



**BELCHERTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
OPEN SESSION SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING  
March 31, 2014**

**LOCATION:** Swift River Elementary School Library  
**TIME:** 6:00 p.m.

**SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS:** Dr. Linda Tsoumas, Chair (present); Ms. Clare Popowich, Vice-Chair (present); Mr. Richard Fritsch, Secretary (present); Ms. Myndi Bogdanovich, Member (present); Dr. Michael Knapp, Member (present)

**ADMINISTRATION:** Mr. Brian Cameron, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning (present)

**VISITORS:** Ms. Patricia Correia, M.A.S.C. Consultant; Ms. Christina Aponte; Ms. Mona Griffin; Mr. John Benoit; Ms. Dawn French; Mr. Eric Goldscheider, Hampshire Gazette reporter

**MINUTES**

- I. Call to order  
Dr. Tsoumas called the School Committee meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
  
- II. Approval of Minutes
  - A. March 13, 2014  
MOTION: Dr. Knapp moved to approve the minutes of the March 13, 2014 School Committee meeting, as presented. Ms. Popowich seconded the motion.  
VOTE: 4-0-1 (abstention: Dr. Tsoumas)
  
  - B. March 21, 2014  
MOTION: Ms. Bogdanovich moved to approve the minutes of the March 21, 2014 School Committee meeting, as presented. Dr. Knapp seconded the motion.  
VOTE: 5-0-0, approved unanimously
  
  - C. March 24, 2014  
MOTION: Dr. Knapp moved to approve the minutes of the March 24, 2014 School Committee meeting, as presented. Ms. Bogdanovich seconded the motion.  
VOTE: 3-0-2 (abstentions: Dr. Tsoumas, Ms. Popowich)
  
  - D. March 26, 2014  
MOTION: Dr. Knapp moved to approve the minutes of the March 26, 2014 School Committee meeting, as presented. Ms. Bogdanovich seconded the motion.  
VOTE: 4-0-1 (abstention: Ms. Popowich)
  
  - E. March 28, 2014  
MOTION: Dr. Knapp moved to approve the minutes of the March 28, 2014 School Committee meeting, as presented. Ms. Bogdanovich seconded the motion.  
VOTE: 3-0-2 (abstentions: Dr. Tsoumas, Ms. Popowich)

III. Meet with M.A.S.C. Consultant Pat Correira to discuss site visits and finalize questions for finalist interviews for the position of Superintendent of Schools

Ms. Correira asked the School Committee members for feedback on their site visits to the three candidates' districts.

Dr. Knapp, Ms. Bogdanovich, and Mr. Fritsch discussed their impressions of the visit to N. Brookfield on March 24<sup>th</sup> with regard to Dr. John Provost, and they summarized the highlights of their meeting with the candidate, the NBTA President, Athletic Director, the District Leadership Team, community members, students, School Committee members, parents, and elected officials. Dr. Tsoumas shared Ms. Christine Vigneux's impressions (since she was unable to attend this evening's meeting), and Ms. Griffin offered hers as well, since they also had been part of the group who visited N. Brookfield. With positive feedback across the board, the consensus was that Dr. Provost was a very strong candidate for Superintendent.

Dr. Knapp, Ms. Bogdanovich, Dr. Tsoumas and Mr. Fritsch discussed their impressions of the visit to Chicopee on March 26<sup>th</sup> with regard to Ms. Lynn Clark, and they summarized the highlights of their meeting with the candidate, Central Office administrators, elementary and secondary school administrators, the Leadership Team, students, PTO representatives, community members, support staff, School Committee members, the Director of Special Education, the Superintendent of Chicopee Public Schools, etc. Ms. Brenda Aldrich, who had also participated in this site visit but was unable to attend this evening's meeting, had provided her input as well. While there was some concern over her lack of experience at a superintendency level, there was positive feedback about Ms. Clark, and it was felt that she could handle the job if given the opportunity.

Dr. Knapp, Ms. Bogdanovich and Mr. Fritsch discussed their impressions of the visit to Lenox on March 28<sup>th</sup> with regard to Mr. Timothy Lee, and they summarized the highlights of their meeting with the candidate, the Director of Special Education, support staff, curriculum specialists, parents, students, LEA representatives, School Committee members, Director of Business Services, Administrative Team, and faculty. Follow-up telephone conversations were also conducted with Superintendent Edward Costa and Cindy Dinan, Director of Student Services, who were both out-of-district on March 28<sup>th</sup>. Their comments, along with the feedback from all others who shared in the site visit, were very positive and all felt that Mr. Lee would be successful in transitioning to the role of superintendent.

In conclusion, the School Committee members expressed that the three finalists are all very strong candidates, which will make the decision a difficult one, and it was felt that while the candidates' personalities were different, they all shared the same goals.

Ms. Correira then asked the School Committee members to discuss and finalize the questions they will ask during the finalist interviews which will be held over the next three consecutive evenings. She recommended that the questions be "open-ended" to allow for follow-up based on the answers given. The Committee then reviewed the content of questions from two sources: the questions that had been prepared for the semi-finalist interviews, as well as a list of questions provided by Ms. Bogdanovich. Seven questions were chosen after discussion took place about revising and rewording the verbiage, as well as reordering the sequence of the questions. It was decided that Dr. Tsoumas will open the interviews by reading an introductory

statement and requesting an opening statement by the candidate. The order of questioning by Committee members was also determined. Dr. Tsoumas will close the interview by offering the candidate an opportunity to ask questions of the School Committee and/or to make a closing statement.

Dr. Tsoumas advised the School Committee that an additional meeting will need to be scheduled after this week's interviews to discuss the contract for the new Superintendent. This meeting will take place in Executive Session and will follow previously scheduled items under the School Committee Executive Session on April 8, 2014.

IV. Motion To Adjourn

MOTION: Mr. Fritsch moved to adjourn the School Committee meeting at 7:40 p.m.

Dr. Knapp seconded the motion.

VOTE: 5-0-0, approved unanimously

Respectfully submitted by,



Kathryn A. Petersen

Non-Confidential Recording Secretary to the School Committee



School Committee members' signatures:

Linda Tsoumas, Linda Tsoumas, Chair

Clare Popowich, Clare Popowich, Vice Chair

Richard Fritsch, Richard Fritsch, Secretary

Myndi Bogdanovich, Myndi Bogdanovich, Member

Michael Knapp, Michael Knapp, Member

The mission of the Belchertown Public Schools is to ensure that every student meets with success every day. To that end, we pledge to ensure that we have rigorous, standards-based curriculum; instruction designed to meet the needs of diverse learners in every classroom; and access to the global learning community via state-of-the-art technology in schools that are communities of respect and civility for all.

2011-2015 Strategic Plan Goals (adopted by the Belchertown School Committee, 3/1/11):

Goal #1: To have guaranteed (standards-based and implemented by all), viable (doable and accessible to every student), seamless K-12 curriculum in every content area.

Goal #2: To have rigorous (standards-based), relevant (grounded in 21st Century skills), differentiated instructional practices with the ability to access the global learning community via technology available to every learner.

Goal #3: To implement a plan to ensure that our students understand the importance of acceptance, tolerance, and respect supported by all adults in the community.

The Belchertown School Committee conducts its business in open session pursuant to Chapter 30A, Section 21 of the Massachusetts General Laws. The public is welcome to comment only on items on the agenda for this meeting as noted above. If you wish to address the School Committee regarding an item not on the agenda for this meeting, please contact the Superintendent of Schools at 413.323.0423 or via email at [superintendent@belchertown.org](mailto:superintendent@belchertown.org) to determine the best way to address your concerns (see School Committee Policy BEDH).

