



# Lunenburg Public Schools

Loxi Jo Calmes  
Superintendent of Schools

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING  
Wednesday, March 25, 2015  
T. C. Passios- 6:30 p.m.

## Minutes

School Committee  
Gregory Berthiaume  
Michael Mackin  
Colleen Shapiro  
Brendan Grady  
Heather Sroka

Superintendent  
Loxi Jo Calmes

Recording Secretary  
Liz Petersen

Student Representative  
Sophia Holman-absent

### Guests

Kerry Speidel, Town Manager  
Jessica Beardmore, LHS Foreign Language Faculty  
Tammy Yourk, LHS Foreign Language Faculty

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Call to Order: Dr. Gregory Berthiaume called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Chairs Report: Dr. Berthiaume stated

Review and Approve Minutes: There were minutes for approval.

- Regular Session 02-25-15 Minutes
- Emergency Session 03-19-15 Minutes. Scheduling discussion- take last paragraph out, amended to reflect that the meeting was adjourned prior to the discussion regarding scheduling a subsequent meeting.

Mr. Mackin made a motion to approve both sets of minutes as amended, Ms. Sroka seconded. **Vote: Unanimous**

Review and Approve Warrants: Warrants were on the table for signature, one line item transfer was discussed for Math department from math textbook line to math dues and fees line. \$100 remains in textbook line that can be used for this purpose. This funding will be used for bus transportation of students to the Elizabeth Haskins Math Contest on 4/17/15. Have purchased all textbooks to date, do not require funding for anything else in the math textbook line currently. Superintendent recommends approval. Mr. Mackin made a motion for approval, Ms. Sroka seconded, **Vote: Unanimous**

### Superintendent's Report:

- Superintendent Calmes reported that building progress is exciting and the site was very active today; look for updates on website & Facebook
- Please show support and wear purple tomorrow for epilepsy awareness day. Impacts over 50 million people worldwide. April 2<sup>nd</sup> is autism awareness day, please wear blue in support.
- Students and staff enjoying warmer temperatures recently, Primary students ecstatic to be able to have recess outside. Most of snow and ice dams removed off of roof. Thanked Mr. Londa for continuing to work with roofing folks and continue cleaning up damage in classrooms at LHS. Mr. Londa avoided excessive amount of damage with custodians by wet vacuuming regularly. Mr. Londa projected that students would be able to be back in classrooms by next Monday.

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- Superintendent Calmes indicated LHS music department was getting ready for the upcoming Guys and Dolls musical.
- MCAS starts next week, students are saying they are ready and focused in order to do their best.

Student Representative's Report: Ms. Holman absent, no report given.

School Building Committee Report – Mr. Mackin reported today was a long day for the work crew pouring of the slab on deck. Work began 7pm. Finish work won't be done until midnight as they are behind due to weather. Next will move to slab on grade in building "A". Making sure compaction is appropriate, no melting etc. so pouring is correct. Starting next week they will begin to excavate water to the site. Steel erection virtually finished, making sure it is to specifications. Beginning exterior framing, slope roof install on building "C", working in area "B". Have made abutters aware of any nighttime work. Ran 30 trucks today. Stood in "B" building for the first time-auditorium. Next SBC meeting April 8<sup>th</sup> at TCP Room #13.

Old Business:

- a. FY16 Proposed Budget Update-Town Manager & Superintendent: Governors budget released, \$47,000 moved back in to operational budget due to loss of kindergarten grant. Chapter 70 funding predicted \$90,000 more than town manager had projected. Circuit Breaker did not incur a loss, is at 75%, will fall to 65% next year according to the state projections. Superintendent Calmes presented to committee the level service budget document. Kindergarten grant eliminated so portions of salaries for a paraprofessional and teacher and some insurance has been added to the budget. Does not include the addition of teachers at the 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade level, or the reinstated ELA position at LHS. Doesn't contain BCBA. Ms. Hanscom still stressing the importance of this. There is \$100,000 of unanticipated expenses-should we use this for BCBA due to vulnerability of students and out of district placements. Will need more discussion of this. If we decide to do that, if we have any unanticipated out of district placements, we would have to consider possible layoffs to take out of our budget. Only other option is to ask for additional assistance mid-year from town. Never been necessarily in position of asking mid-year for finances. Try to have buffer in budget for this. As we look at our revolving accounts we do not have much flexibility. Nonresident virtually gone next year with just 2 students-18,000. Over at THMS Mr. Santry reported 30 students receiving help before school, happening at Primary also. A lot more students could benefit for it. Had asked for paraprofessionals to serve more students before/after school. Currently have 5 obligations from IEPs to provide one to ones-covering with subs. Continuity is compromised when you do this. Mr. Santry provided evidence of support students are getting from paraprofessionals and growth/benefits of students. Sustainability a concern. Ms. Hanscom spoke of out of district coordinator & Mr. Londa with needs of another maintenance person. Next year have transition needs. School nurse will be needed, special educator, maintenance. Will be sharing staff across district, specialists will be shared across buildings. Want to continue to provide health, art, music, tech-goals for future despite transition. Question as to uncertainty in federal grants. Appropriated by town meeting, we get monies, grant from state, grants-title 1 and special education funding always anticipate level funding-remain unknown until July. In regard to Choice 39 this year. 4 Choice students will graduate. Have received Choice applications for 5 students at 8<sup>th</sup> grade level, 4 students at 9<sup>th</sup> grade level. At 9 applicants for 4 we are losing. Important to understand that we may have to make cuts. Level service does not continue to fill position with full-time paraprofessionals but with substitutes. We are compliant because we are providing services. But continuity of stable environment is compromised. This definitely adds risks of more out of district placements. Do not have additional funding for paraprofessionals to provide services of extra hours before/after school. Lack of BCBA means that more students may go out of district because we can't minimize risk. We will prioritize and make the difficult decisions. Dr. Berthiaume expressed that level services as tremendously inadequate and unacceptable. Will need to add staff next year due to transition, how we do this without investing. Superintendent has predicted 6% over this year to bring us through next year. Ms. Speidel said no room in budget for wiggle. Got new growth report 145,000 higher from board of assessors-Finance Committee and BOS will have to allocate. All employees do great job in working with us in health insurance do better now than 4 years ago. Take in opportunities in utilities. Have capacity to do net reading,

solar project has paid out. All of these things together do not produce a million plus dollars. Dr. Berthiaume expressed that raising taxes via an override is only thing that will provide this. Particularly from DPW and public safety. Interest in roads and ambulance. Question is when is the right time to put in override? Ms. Speidel indicated many have asked, but no group except the School Committee has talked about it publically. Dr. Berthiaume indicated the benefit of an override happen this year to make smart investments for future. Right now considered a level 2 district because our sub-groups at THMS are not making adequate progress. Impacts property values and our kids' futures. Dr. Berthiaume thanked Ms. Speidel for way she balances budget, unfortunately does not have big pie to work with. With costs going up in health insurance and the work on the budget. Dr. Berthiaume would like override discussion to be on agenda for budget hearing. Need to make it clear that items on our budget are important enough to ask for an override in FY16. We would most likely need to do a special town meeting if this happens. Guidance from Ms. Speidel that there is an opportunity for new growth will be a number of spending requests for that. For Governors budget 40S-183,000 susceptible to being eliminated, but if you had items as one-time costs within budget like curriculum update. State typically does a joint resolution on local aid, have not heard whether they are doing this year. Superintendent Calmes indicated that \$116,000 was identified for possible one-time money expenditure. The House does not have to issue budget until end of April. Governor seems to be supportive of local government. Chapter 70 number was 90,000 more than what Town Manager included. Two communities receive that 40S aid. Have had a couple of dept. heads ask if someone will be asking for an override. Town government puts forth a level service budget but this doesn't necessarily meet demands. Dr. Berthiaume asked Supt. Calmes to emphasis level service budget and discrepancies at upcoming School Budget hearing.

- b. TCP Release – Need to set date with reuse committee. Mr. Mackin would like to know there is an opportunity for taking down TCP when they demolish old LHS. Would like to meet with reuse committee after April 6<sup>th</sup>. Dr. Berthiaume will send email with possible dates.
- c. School Committee Representative to Diversity Advisory Committee: Dr. Berthiaume volunteered to be on committee. Mr. Mackin made a motion, Ms. Sroka seconded. Vote Unanimous. Next week will appoint advisory committee.

New Business:

- a. Utility License Agreements: Supt. Calmes waiting license agreements from Town Counsel. The Easements will be on the town warrant. Recommended approval and authorization for Dr. Berthiaume to sign once received from Town Counsel. Mr. Mackin made motion, Ms., Shapiro seconded.
- b. Europe Trip 2016 Initial Approval: Ms. Beardmore discussed that Canada trip was wonderful-canoe race on St. Lawrence. Physical feat to dig into ice, wind. Another example of how they embrace winter. Students really glad to see this for first time. This trip has evolved and trouble with filling students for trip in past, so proposal this year was to combine together. Quick trip through France and Barcelona but tying it all together was Roman origins. Start in France, then Barcelona then to Rome. Trip was moved to summer so there is less stress because students won't have to miss school. Cost is a few hundred dollars more, but some students couldn't participate before because of activities. Can pay monthly, which works out better-can pay over longer time. 11 day trip total, leave on 16<sup>th</sup> of June. \$4149, but \$150 discount if they book by April 9<sup>th</sup>. Students excited. Grade 9-12. Superintendent Calmes recommended that students entering 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders and recently graduated 12<sup>th</sup> grade students are eligible to attend. She thanked Ms. Beardmore and her colleagues for the creativity in designing a trip that was appropriate for wider range of students. Superintendent recommend initial approval of the trip...Mr. Mackin made motion to grant initial approval. Ms. Sroka seconded. Vote Unanimous.
- c. Final Approval for Rome, Florence, and Venice Trip & Latin Convention: Supt. Calmes said that the trip will take place during April Break. Final price was \$3031 vs. \$3242. Five students and two adults attending. They leave 1:35pm on April 18<sup>th</sup>. Appropriate transportation and all liability insurance in place. Superintendent Calmes recommend final approval. Ms. Sroka made motion to grant final approval for the trip. Mr. Mackin seconded. Vote Unanimous. Superintendent Calmes also recommended final approval for the over-night trip for the annual Latin convention on May 1-

3 at Sturbridge host cost 185, anticipating 15 students 2 adults to attend. Motion by Mr. Mackin to grant final approval. Seconded by Ms. Sroka. Vote Unanimous.

- d. Paraprofessional Agreement Sick Leave Bank Eligibility Waiver Superintendent Calmes reviewed and recommended approval of a side letter agreement with the paraprofessionals to make sick leave bank available to an employee who has not been with district long enough to be a member of the bank. The employee has served as a long term substitute for several years. This agreement waives eligibility for this one individual. Dr. Berthiaume stated this is very generous of paraprofessionals. Mr. Mackin made motion to approve. Ms. Sroka seconded. Vote Unanimous, document signed.
- e. Donations: Superintendent Calmes acknowledged the Lunenburg Cultural Council's donation for the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade Plimoth Plantation trip and another Target donation to LHS of \$215.00.

Public Comment –Mr. Mackin mentioned this Friday the Boys and Girls club is holding the “Are you Smarter than a 5<sup>th</sup> Grader” event. Proceeds go to afterschool homework program for club.

Mr. Luck asked for clarification regarding the level service budget- no new hires, just replacement of retirees? Headcount doesn't change? Response – Yes that is correct. Mr. Luck inquired about health insurance. Response-Currently have 4 teacher retirements. 3 take insurance.

Dr. Berthiaume indicated that Superintendent Calmes provided the Town Manager with a projection for School Budget of 6% this year and 6% increase next year. Since we are not getting 6% this year, will need to recalculate for next year.

Ms. Luck asked for clarification- Is it correct that paraprofessionals can accumulate up to 180 sick days? Is it same for teachers? Response - Yes Question -When they resign or retire is there a buy out? Response – No there is no sick-leave buy back. Question from Ms. Luck, Does the school incur any expense in the trips presented? Response- No. Question - for Plimoth plantation do they have an extended day? Response – The bus doesn't get back until 5pm. Parents are responsible pick up all the students. Dr. Berthiaume wanted to make sure that everyone understood that there is no deferred benefit within the schools contracts. Teacher pension fund is self- funded.

Superintendent Calmes mentioned whenever we speak about TCP release it also means Brooks House. Currently we have a school program and a business renting space including FLLAC Collaborative and the Lunenburg Ledger. These groups need to be kept informed about any changes the Town is making when the School releases the property in 2016.

#### Reports

- a. Finance Committee – Dr. Berthiaume reported Finance Committee meets tomorrow
- b. School Councils – No reports
- c. PTO- Ms. Sroka reported had event \$7652.55 was taken in for parents' night. There was good attendance, the baskets were great. The PTO is considering continuing the Miles for Myles. They will only have 2 events annually. One in fall and one in the spring.
- d. Policy Sub-Committee- Dr. Berthiaume reported the sub-committee has completed work for this year.
- e. Capital Planning Committee – Ms. Sroka reported the committee is meeting next week.
- f. PAC/SAL – No report
- g. Re-Use: Mr. Mackin reported no quorum in March, next meeting April 6<sup>th</sup>
- h. Calendar Advisory Committee- No report
- i. Transition/Reconfiguration: posting is out for a stipend for teachers to be part of transition work groups during the summer. This will include a teacher from each grade level. Work scheduled for July 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> and two dates in August.
- j. Diversity Advisory Committee - To be appointed at next meeting.
- k. Start Time Sub-Committee: Met March 17<sup>th</sup>. Supt. Calmes reported that due to excessive cost the option of 1 bus run has been ruled. In 2016 the bus will return to 2 runs. School council are being asked to provide input; An FAQ will be developed. Superintendent Calmes will talk to administration more about impact for both younger and older students. A public forum is recommended and information should be available during open houses. The public forum should be televised – perhaps the October 7<sup>th</sup> meeting. Currently we are looking at an 8:10-8:15 start in at MS/HS and simply dropping the earliest

run. We have also surveyed other communities to determine their elementary start/end times. We also wanted to talk to Wellness Advisory about using this as an opportunity to speaking to parents about unplugging kids earlier at night.

Items for Future Discussion: Dr. Berthiaume indicated a need to meet and discuss the district improvement plan after the joint meeting with the Re-use Committee. We also need to schedule another meeting about the technology plan. Mr. Malandrinos is contacting the Google personnel to obtain additional information after the last workshop.

Adjournment – Mr. Mackin made a motion to adjourn regular session of the meeting at 8:05 p.m. Ms. Sroka seconded. **Vote: Unanimous**

Respectfully Submitted,

Liz Petersen  
Recording Secretary