funding. The Netbook and tablet carts are new purchases for the district, necessary to meet the requirements of MCAS 2.0. These items are not in the preliminary budget, and respond to the goals of the Strategic Plan.

Mr. Mathieu said if the committee is interested in pursuing these items, he suggested asking the towns to help fund them outside of the tax levy. He asked the committee to authorize him to gather more information about a debt exclusion and to ask the town of Charlton for a place holder on the upcoming annual town meeting warrant.

Mrs. Kabala said she is hesitant to support this at this time, and said School Choice funds are intended to be used for these one-time projects. She would prefer that we concentrate on the operational budget and delay this action until the fall.

Mr. Mathieu said School Choice monies have eroded over time as they have been used to offset the budget.

Mrs. Rabbitt and Mrs. Antocci agreed there is no harm in seeking a place holder. Mrs. Rabbitt said there is no harm in looking for a place holder and allow the finance director to have continued discussions with the town boards. A placeholder gives the committee an option to have the conversation.

Mrs. Antocci said it is prudent to leave that window of opportunity open, and continue to study. She said if we close the door we can't go back to it.

Mr. Desto said timing is a legitimate concern but we will have to do this or something like this in the near future. Mr. Desto and Mr. Mathieu have raised the possibility of a debt exclusion with the town administrators, and they seemed somewhat receptive.

A motion by J. Pietrzak, seconded by M. Antocci to bring hold a spot on the warrant of both towns for the possibility of a debt exclusion, was approved by a vote of 5-1. Voting in favor were Mrs. Antocci, Mrs. Aucoin, Mr. Pietrzak, Mrs. Rabbitt and Mrs. Reed. Mrs. Kabala was opposed.

B. Finance Director Report *(Vote Required)*

Request to Accept Donations:

Mr. Mathieu asked the committee to vote to accept three donations totaling \$297.83:

\$93.48 from Target Take Charge of Education for Shepherd Hill

\$178.75 from Target Take Charge of Education for Charlton Elementary School

\$25.60 from Planet Aid for Charlton Elementary School

A motion by J. Pietrzak, seconded by S. Reed to accept the three donations as presented, was approved by unanimous vote.

Mr. Mathieu requested the committee vote to authorize the posting of seven two-hour cafeteria helper monitor positions. In reviewing staffing, it was determined that these positions are currently staffed by substitutes, many of whom have been working in the position for several years. With the committee's vote those working at least 10 hours per week are eligible for the benefits as outlined in Schedule E of the Wage and Benefit Schedule for Support Personnel.

The positions are as follows:

One position per building: Dudley Elementary School, Heritage School, Charlton Elementary School.

Two positions per building: Charlton Middle School, Shepherd Hill.

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by J. Pietrzak to define permanent cafeteria positions as one two-hour per day position each at Dudley Elementary School, Heritage School, Charlton Elementary

School, and two two-hour per day positions at Charlton Middle School and Shepherd Hill, was approved by unanimous vote. The positions will be posted internally.

C. Budget and Finance Subcommittee Report

This item was tabled.

D. Pathways / Certificate Programs at Shepherd Hill – Mrs. Pierangeli, Mrs. Allen, Mrs. Ares

The new course of study pathways and certificate programs were unveiled to freshmen and sophomores at Shepherd Hill Regional High School this week. Mrs. Pierangeli, Mrs. Ares and Mrs. Allen presented an overview of those programs to the committee. The initiatives allow students to explore the future and begin preparing for college and beyond.

Programs include a STEM Certificate program to prepare students for careers in engineering, computer applications and more; Pathways in the arts, business, global studies, and science.

Mrs. Pierangeli highlighted the new Shepherd Hill/Nichols GAP Program (Global Awareness Program) designed to provide students a broad range of language, political, economic, ecological and cultural relations studies.

Mrs. Pierangeli said 19 sophomores have applied for this program, and were already treated to a field trip to Nichols College earlier today.

Mr. Desto thanked the teachers at Shepherd Hill who will experience changes in their subject matter. He also commended the students who will take the risk by joining these paths, which will require extra work.

E. Water Testing Procedures

Mr. Desto presented a draft of the procedure and said the water at Charlton Middle School and Heritage School is clean. There has been no detection of MBTE since 2011.

Testing results will be made public after each monthly test. It was agreed that, although not necessary, parents will be allowed to provide their own water for their children to take to school.

No vote is necessary; the procedure will be posted on the website.

Mrs. Reed left the meeting at 8:36 p.m.

F. Consideration of Request for Home Instruction, Policy IGBH (*Vote Required*)

A Charlton family has submitted a request to home school their son for the remainder of the 2015-16 school year. Mr. Desto recommended approval.

A motion by J. Pietrzak, seconded by C. Kabala to approve the request for home instruction for the remainder of the 2015-2016 school year, was approved by unanimous vote.

G. Consideration of Requests for Enrollment of Non-Resident Students, Policy JF (*Vote Required*)

The parent of a first grade student at Mason Road School has requested that his daughter be allowed to complete the 2015-2016 school year there despite the family's recent move to Webster. Mr. Desto recommended approval, based on best interest of the child, and contingent upon the parent's provision of transportation to and from school.

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

Policy JF also allows for the enrollment of up to two foreign exchange students at Shepherd Hill per school year. The students must be juniors, and fluent in English. Mr. Desto presented the request from a Charlton family requesting to enroll a student from Italy for the 2016-2017 school year. The agency, International Student Exchange Programs, has provided transcripts and medical forms. Mr. Desto recommended approval.

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by M. Antocci to approve the request to enroll a foreign exchange students for the 2016-2017 school year as submitted, was approved by unanimous vote.

XI. Next Meeting Dates

- Budget and Finance Subcommittee: Friday, March 18, 2016, Shepherd Hill Regional High School, 68 Dudley-Oxford Road, Dudley, 9 a.m.
- *School Committee Meeting*: Wednesday, March 23, 2016 Charlton Middle School, 2 Oxford Road, Charlton.

A motion by C. Kabala, seconded by J. Pietrzak to suspend policy BE and to schedule the meeting of Wednesday, March 23 at 6:30 p.m., was approved by unanimous vote.

- *Joint Financial Meeting*: Thursday, March 31, 2016, Charlton Middle School, 2 Oxford Rd. Charlton, 6:30 p.m.
- *School Committee Meeting*: Wednesday, April 13, 2106, Shepherd Hill Regional High School, 7 p.m.
- *School Committee Meeting*: Wednesday, April 27, 2016, Charlton Middle School, 7 p.m.

XII. Future Agenda Items - FY 17 Budget, Principal Search Updates, Auditors, School Choice public hearing, negotiations with support personnel.

XIII. Executive Session "...to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation." There was no need for exec session this evening.

XIV. Adjourn

A motion by J. Pietrzak, seconded by E. Rabbitt to adjourn the meeting was approved at 8:42 p.m.

Items used for this meeting include:

Agenda for March 9, 2016	Superintendent's Report of Friday, March 4, 2016	Minutes of School Committee Meeting of February 24, 2016	Minutes of Executive Session of February 24, 2016
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**Minutes of the School Committee
Meeting of Wednesday, March 9, 2016**

Day on the Hill brochure – MASC	MARS Breakfast agenda	Mason Road School Enrichment Program brochure	School Water Procedure draft
STEM and Global Awareness programs	Finance Director’s Report		

Respectfully submitted by Sandra Sullivan, recording secretary