

School Committee Members: Mr. Stewart, Ms. Silvers, Ms. Rundle, Ms. Sahn, Ms. Sparhawk, Mr. Batacchi, Mr. Valentini, Ms. Fields

Absent: Mr. Sears

Administration: Mr. Hastings, Mr. Turner, Mr. Devoti

Others: Mr. Charles Ketchen, Chair, Alford Select Board; Mr. Eric Munson, Sheffield Police Chief; Ms. Susan Rathbun, Sheffield Police Officer; Ms. Angel Rote; Ms. Linda Higgins

Press: CTSB TV; Ms. Julie Ruth, Berkshire Record

1. Chairman Stewart called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m. In deference to Police Chief Munson and Officer Rathbun, he moved to Item #6, District Safety Program. He requested executive session in order to discuss the deployment of security personnel and/or devices and strategies relating to security. He said that the Committee would return to open session immediately following.

The Committee then voted as follows:

Ms. Silvers	yes	Ms. Rundle	yes	Ms. Sahn	yes
Ms. Sparhawk	yes	Mr. Valentini	yes	Mr. Batacchi	yes
Ms. Fields	yes				

The Committee entered into executive session at 6:13 p.m.

The Committee came out of executive session at 6:26 p.m.

The meeting resumed at 6:27 p.m.

2. **Approval of Minutes:**

Ms. Silvers moved, seconded by Mr. Batacchi, to approve the minutes of Meeting #1,479. It was so voted.

3. **Communications from the Audience Pertaining to this Evening's Agenda**

A. There were no communications from the audience.

4. **Business:**

A. Superintendent's Report: Superintendent Hastings reported that he had met with the New Marlborough Select Board on September 3. At the Select Board's request, Ms. Groener had given a presentation on New Marlborough Central School.

Mr. Hastings also reported the following:

- He received a letter from Dr. James Thompson on behalf of the Class of 1964.
- Deanna LeBlanc will begin her duties as Elementary Assistant Principal on Sept. 22.

- Ms. Sheela Clary will write a grant for the six district collaborating schools (Southern Berkshire Shared Services Project). \$300,000 will be requested.
- The recently acquired exercise equipment will be checked out by a representative from Berkshire Nautilus.
- Undermountain is holding an open house this evening; the middle school held its open house the previous evening.
- The Mt. Everett Band will march at the Lee Founders' Day Parade on September 20.
- Thirty chickens are being temporarily housed in the elementary area in a cage that can be moved to new grass, as necessary. This farm to table project may grow in the spring.
- Artist Ann Jon will fund a trip for Mr. Wolgemuth's class to go to the Mount in Lenox to view the artwork there.
- Senior Max Lowenstein is a National Merit Scholarship Semi-finalist.
- The Rotary Club has donated \$1,000 to fund the trip to China for Seniors Kosta Casivant and Max Lowenstein.
- The annual 7th grade balloon launch happened on September 17.
- Over 30% of the District's students now have applied and are eligible to receive free and reduced lunches, thus far for 2014-15. This represents a potentially significant increase.
- New Marlborough Central School will hold its annual harvest supper on Sept. 25.
- Erica Clark has been hired as the Education Support Professional at the South Egremont School.

Ms. Silvers commented favorably on the common lunch time for the high school students.

Mr. Stewart announced that Mr. Valentini will be honored on November 7 as District VI School Committee member of the year. Other members offered congratulations on the honor.

B. Request for Approval of Overnight Field Trip to Louisville, KY, October 28 through November 2, 2014 for FFA: Ms. Sparhawk moved, seconded by Ms. Rundle to approve this trip. It was so voted, unanimously.

C. Subcommittee/Representative Reports:

- Cooperation Subcommittee: Mr. Stewart reported that the Shared Services Committee, chaired by Representative Pignatelli, has met three times and will meet again on September 26 to work on ways to share services in order to improve the quality of education for students.
- Buildings, Grounds and Technology Subcommittee: Mr. Valentini updated the Committee regarding the boilers and roof project. He said that the project manager and engineers have been assigned by the SBA. He reported that the project will be more extensive than originally thought, and it will cost in the range of \$6 million, of which the state will participate at 40%. He said that the District will need to float a bond for approximately \$3.6 million, and it will be necessary for all five towns to hold special town meetings to approve the project. The Subcommittee is working to get the specific numbers together.

Mr. Flynn arrived at 6:51 p.m.

Mr. Valentini also reported on projects accomplished during the summer, including the following: a Scag mower and a carpet cleaner have been purchased; the soccer field has been re-graded; painting at New Marlborough Central School is in progress; carpet and tile has been replaced in some rooms; the gym floor has been resurfaced, and the volleyball court has been repositioned; the ceiling tiles in both cafeterias and the kitchen have been replaced; and some work was accomplished at the South Egremont School. He also reported that the

garden next to the Yellow House is being turned into a reflective garden, with SADD becoming involved in the project, and Mr. Von Ruden's class has made some benches for the area. Ms. Sahn has taken on the project of designing new signs for the District's buildings. There are no XP computers left in the District. The department is also taking out old televisions and installing flat screens. Travis Daly has requested a new light board and some stage extensions be included in a future budget. Additional information will be necessary. \$25,000 has been dedicated in the FY'15 budget toward a kitchen upgrade at New Marlborough Central School. Mr. Turner will work with Mr. Tranfaglia to develop a kitchen which will not be a commercial kitchen, but will be a "nice kitchen".

Preliminary discussions have begun regarding cooperative efforts for the community schools. Mr. Valentini said that those schools have suffered from neglect over the past six years, and although the District will not be able to engage in huge capital projects, it will need to take on ordinary maintenance projects. Mr. Valentini said that the Subcommittee wishes to enter into dialogue with each town to develop a cooperative effort for the maintenance of these buildings.

- Finance Subcommittee: Mr. Valentini reported on the Finance Subcommittee meeting held earlier in the evening. He said that from 2006 through 2014, the District's budgets have increased 2% on average, but with wide fluctuations. He stated that the Finance Subcommittee will work on a way to use E & D to level out the fluctuations in the budgets to allow the towns predictability.
- Executive Evaluation Subcommittee: Mr. Flynn asked that members whose complete evaluations did not get through to him re-send in a Word document by October 7. He said that he and Chairman Stewart will compile the results for presentation at the October 9 School Committee meeting.
- Transportation Subcommittee: Mr. Batacchi reported that the subcommittee is awaiting cost figures from Lower Pioneer Valley Educational Collaborative for evaluating the District's routes. He said that the Subcommittee is also still working on getting a bus from New Marlborough Central School to the Sheffield campus at the end of the day and getting a bus to Great Barrington at 3:00 p.m. Mr. Valentini added that the Subcommittee will support the administration seeking other contractors, if the current contractors cannot fulfill the needs of the District.
- Negotiations Subcommittee: Mr. Stewart reported that Mr. Rapport has asked to start negotiations for Units A and E. Mr. Stewart said that he will begin without engaging counsel until and unless it becomes necessary.

D. Financial Updates/Transfers

- Request to establish a student activities account for the Class of 2018: Mr. Flynn moved, seconded by Mr. Batacchi, to establish a student activities account for the class of 2018. It was so voted, unanimously.

It was agreed that the Committee would receive the Audit Report in October.

Ms. Sahn left the meeting at 7:11 p.m.

Mr. Flynn moved, seconded by Mr. Batacchi, to adjourn. It was so voted, and the meeting adjourned at 7:12 p.m.

Documents presented for this meeting:

- *Agenda, Meeting #1,480*
- *Minutes, Meeting #1, 479*
- *Request for Approval of an Overnight Field Trip to Louisville, KY for the Mt. Everett FFA*
- *Invitation to the Annual Harvest Supper and Book Fair at New Marlborough Central School*