

**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
100 MAPLE AVENUE  
SHREWSBURY, MASSACHUSETTS**

**MINUTES OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Wednesday, February 14, 2018**

Present: Dr. Dale Magee, Chairperson; Mr. Jon Wensky, Vice Chairperson; Ms. Sandy Fryc, Secretary; Ms. Erin Canzano; Mr. Jason Palitsch; Mr. Patrick Collins, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations; Ms. Amy B. Clouter, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction; Ms. Barb Malone, Director of Human Resources; and Dr. Joseph Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools.

A complete audio/visual recording of this meeting is available on the Shrewsbury Public Schools website.

The meeting was convened by Dr. Magee at 7:00 pm.

**I. Public Participation**

None.

**II. Chairperson's Report & Members' Reports**

Dr. Magee expressed concern and sorrow for victims of the mass shooting earlier in the day at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, and requested a moment of silence.

**III. Superintendent's Report**

Dr. Sawyer also expressed his sadness at the news that as many as 17 high school students were killed in the school shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. He noted that, as a school district, Shrewsbury Public Schools (SPS) continue to work to plan for potential crises, and that a previously scheduled drill was already planned for the following day to determine how best to handle reunification of students and families if there were to be a school shooting.

Separately, he added that he was proud of Shrewsbury High School (SHS) students for performing over 110,000 hours of community service since 2012, noting a recent ceremony at halftime of a boys' basketball game was attended by Lt. Gov. Karyn Polito; Secretary of Energy & Environmental Affairs and former State Rep., Matt Beaton; Rep. Hannah Kane,; and Sen.

Michael Moore. All of these officials gave citations to commemorate this outstanding collective achievement. Dr. Sawyer also noted he attended an outstanding Black History Month Assembly at SHS the prior morning, adding that the messages sent through student-made videos, musical performances, poetry, and dance, were both poignant and inspirational, and that the assembly's theme connected to what we want our students to do as citizens: "Step up, stand up, and speak up."

#### **IV. Time Scheduled Appointments:**

##### **A. Campaign for Shrewsbury Athletic Fields: Vote to Approve Memorandum of Understanding with Shrewsbury Youth Soccer and Vote to Accept Gift**

Mr. Collins gave a brief history of the Campaign for Shrewsbury Athletic Fields, provided a description of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Shrewsbury Youth Soccer (SYS) - SYS would donate \$100,000 to be used exclusively for the installation of a synthetic turf field at the SHS stadium, and in return SPS would treat this donation as a prepaid credit towards future (discounted) rental costs of the field by SYS. SYS President Jay Brann then addressed the Committee. He acknowledged SYS Board Members who were in attendance at the meeting (Christine Brann, Mike Pacy, Roy Pedersen, Andrea Lowy, Iqbal Kahn, Deb Mooney, Matt Dowd, and Allen Jarrell), discussed the partnership between SPS and SYS, and read a prepared statement.

On a motion by Ms. Fryc, seconded by Mr. Palitsch, the Committee voted unanimously to accept a gift of \$100,000 from Shrewsbury Youth Soccer for the Campaign for Shrewsbury Athletic Fields, per the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding between the School Department and Shrewsbury Youth Soccer.

Dr. Magee requested a brief recess at 7:11 pm so a photo could be taken of the Committee, SYS Board Members in attendance, and SPS Administrators. The meeting reconvened at 7:14 pm.

On a motion by Mr. Palitsch, seconded by Ms. Fryc, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the memorandum of understanding between the Shrewsbury Public Schools and Shrewsbury Youth Soccer that specifies the terms of an agreement regarding providing future access for Shrewsbury Youth Soccer to the Shrewsbury High School synthetic turf field in return for a \$100,000 donation to enable the construction of the synthetic turf field.

##### **B. Special Education & Pupil Personnel Services: Annual Program & Budget Report**

Ms. Meg Belsito, Director of Special Education and Pupil Personnel Services, gave an annual report that included information on mission and values; current areas of focus; student demographics; state averages; disability categorizations; placement options; staffing data; Circuit Breaker funding (which has been trending down since FY16) and the loss of the 274 Grant; out-of-district programming (which has decreased as in-district program opportunities have increased); transportation; contracted services; challenges (relative to Summer Special Education and Educational Learning Center (ELC) caseloads); clinical rounds and recommendations for mental and behavioral health assistance (which historically have peaked at Grades 7-8); and recommendations for FY19 relative to personnel and resources. Ms. Belsito concluded by summarizing how the goals of the department align with the newly approved 2018-2022 Strategic Priorities for the district.

Committee members noted the shift from out-of-district to in-district placements, and expressed their appreciation for the thoughtful data analysis in the report. Ms. Belsito provided clarifying information on the rights of parents relative to changes around 504 plan eligibility and notification, the co-teaching model at elementary schools, and the Transitions program at SHS. The Committee acknowledged the significant challenges associated with decreasing Circuit Breaker funding, and Ms. Canzano suggested that the Committee consider reaching out to State Rep. Hannah Kane and State Sen. Michael Moore for assistance in this regard.

## **V. Curriculum**

None.

## **VI. Policy**

### **A. School Year Calendar for 2018-2019: Vote**

Dr. Magee noted that the draft school calendar was presented to the Committee at the meeting on January 31, 2018, and was posted afterward for public viewing, and advised that the Committee had received eight emails with suggestions and concerns relative to the calendar. He advised that the school start date is largely contractually defined, and gave a brief history of how the work of the Calendar Committee, surveys, and data from other districts was utilized to create past calendars as well as the calendar proposed for 2018-19.

The Committee thanked respondents for their feedback regarding the calendar and noted the importance of periodically surveying parents and families, and reviewing other district's calendars. Dr. Sawyer suggested conducting a survey in advance of creating next year's calendar.

On a motion by Ms. Canzano, seconded by Mr. Palitsch, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the proposed 2018-2019 School Year Calendar.

On a motion by Mr. Palitsch, seconded by Ms. Canzano, the Committee voted unanimously to survey parents, faculty, and other districts regarding the calendar as has been done in the past.

## **VII. Finance & Operations**

### **A. Fiscal Year 2019 Budget: Update**

Mr. Collins' and Dr. Sawyer's update included a financial overview of the current status of the proposed budget. The Town Manager's Recommendation shows a gap of \$2,536,028, or -4.06%, from the Superintendent's Recommended Budget, which reflects different methodologies and not a difference in philosophy. Other topics included the recent appropriation history; information on the state budget process and declining Circuit Breaker funding; and information on the local budget process that included a timeline. Their summary noted: the initial gap is \$2,536,028; significant additional revenue is unlikely; administration is beginning

reduction planning; and the magnitude of the gap will jeopardize the district's ability to maintain existing program while addressing mandates, enrollment growth, and strategic priorities.

Committee members noted recurrent stress on the annual budget relative to decreasing state and federal funding and increasing costs due to normal inflation, and reiterated the importance of fully funded Circuit Breaker reimbursement.

Noting Ms. Canzano's earlier comments relative to communication around Circuit Breaker funding, Mr. Palitsch made a motion for the Committee to send a letter to their local delegation as well as other relevant members of the legislature to express their thoughts on Circuit Breaker funding. Ms. Canzano seconded, and the Committee voted unanimously to approve the motion.

### **B. Beal Building Project: Update**

Mr. Collins provided a recap of the Beal Project to-date, noting that it was shifting from the Preliminary Design Program (PDP) phase to the Preferred Schematic Report (PSR) phase, and added that the primary objective of the PSR phase will be to identify the Preferred site of the three options currently in contention: addition/renovation of the existing Beal site; new construction at Glavin Center site; and new construction at Allen Farm site. Mr. Collins also provided a Feasibility Study Schedule Outline and noted highlights.

### **VIII. Old Business**

None.

### **IX. New Business**

None.

### **X. Approval of Minutes**

Without objections from the Committee, the minutes of the School Committee Workshop held on January 24, 2018, and the School Committee meeting held on January 31, 2018 were accepted as distributed.

### **XI. Executive Session**

#### **A. For the purposes of negotiations with the Shrewsbury Paraprofessionals Association**

#### **B. For the purposes of negotiations with non-represented employees**

Dr. Magee requested a motion to adjourn to executive session for the purposes of negotiations with the Shrewsbury Paraprofessionals Association and negotiations with non-represented employees, where deliberation in an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body, and to reconvene to open session only for the purpose of adjourning for the evening. On a motion by Mr. Palitsch, seconded by Ms. Canzano, on a roll

call vote: Mr. Palitsch, yes; Ms. Canzano, yes; Ms. Fryc, yes; Mr. Wensky, yes; Dr. Magee, yes, the School Committee voted to adjourn to executive session at 8:19 pm.

## **XII. Adjournment**

On a motion by Mr. Palitsch, seconded by Ms. Canzano, the committee unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting at 9:12 pm. Roll call votes were as follows: Dr. Magee, yes; Mr, Palitsch, yes; Mr. Wensky, yes; Ms. Canzano, yes; and Ms. Fryc, yes.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth McCollum, Clerk

### Documents referenced:

1. MOU between SPS and Shrewsbury Youth Soccer re: Turf
2. Special Education Annual Report
3. Special Education Annual Report Slides
4. Draft School Year Calendar 2018-19
5. FY19 Budget Update Report Slides
6. Beal Project Update
7. Set(s) of Minutes Referenced Above