

BRISTOL WARREN REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

WORKSHOP/MEETING

MONDAY, MAY 8, 2006

The monthly workshop/meeting of the Bristol Warren Regional School Committee was held in the Cafeteria of Mt. Hope High School, 199 Chestnut Street, in Bristol, RI, on Monday, May 8, 2006. The Chairperson, Marjorie J. McBride, called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00 p.m.

Present: Marjorie J. McBride, William A. Estrella, Jr., William M. O'Dell, Thomas E. Skuba, Paul Brule, Joyce M. Kinsella, John P. Saviano, Paul Silva and Beverly Travers; Edward P. Mara, Superintendent; Donna Bettencourt-Glavin, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Grants; and Jane F. Correia, Director of Administration and Finance

Absent: none

OPENING BUSINESS

All present were invited to join in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

RHODE ISLAND FOUNDATION PRESENTATION

Dr. Mara explained that Bristol Warren is exploring the possibility of establishing an Education Foundation and asked the RI Foundation to provide information to the School Committee. He introduced Mr. Owen Heleen, Director of Special Funds, who described the RI Foundation—a community foundation founded in 1916, has \$500M total assets, made up of 950 individual funds. Three communities--Westerly, South Kingstown and Chariho, have worked with the Foundation to establish educational endowment funds and connect donors with their school district mission; each has established a committee separate from, but working closely with, their school committees. Mr. Ben Middleton, Philanthropic Adviser, said the huge amount of their total assets gives access to the brightest and best investment managers; 85% equities to 15% income; nothing is short term; they are cost effective—1% net payback of investment fees, 1.8 and 2.2% of fair market value of funds on an annual basis; in the past three years, their fund is up almost 44%; we access a maximum of 4.5% of fair market value of funds that grow for perpetuity; arrangements are flexible and personalized; they oversee over 120 organizational endowments; fees and returns are extremely competitive. In response to concerns from the School Committee, Mr. Heleen and Mr. Middleton explained: Their staff will support our development of RFP's and community education; the three successful communities set up 501C status (with which the Foundation assists), solicit individual donors and do an annual appeal through the mail and fundraising; the Foundation helps with

fundraising strategies and any kind of asset is acceptable, such as real estate; to avoid overwhelming donors with requests for donations, the key is to provide a range of choices, success is based upon the strength of the message; there are no guarantees of future value other than the track record of the Foundation. Mr. Middleton stressed that this is an irrevocable transfer of assets, the School Committee will have no influence over the investment or policies of the fund. Mr. Heleen mentioned that they are bound by law and by-laws to follow donor intent as closely as possible; strong liaisons have always been maintained with school boards. Mr. Skuba commented that an education foundation was talked about in 1997 and help from the RI Foundation is valuable because it is difficult for a school board to do on their own. Dr. Mara reiterated that the funds are created to provide additional opportunities for our students, not to supplement the budget; it would be called the Kickemuit Educational Foundation since the Kickemuit River runs through both towns. The RI Foundation has worked with 7 or 8 communities—2 never got it together, some are still working and 3 are doing great; start up amounts have ranged from 0 to a few hundred dollars. Should the State decide to restructure and combine school districts in the future, the funds would remain solely for Bristol and Warren students by virtue of the by-laws. Dr. Mara said we do have by-laws that have been reviewed by our attorney. Mrs. McBride feels this is a very good thing for our community.

HUGH COLE BUILDING PROJECT PRESENTATION BY ARCHITECT

Mrs. McBride publicly thanked several people who worked very hard to get the water supply to Hugh Cole School repaired after a water main was broken by National Grid during construction, including Bristol County Water Authority, Warren Fire Department, National Grid, Clean Harbor, and Farrar and Associates. She also thanked the Hugh Cole staff for their patience and especially Robert Pugh and George Simmons, who work tirelessly for the District.

Roland Robert, Architect for the Hugh Cole Project, presented the site plans pointing out an increase of parking spaces from 46 currently to 153 with room for 10 buses although only 7 are anticipated, a separate lane for parent drop off and a rotary for traffic turn around. They are developing a grassy area along the road to soften the look. When school is not in session, the parking lot will be used by the adjacent ball fields. Lighting will be on poles with boxes so the light shines down.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Linda Formica, representing the Asylum Road Neighborhood Association, expressed the following concerns about the Hugh Cole Project: when can they see the landscaping plans and curbing plans; why is there not more landscaping planned; where is the K drop off; safety of the students is a concern; they would like reassurances there will not be a reenactment of past years; Town of Warren feels

the same. The School Committee cannot respond at this time; however, Mr. Robert and Mr. Lindemann met with the group separate from the meeting to answer their questions.

ROCKWELL BUILDING COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Skuba reported the Committee approved the change order for the bus loop in the amount of \$295,766 which must be completed by June 30, 2006 for housing aid reimbursement. Although the amount is higher than was projected at first due to the rise in cost of materials over the past year, the project is still within the \$1.7M allocated.

BUDGET/FACILITIES SUBCOMMITTEE

Mr. Skuba said administration is in the process of making the necessary cuts to the budget; the Committee will meet before May 22nd (date to be determined) to identify recalls of laid off staff. Mrs. Correia added that every non-tenured teacher has been laid off and that over \$70,000 was spent in unemployment payments last year because some recalls were not made until August.

PERSONNEL/CONTRACT SUBCOMMITTEE

Mr. Silva reported that every member turned in their evaluation of the

Superintendent; he will prepare a compilation of scores.

Mr. Estrella reported a preliminary contract negotiation meeting with Council 94 is scheduled for May 15th at 5:00 PM; he will report out to the full Committee.

POLICY/COMMUNITY AFFAIRS SUBCOMMITTEE

Ms. Travers had nothing new to report; the May 15th meeting is rescheduled to May 22nd at 5:30 PM.

CHAIRPERSON'S UPDATE ON DISTRICT ISSUES

Bristol Fourth of July Activities: Mrs. McBride stated that it was reported to her and Dr. Mara that the plans to move the Fourth of July functions that normally take place at Colt School to the Guiteras School would act to punish the downtown business owners. Mrs. McBride asked the Committee to endorse the use of the Colt School front lawn for concerts with full knowledge that the building, parking lot, restrooms and changing areas are strictly inaccessible. There would be no greater level of liability than in the past. Alternate arrangements will be made for the Mt. Hope band to change after the parade. Mr. Saviano motioned for School Committee endorsement of the above. All approved.

BWEA Contract: Mrs. McBride reported an amendment to the

teachers' contract is in the works; it will be distributed to the Committee.

SUPERINTENDENT'S RECOMMENDATIONS AND ISSUES

Dr. Mara had none at this time.

ADJOURNMENT – 8:34 PM

There being no further business to discuss, Mr. Estrella, seconded by Mr. Brule, motioned to adjourn at 8:34 PM. The vote was unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

William M. O'Dell, Secretary

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