



Town of Reading Meeting Minutes

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2023 MAY -4 PM 5:01

Board – Committee – Commission – Council:

School Committee

Date: 2022-08-29

Time: 7:00 PM

Building: Reading Memorial High School

Location: Library

Address: 62 Oakland Road, Reading, MA

Members Present: - Tom Wise, Shawn Brandt, Erin Gaffen, Carla Nazzaro, Chuck Robinson

Others Present: Superintendent Dr. Tom Milaschewski, Jen Stys, Susan Bottan

Minutes Respectfully submitted by: Susan E Brown on behalf of the chairperson

A. Call to order – Mr. Brandt opened the session at 7:00 pm and reviewed the agenda.

Ms. Nazzaro made a motion to take C1. New Staff Introductions out of order, seconded by Mr. Wise. Vote passed 5-0

C. Personnel Introductions

Dr. Milaschewski welcomed all the new Reading Public School employees and asked all the new staff who are present to introduce themselves to the community.

B. Routine Matters

Public Comment

Nancy Docktor – Pearl Street, commented that while she is happy that Killam is being addressed, the School Committee needs to address teacher's salaries to keep competitive and suggested \$10-15k per teacher increase.

Chris Haley – Fall Street Faire, 9/11/22, 12-5pm, many school community members will be volunteering in the dunk tank to raise funds for Reading Rotary and Ruff and Ready Dog Groomers. He then went through the schedule of those volunteering. For more details, please check out the website www.dunkthereadings.com

Consent Agenda

1. **Minutes** - Ms. Nazzaro moved to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Mr. Wise

Corrections to the previous meetings minutes are as follows: add adjournment time, add YouTube link.

Vote as amended – passed 5-0

Reports

2. Dr Stys reported on Lynn Lyons starts training staff with mental health assistance, help with anxiety etc.

We have cleared out years of SPED Records, that went back to 1980. They have all been scanned and digitized, eliminating many old files, and freeing up space, thanks to Fran Greene for spearheading, Denise, Andrew, Kristyn, Michelle from Central Office, all records will continue to be scanned for electronic storage going forward.

4. Ms. Bottan reported on the cafeteria mgrs. received training on new POS system, and the remaining staff will be trained on 8/30, as well as health and safety training for all café staff.

Regarding the Killam project – the 2 MSBA deliverables, education profile, and online projections were sent in ahead of schedule.

A quick update on school choice lottery, 5 applicants were received and accepted, for a total of 12 students to join RPS, the next lottery will be open in the Spring for next year.

The new website will be up and running very soon, that communication will come out soon.

5. Dr. Milaschewski reported that all teachers and staff are back in the buildings and a big shout out to our facilities team, they are fantastic, and the buildings look incredible going into the school year!

Thank you to the secretaries at all levels, without your support we would not be ready for the students.

Thank you to the IT team for your incredible work

Track update – we are back on track on the timeline Cape & Islands the vendor doing the track, got the work started on the topping of the track we are in the 2–4-week window, we are still on track to open Sept 23.

Update on Food Service Director – we lost initial candidate, and we are fortunate to have Catherine Franzetti who decided to accept our offer, recently culinary mgr at BPS 40 different kitchens, she has a forward-thinking way of working, she has some innovative and creative ways to serve the RPS community to ensure they are eating well balanced nutritious foods. She has opened scratch kitchens within BPS, Grab and Go Smoothies, working with local farm to table programs

6. Liaison Reports

Mr. Wise presented on Finance committee – financial forum planned for 9/21, policy subcommittee met this morning, went through procedure in the handbook for attendance, acknowledging absences, skip days policy review or repeal, student attendance policy, 2012 updates for head coverings etc., there will be 7 or 8 policy changes regarding head coverings, cataloging etc.

Mr. Robinson – Coalition meeting Wednesday no report at this time

Ms. Nazzaro - Killam Project Committee met, presentation will be reviewed tonight, there will be a formal hearing on 9/28, inviting the public to participate in the Killam project.

Mr. Brandt – there is Select Board on 8/30 and ARPA on 9/1.

Ms. Nazzaro made a motion to take E1 out of order, seconded by Mr. Wise, vote passed 5-0.

E. New Business – SY22/23 Beginning of School Update

Dr. Milaschewski presented the RPS Update, reviewed the summer academy success, METCO expansion, new staff, Killam building project update, new website, adaptive sports and RMHS Track renovation. Presentation in it's entirety is available in the packet.

The new Covid protocol –

We must obtain consent from each family for symptomatic testing, the nurse will get consent in the moment from the student's family, if a family refuses consent of symptomatic testing, the student will automatically be sent home, things will be fluid and things will change.

HR Update - RPS is looking for staffing for para educators, cafeteria manager and café workers, a few tutors and substitute teachers as well, community call to action to help fill these spots.

D. Old Business

1. Track naming committee – voting on the name of the RMHS Track be named for Hal Croft, Chuck Robinson, Christine Talbot, John Means, Carlo Bacci, Principal Tracey, Olivia Rotundo, (student) makes up the committee, the first meeting was a presentation from Mr. McFadden on naming the track after Hal Croft, there was a public forum meeting to allow for public input, the committee voted to recommend the track be named the Hal Croft Memorial Track, targeting September 30th, opening ceremony, per policy asking members of the public to comment on the naming, no discussion on the committee.
2. Motion made by Ms. Nazzaro to name the Reading Track after Mr. Hal Croft, seconded by Mr. Robinson passed 5-0.

Mr. Brandt called a recess – 10 Min

E. New Business

Ms. Nazzaro moved to take E4 Out of order - seconded by Mr. Wise, vote passed 5-0.

4. Public hearing for Killam Building committee although not required but we are having it public hearing to allow for public input.

We have a draft warrant article tonight for information purposes only

Sarah Leveque presenting on the need for the Killam project, this is a huge opportunity for the Reading community, Joe Huggins will also speak on the facilities portion,

Joe Huggins – presented Killam is the only school in town to not receive any major renovations built in 1967 and there was a new room put on and heating upgrades, and new windows, however there are deficiencies, it's not fully ADA compliant, the bathrooms, the entry points, in the common areas, stage, classrooms as well. The building has been maintained, the doors are the original doors, and many of the windows, the lead in the drinking water, regular monitoring is done, also providing drinking water bubblers of spring water because all of the building water supplies needs to be replaced, not all

building is fire suppression system, due to age of building, not good access, site lines to the main doors, making it not a secure site, issues with water infiltration around the foundation, few classrooms that are only accessible by entering another classroom, making it difficult to egress, the building is constantly being maintained as best as possible, however the addition of those items to renno, is extremely costly, it's reached the end of its useful life to maintain a usable school building.

Sarah Leveque, from an educational standpoint, they do the best they can with the limitations of the building, the student complexities, require more space than they have, the school has hit its max potential. The shared spaces in the middle of each wing of the school, unable to think of space for sped multilingual learners, they create natural barriers with temp walls and furniture, gen ed students who need extra push or concept review, there is not private space to help students as needed, the older closet spaces are being turned into office space, no windows, low ventilation and heating options in those spaces, some rooms only accessed by walking through another classroom limiting the learning experience. The Learning center holds 3 staff and it's very small, PT, OT Speech are being all shared and maximizing schedules, there is no room to expand, storage is a major issue with Killam, where things can safely be put away to not hinder fire code, The RISE Preschool at Killam needs space for sped, outdoor play, and they are maxed out in what can be done. How do we meet the potential of students and staff while meeting the challenges put forth by the limitation of the building.

Killam School Building Committee was called to order

Comments from the Committee

Mr. Wise, thank you to Joe and Sarah for presenting tonight we want to be sure we present on the real problems, lead in the water, staff in closets, classrooms in locker rooms, no proper SPED Program space, opening us to OCR violations. Focusing on the essential needs.

Ms. Gaffen – visited Killam elementary school, and agrees we need to focus on the physical condition of Killam to show the need and then the programmatic needs at Killam and RISE, enrollment numbers are one thing, but the needs of students need to be met and to keep high needs students in district we need to ensure that we have the space available to meet those needs.

Mr. Robinson – from a historical perspective we cannot go to MSBA without an enrollment problem, we need to take advantage.

Ms. Nazzaro – this is not just a Killam issue, it's a district issue, this is an opportunity as a town and as a district, we need to encourage town meeting members to come Sept 8 to see the school as a town issue, not just a school issue.

Mr. Brandt – targeted outreach to the town to ensure they see what the challenges are at Killam to bring to life those issues for the town.

Ms. McLaughlin – we make an investment in the one school we are investing in all our schools, it will add value to our town not just to one school.

Dr. Stys - we are having site visits for TFM for civil rights review, and all of the issues right now at Killam getting PT, OT, Speech, ADA Compliance etc. need to be addressed.

Dr. Milaschewski – transition to Dale Gienapp from Gienapp Architects

Gienapp presentation in its entirety is available in the packet.

Public Comment

Ed Ross Fin Comm Chair – Kensington Avenue Reading, the context does matter, don't set faulty expectations with regards to what the ask is from the town. Need to have a lot of transparency in this long process of getting approval for this project.

Mr. Brandt – Draft Warrant article in the packet, description, amt, funding source and parcel description, worked with town counsel to assist in the draft of this document, the language must state it's not just a replacement of the building but could be a renovation or rebuild, the committee will hold a public hearing next week and vote on the 15th to submit a warrant article for Town Meeting in November.

Killam School Building Committee was adjourned.

3. Handbook Updates – approving the updates soon as a committee.

Dr. Milaschewski - stated there a lot of inconsistencies in all the handbooks, we need to have a district wide handbook to cover across all schools in the district. Each school would also have their own handbook to address school-specific elements.

Ms. Rochelle Rubino presented on the changes that are being made in the Parker Middle School Handbook. The changes are noted in the packet.

Mr. Kevin Tracey presented on RMHS handbook changes; those changes are noted in the packet.

6. Ms. Batton presented on the updating of the RPS Website, the district has worked with many of the community, parents, and school community to improve the website, there were 11 members of a committee to make improvements, with content and ease of use.

Ms. Gaffen motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Wise. Vote passed 5-0. Meeting adjourned at 10:39 pm