



School Committee

Provincetown School Committee Meeting

**PROVINCETOWN HIGH SCHOOL
ELMER I. SILVA LEARNING CENTER
12 Winslow Street
PROVINCETOWN, MA 02657**

**Tuesday
September 7, 2010
5:00 p.m.**

Members Present: Peter Grosso, Shannon Patrick, and Lory Stewart.

Members Absent: Kerry Adams

Staff: Dr. Beth Singer, Superintendent
Kim Pike, District Principal

Others Present: Entire Board of Selectmen: Elaine Anderson,
David Bedard, Michele Couture, Austin Knight,
and John Santos.
Sharon Lynn, Town Manager
David Gardner, Assistant Town Manager

Each Board was called to order by its respective Chair at approximately 5:05 p.m.

AGENDA

JOINT MEETING WITH BOARD OF SELECTMEN (BoS)

Interview(s) and Selection of School Committee Candidate(s)

There were originally two candidates who applied, Cass Benson and David Cleveland. David Cleveland sent word in that he had a prior commitment and would be unable to attend tonight's meeting, thus there was only one candidate, Cass Benson.

Both chairs of the attending Boards agreed that they didn't want to wait for any other applicants. Peter Grosso worried that they are currently a committee of three and should any one person be unable to attend – they would be left without a quorum. Also, the budget season is fast arriving and it's imperative that meetings be held expediently.

Cass Benson fielded many questions from both Boards. She has two children who will be starting school the next morning and both will be entering kindergarten and this feeds her interest in the School Committee. Also her qualifications include being a CPA and also a former employee of KPMG, a public accounting firm. She is also a former chair of the Licensing Committee, a real estate broker and developer, as well as a local business owner.

Peter said that the school committee is time consuming and he painted a dire picture of the time commitment. He also detailed the meeting schedule and asked if she had a conflict with that (Tuesday's at 5:00 p.m.)? All was agreeable with Cass.

Additionally he cited the training required for school committee members and it takes place in Hyannis. Peter said that it's very enlightening and the course teaches you about the law and what you can and can't do.

Beth said that school committee members are charged with overseeing mainly four aspects of the schools (budget, negotiations, policy and superintendent) and she asked where Cass saw her strengths. The answer was that probably finance and budgets would fit her level of expertise.

Then it was the BoS' turn to interview and Elaine Anderson asked the first question: "What is a KPMG?" After that query was satisfied – Elaine said she also had a burning question: "How do you feel about pet friendly shelters?"

Michele Couture then asked, "Why do you want to do this and what do you think you can contribute?" Cass answered that she had already answered this question; she wants to see the schools succeed. Michele then asked, "Do you have any visions yourself?" Cass said that she has visions for the town – not specifically the school.

Austin Knight asked, "What do you see as the challenges?" Answer: Obviously the numbers of students are a worry.

David Bedard said that in the past we've had uncontested races which are not ideal.

Michele then asked Cass if she had any possible strategies for introducing new students into the system. This didn't receive any response.

Board of Selectmen's motion:

Motion: Move to appoint Cass Benson to the vacant School Committee position expiring on May 2, 2011. It was then moved to call for a roll call vote and each member of the BoS polled voted in favor of the motion. 5-0-0

School Committee's motion:

Motion: Move to accept the prior motion from the BoS with a roll call vote from each member of the School Committee who were polled and voted individually for the motion. 3-0-0

Elaine Anderson said that she felt that soon the school will be teeming with children.

Sharon Lynn's Update

Sharon Lynn said that she had a meeting today and the building assessment of town buildings has begun. She conducted a walk-thru of the buildings involved. Dr. Singer was very helpful leading us through the school and Sharon wanted to thank her publicly for making the building accessible to the assessment team.

Michele C. said that she had had a conversation with the chair of the animal welfare committee to ask her to consider having the VMES designated as a shelter for animals. She's sure that Candace Nagle will raise the funds necessary in no time. "Pets and people go hand in hand and it puts a lot of people in jeopardy if there is no animal shelter."

Beth said that on tonight's agenda there is a discussion on this and when Candace finalizes the plan she will come before the school committee for a vote.

Peter said that we know how attached people get to their pets. It has been reported that 40% of people refused rescue during Katrina if they couldn't take their pets.

Michele has pets and wouldn't leave them either.

Public Comments

There were none.

Minutes: August 3rd, 2010

Kim Pike took the minutes because Evelyn was attending her granddaughter's funeral.

Motion: Move to approve the minutes of the August 3rd meeting as amended.

Motion: Shannon Patrick Seconded: Lory Stewart Vote: 3-0-0.

Superintendent's Update:

▪ **Opening of School**

Tomorrow is the 1st day of school and we have 29 pre schoolers. There will be 50 students in K-8. A number of applicants came in just today for WeeCare in Provincetown. Then there was a detail of new personnel, etc.

One of the new staff members is our district receptionist and we're almost set up for her. She will handle all calls and will be located at the front desk.

Peter asked about the new entrance to the High School. You don't come in via the front steps. People will park in the Grace Hall lot and enter the school from the back door. The front door will be locked and the parking lot door will be open (H-04). Also, the adult bathrooms will have the locks taken off their doors. This was welcome information to one of the School Committee members who found the bathroom door locked during the break between the PSC meeting and the Executive Session!

Kim said that we've put signs up announcing where the entrance is. Shannon would like something on the bricks to let people know how to get in.

Beth gave a list of returning teachers and explained that some have different responsibilities. She also named the new faculty.

Also, today we began our professional development program for the year. We'll be learning in two groups – one will be focused on "Imagine It" a new reading program and the other group will be learning how to teach thinking through technology. Soon, we'll all be learning a foreign language, too.

▪ **Agenda for 2010-11**

We anticipate moving into the formal IB program application. We will also be spending a great deal of time working in the community. We will be involved in community service learning and projects and learning about our community and environment. We will begin to prepare for stage 2 of our re-organization –

mostly into this building. We are also continuing to negotiate with Nauset. We will be negotiating all employee contracts this coming year.

We're going to build and advertise the 3Rs program: rigor, relevance, and relationships.

We expect infants to begin September 15th; the toddlers have been here since July. The school's goal is to support families, to give kids an early start early and also to attract a population of kids.

Peter asked some practical questions: Will there be a sliding scale fee or a specific fee? Answer: We have funds to help families out so some families who qualify, don't have to pay anything. We have an adjustment for siblings.

Peter then asked – do we have all the 10, 11, and 12 grades returning. There was not a definitive answer to this particular question – save the statement, “If you take the 9th at Nauset and the seniors who graduated last year, we're running O.K.” - Some students have left, some new students have arrived.

Massachusetts was awarded monies in the second round of race to the top funding which I understand will be about \$22/student and shouldn't have much of an impact on us. The bulk of money will go into large districts like Holyoke and Springfield.

Beth said that she has written recovery money grants – for professional development training, etc. We didn't hire anyone with that money and the money is helpful but we have to be creative.

Unfinished Business:

Pet Emergency Shelter letters

There then ensued a discussion on supportive letters which had been received; the one you don't have is from the tourism office. They were all very supportive. Beth walked through VMES with a committee working on this issue. The issue is not easy: pets need water, they have to enter the building separately, and supplies have to be available. They are working on that and that's what the animal group will be bringing to you. There will be a veterinarian to treat the animals and a place for quarantine. Further, they have to be separate from people who might be allergic or afraid. Candace will probably be ready to present a plan at the next meeting.

New Business:

Superintendent Evaluation

The school committee has evaluated the superintendent and she has come through with flying colors and Peter feels it would be prudent to check **above and beyond** as part of Beth's evaluation.

Beth would like to add district goals – she thinks if we start with the 5 items turned into the district goals they could be the start for the school year.

Lory said she'd like to go on record as being opposed to moving the younger children to the high school building. She feels that there is a portion of this building that can be used for middle school children but for younger children she's opposed to moving them here due to the dangerous stairs.

Peter said that the placement of the children (age-wise) would be appropriate. Beth countered that this building (high school) is in much better condition. The VMES has leaks and is the poorer building; the high school building has spaces that can't be duplicated in the other building. Beth said that that was the basis for the thinking but it's an ongoing discussion. There has not been a decision on the disposition of the VMES building.

Peter said that the town is not taking it away; we're giving it away! Today Beth started to make a list and the playground is the only real asset the VMES has.

Job Descriptions:

- **District Principal's Adm. Assistant**
- **District Receptionist**

The above job descriptions were presented for the 1st reading.

Line Item Transfer Request FY-11

A brief explanation was presented and then the following motion was made:

Motion: Move to approve the line item transfer of \$8,800 from 10-2305-15-100-155 to 10-2305-15-101-151.

Motion: Lory Stewart

Seconded: Shannon Patrick

Vote: 3-0-0

PSC Comments

Peter said that he saw an article about MCAS and one of the people on the sub committee said they would only approve eliminating MCAS if it is replaced with a tougher test. Some people said that they are good tools but they should not be a requirement.

The main meeting adjourned 6:30 p.m.

**Executive Session:
Grievance Hearing**

Respectfully submitted,
Evelyn Rogers Gaudiano

Approved by the School Committee on October 5, 2010

Peter Grosso, Chairperson