

Regular Meeting of the Pelham School Committee
Thursday, January 9, 2014
Community Room, Pelham Library

In Attendance:

Debbie Gould, Chair
Emily Marriott
Darius Modestow
Trevor Baptiste
Dan Robb

Maria Geryk, Superintendent
Lisa Desjarlais, Principal
Jerry Champagne, Information Systems Director
Public
Debbie Westmoreland, Recorder

A. Welcome and Call to Order

6:35 p.m.

Ms. Gould called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

B. Announcements and Public Comments

None

There were no announcements or public comments.

C. Superintendent's Update

6:34 p.m.

Ms. Geryk reported that she is planning to start a blog as part of her goal of increasing communication with the community and families. She also noted that the Capital Committee selected at the last Four Towns Meeting is meeting this Saturday at 8:30 a.m. in the ARMS library to discuss the Regional Capital Plan. While the Pelham Capital Plan is not on the agenda for Saturday, Ms. Geryk noted the impact of the Regional plan on the Town of Pelham. She then distributed written updates about upcoming events at the district level. Ms. Desjarlais reported that the students came back from the extended break very excited and ready to learn. Mid-year assessments are beginning and Michael Morris will be working with the Pelham staff to input the data and train them in the effective use of *Inform*. The Artist in Residence program began this week with artist Jonathan Keesy working with students. Ms. Desjarlais noted that the UMass dancers are visiting this week and the PVPA theater group is coming to provide a performance for students. Ms. Desjarlais reported that Mr. Champagne is working with her to customize the new website to Pelham's needs and time will be built in at staff meetings for staff members to develop and update their own web pages. The first ever literacy night is also in the planning phase for Pelham School. Ms. Desjarlais is working with Sara Frenette from Mount Holyoke to plan the event which she hopes to schedule in April. She noted that Wednesday, January 22 will be a Family Math Night at Pelham School. Ms. Desjarlais distributed an updated enrollment report and briefly reviewed the data.

D. New and Continuing Business

6:48 p.m.

A. School Choice Hearing

Ms. Gould explained for the new members how school choice works, noting that the School Committee must vote on whether to continue to participate in the state's school choice program. Ms. Geryk clarified that any students already enrolled through choice may continue to attend Pelham regardless of the vote for next year. Ms. Desjarlais noted that there are currently, at most, 11 resident kindergartners entering Pelham in the 2014-2015 school year. There was brief discussion regarding how the optimum number of students is determined and a vote will be taken at the February meeting.

B. FY15 Capital and IT Plans

Ms. Geryk distributed written information regarding the IT and Facilities Capital Plan requests. Mr. Champagne reviewed the IT requests and answered clarifying questions from the committee. Ms. Gould noted that she believes technology spending should be built into the budget to ensure that adequate technology funds are available. Mr. Tricky, Pelham Finance Committee, noted that there is an IT account that receives money from Comcast and is controlled by the Select Board that is meant for these types of purchases. He said it would be important to ask the Select Board now how much can be allocated from that account so that a warrant article can be presented at the Town Meeting requesting that the additional funds to be allocated from free cash. Ms. Gould was advised to ask for time on the Select Board agenda to present the IT needs for next year. Ms. Geryk, Mr. Champagne and Mr. Baptiste also expressed willingness to attend the meeting. Mr. Baptiste left the meeting at

7:21 p.m. Ms. Geryk noted that Ron Bohonowicz, Facilities Director, had to chair a meeting in Deerfield and could not attend tonight. Any questions about his capital request will be recorded and he will provide answers. The committee discussed the Capital requests and agreed that for FY15, Ms. Gould will prepare a warrant article requesting the Town to allocate \$5,000 from free cash to complete courtyard repairs. Mr. Tricky had two questions for Mr. Bohonowicz: 1) Can the security request of \$10,000 for FY16 can be moved to FY15 and what does it entail, and 2) What is the recurring cost for energy management? It was agreed that Ron will be asked to present a revised Capital Plan for the Committee to vote on requesting \$15,000 for FY15 instead of FY16.

C. FY15 Pelham Budget Presentation

Ms. Geryk distributed the FY15 Proposed Pelham Budget and the memo outlining requested increases and reductions. She noted that Mr. Detweiler, Finance Director, was unable to attend tonight due to illness and that any questions from the committee that she cannot answer will be recorded and forwarded to him. She also noted that if any members would like to have a "budget 101" meeting with Mr. Detweiler, he will be happy to meet. Ms. Marriott said she would like to take advantage of that offer. Ms. Geryk briefly reviewed the type of data that is included in the budget document. The committee then reviewed the document page-by-page. Ms. Geryk answered clarifying questions that she could and took notes about questions regarding specific figures for Mr. Detweiler. In particular, there was a question about the FY14 special education amount which was \$327,670 in the FY14 voted budget but shows as \$307,670 in the FY15 document. Ms. Geryk and Ms. Desjarlais then reviewed the proposed increases and answered clarifying questions from the committee. The committee requested that all increases be factored into page 7 of 14 of the budget for the next meeting.

D. MASC Statement Vote

Ms. Gould noted that at the last joint meeting the Regional School Committee voted to send a message to MASC advocating that DESE accept the PRAXIS test for initial licensure. Mr. Robb moved to approve the letter on behalf of the Pelham School Committee as well. Ms. Marriott seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

School Committee Planning

8:30 p.m.

A. Calendar Review—The next meeting will be February 6 with second quarter budget update, FY15 budget hearing, revised capital plan and school choice vote on the agenda. Ms. Gould asked that the CPR be added as an agenda item in March. Thursday, March 13 is the date the school budget is scheduled to be presented to the Finance Committee.

6. Adjournment

8:35 p.m.

Ms. Gould moved to adjourn at 8:35 p.m. Mr. Robb seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,
Debbie Westmoreland