

**Pelham School Committee Meeting
Wednesday, May 3, 2017
Community Room, Pelham Library**

IN ATTENDANCE

Cara Castenson, Chair
Ron Mannino
Trevor Baptiste
Emily Marriott

Mike Morris, Interim Superintendent
Lisa Desjarlais, Principal
Debbie Westmoreland, Recorder

ABSENT:

Tara Luce

1. Call to Order and Approve Minutes 6:35 p.m.

Ms. Castenson called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. She noted that Dr. Morris will present the Third Quarter Budget Update first because he has to leave for Amherst Town Meeting.

A. Third Quarter Budget Update

DOCUMENT: FY2017 Third Quarter Budget Update—Pelham

Dr. Morris reported that Mr. Mangano is unable to attend due to Town Meeting preparations so he will email the document to the committee tomorrow. He reported that there have been some financial variances, due mostly to insurance costs, which means the year may end in a deficit. Spending has been constricted and more will be known at the next meeting. Dr. Morris then exited the meeting at 6:38 p.m.

Ms. Marriott moved to approve the minutes of March 1. Mr. Baptiste seconded and the motion was unanimously approved. Ms. Castenson recognized that tonight is Mr. Baptiste's last meeting and the members expressed their appreciation for his hard work and dedication over his six years of service. Ms. Desjarlais also thanked Mr. Baptiste for his support over the years. Ms. Castenson acknowledged that Ms. Luce is not running for re-election and expressed appreciation for her service.

2. Announcements and Public Comment 6:40 p.m.

There were no announcements or public comments.

3. Interim Superintendent's Update 6:40 p.m.

DOCUMENT: Pelham School Enrollment 2016-2017

Ms. Desjarlais distributed and reviewed the Pelham School Enrollment Update, noting that there are currently 12 school choice applicants for kindergarten and seven Pelham students. There are also several applicants for sixth grade and some for fifth grade. Ms. Desjarlais reported that Big Y donated \$500 and a cake to Pelham School at their grand reopening today. The funds will be used to replace the color copier, which is no longer in good working order. She noted that LeAnn Hunt, special education teacher, was recognized last week at the Pioneer Valley Excellence in Teaching Awards. Ms. Desjarlais noted that the annual spring fair was held last weekend and it was a very nice community event.

4. New and Continuing Business 6:47 p.m.

B. School Options Update

Ms. Castenson noted that the School Options Committee will be presenting at Town Meeting and she will forward the information she prepared to the committee. She reported that some members want to see if there is a way to revisit increasing revenue from the Town's water resources through a payment in lieu of taxes program increase for Boston's use. Another plan was to look at cost-containment options for the school through something such as a partnership with Amherst, which would yield more than \$250,000 in savings. Ms. Castenson noted that regionalization with Leverett and Shutesbury or some other town will not yield as much savings. She noted that a thread running through the discussions is the fear of losing autonomy of the school. The idea of having Pelham become some sort of a magnet school, perhaps with a STEM focus, is another idea being suggested. DESE does not have any requirements to become a magnet school, it can just be done. Ms. Desjarlais reported that the Hawlemont School was facing similar issues to Pelham so they became an innovation school and received an innovation grant. They have reworked the school to focus on project-based curriculum with farm animals and agriculture on site. The school is thriving and Ms. Desjarlais expressed her interest in visiting the school to learn more. Mr. Baptiste noted that such a school is something he is interested in from a sustainability

perspective. He said that keeping the small system will allow us to innovate and choose the best potential focus, noting that STEM and computer coding would be his suggestion. Ms. Desjarlais will reach out to an Innovation contact Ms. Bode, ARMS Principal, knows well to gather more information. Ms. Marriott expressed concern about potential enrollment pressures that may result from becoming an innovation school and whether increased enrollments will fix the financial problems. Mr. Baptiste noted that developing our brand is important.

C. Superintendent Evaluation Process

DOCUMENT: Survey Questions Rubric; End-of-Cycle Summative Evaluation Report—Superintendent; Superintendent 360 Survey 2017

Ms. Marriott noted that she worked on the Superintendent Evaluation Committee of the Regional School Committee. She provided a brief overview of the evaluation process for Mr. Mannino since this is his first time to participate in an evaluation and then reviewed the work of the subcommittee, including the 360 survey questions developed and the draft of the evaluation tool. Discussion followed regarding the process for completing the evaluation and how to utilize the evaluation tools. Ms. Marriott then noted that none of the four Pelham-specific goals were from Standard I: Instructional Leadership. She said that a possibility is to use one of the Amherst goals “Initiate and engage in dialogue about the role of out-of-school time in students’ lives and develop a plan for stakeholder engagement in this critical issue” since it would also pertain to Pelham. Dr. Morris has said he is fine with including it in the Pelham evaluation if the committee chooses to. Ms. Castenson moved to include the out-of-school time Amherst goal as one of the Pelham goals. Mr. Baptiste seconded and the motion was unanimously approved. It was agreed that the committee members will provide any feedback on the evaluation document to Ms. Westmoreland to share with Ms. Marriott who will bring the document for a vote at the May 16 meeting. The committee expressed appreciation to Ms. Marriott for her work on the evaluation documents.

D. Special Education Reserve Fund

Ms. Castenson reminded the committee of their vote in March to create a Special Education stabilization account, not to fund it but to have it in place. She noted that the Select Board had some concerns about the warrant article language since it did not delineate whether it would be funded or how. The Select Board did agree to place it on the warrant so it will be considered at the Town Meeting on Saturday. Ms. Castenson noted that utilizing funds in the account will require a vote of both the School Committee and Select Board, per statute.

E. Accept Gifts

DOCUMENT: Memo to Pelham School Committee from Jill Berry, Region Treasurer, dated April 20, 2017

Mr. Baptiste moved to accept a \$776.70 gift of a TV, bracket, signage and setup from the Pelham PGO and \$15 for Nature’s Classroom from Eric and Cara Castenson. Ms. Marriott seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

5. School Committee Planning

7:48 p.m.

Evaluation materials; draft of 2016-2017 school committee meeting dates

6. Adjourn

7:48 p.m.

Mr. Baptiste moved to adjourn at 7:48 p.m. Ms. Marriott seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,
Debbie Westmoreland