

EDGARTOWN SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES

Wednesday, April 4, 2007
Edgartown School Community Room
7:00 PM

Those present were Chairperson David Rossi, Members Les Baynes and Susan Mercier, Superintendent Jim Weiss, Acting Principal Anne Fligor, Acting Assistant Principal Mike Joyce, Curriculum Coordinator Donna Lowell-Bettencourt, and PTO Representative Deirdre Morris.

I. Approval of Minutes of March 14, 2007

On a motion by Les Baynes, seconded by Susan Mercier, the Committee agreed to accept the minutes of March 14, 2007.

II. Parents Groups and Community Input

Donna Lowell-Bettencourt gave a presentation on the proposed playground improvements to be sponsored by the PTO. The PTO and the past 8th grade classes have donated money toward a swing set for the playground. The cost of the 3 bay/6 swing set unit will be \$4000. The school will work with the Town Highway Department to have the swing set installed sometime this summer. The SAC and the PTO both have playground improvements on their agendas with a goal to make the area meet the needs of both the students and the community. The addition of play structures, pavement to allow for basketball, 4-square, hopscotch, jump rope, plus another area with a fitness center/circuit would enhance the space. The SAC is sending a letter to the Board of Selectmen informing them of the change and requesting an article for the special town warrant. To accomplish the entire "wish list" would require a need of \$350,000.

III. Finance Report

Dr. Weiss shared the current financial report. The expenditure report shows we are in good shape. He will look into the school choice payment and when credited.

IV. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Weiss shared upcoming town meetings and who will cover which towns. Our school budget looks fine. In regards to the contractual cleaning issue, the money was used for the salary of the temporary custodian (thru June 2007) but will need to be moved back to the custodial contractual line which will be handled by Anne Fligor and Pam Dolby.

A. Principal Search

Dr. Weiss led a discussion regarding leadership options and the next steps in the Principal Search. The first option was to immediately return out to advertise, and the second option was to wait and advertise a year from now. The positive to posting now would end the question of who is in charge bringing the leadership issue to closure. The negative might give the perception of "what is wrong with our school," plus all the effort and energy to do it again so soon. There may be a need to take a break from this pressure. The Committee would like to follow the same school visit procedure from the past principal search. It worked well and generated a lot of information. Mr. Baynes said that the school is lucky to have an excellent staff and good leadership. This confidence gives the school the ability to look at options at this point. With all these skills set in place, there is no rush and it is possible to stay with the present leadership team. Mrs. Mercier said the building is clearly moving forward. She feels that if it is right to go out now and no suitable candidates are found, the leadership team will stay in place and the school will go out again next year. The same sentiments were echoed from Mr. Rossi, Mr. Joyce, Mrs. Lowell-Bettencourt, Teachers Maria MacKenty, Sue Costello and Sandy Joyce, Parents Cliff Jernegan, Deirdre Morris and Fred Condon, Dr. Weiss said he wants to find the

best candidate and not settle for someone who does not have all the qualifications. He is looking for someone who is articulate in speech, is writing knowledgeable, has the experience to do the job of principal, is committed to do the job (not just putting in time before retirement), and works with people having strong interpersonal skills. Dr. Weiss feels ready to move forward, do the advertising and find someone for this school. He will research NESDEC consultants' cost and services. Dr. Weiss thanked everyone for the debate and said he valued the input.

V. Personnel

A. Resignations – Becky Dulac, William MacKenty and Elizabeth Hauck

Dr. Weiss said he received letters of resignation from Teachers Becky Dulac, William MacKenty and Elizabeth Hauck. On a motion by Les Baynes, seconded by Susan Mercier, the Committee agreed to accept these letters of resignation with regrets and many thanks.

B. Returning from Leave of Absence

Dr. Weiss also mentioned that he received a letter from Teacher Bridget Mello stating she will return to her teaching job in September 2007 after taking this current year off for child-rearing purposes.

VI. Principal's Report

A. MCAS Update

Mrs. Lowell-Bettencourt spoke about the math workshop in Tisbury and Bill Attwood's presentation to the staff on writing for open response questions on the MCAS. She said it was nice to have someone address the writing piece with understanding and have it tie into math pieces. There was a meeting with math teachers for timeline in selecting new math programs. They are looking at two programs for K-5 and 6-8. The new programs should arrive this year so staff may review them over the summer. There is also an 8th grade algebra program to implement for next year. The goal is to look at raising the bar for everyone, taking an honest look at programs which align to state standards. The staff and the school unit as a whole must commit to a new K-8 approach. Mr. Baynes said the "acid test" is how the students do at the high school level. It is an indicator as to how things are going in the elementary schools.

B. Energy Audit

Mr. Fligor gave a review of the findings on the energy audit. The review revealed priorities and a list of cost saving possibilities. Finance Committee Representative Fred Condon said there is a need to move on the corrosion issue on vent pipes. There will also be an added expense for some items which will run over the regular budget, possibly resulting in a presentation at a special town meeting to provide information to the taxpayers.

VII. Old/New Business

The Committee voted to reorganize the officers and committee representatives. Mrs. Mercier will assume the role of Chairperson as of April 4, 2007. Mr. Baynes will remain as representative to the high school school committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Fligor
Secretary Pro Tem