

**BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
MINUTES OF  
October 12, 2010**

**Bedford High School - Large Instruction Room**

**1. Call to Order**

At 7:35 p.m., Mr. Hafer called to order, the meeting of the Bedford School Committee. Other members present included Ms. Seibert, Ms. O’Gara, and Mr. Pierce. Ms. Anne Bickford was absent.

**2. Comments From Public**

None

**3. Personnel Report**

Dr. LaCroix presented the job description for the Occupational Therapist position. School Committee members reviewed the job description and did not have any edits. They agreed to vote on approving the job description at the next School Committee meeting.

Dr. LaCroix asked the School Committee to consider approving two out-of-state field trips.

The first field trip discussed was a field trip for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders to attend an educational and recreational field trip to Key Largo, Florida during April vacation 2011. Dr. LaCroix noted that this same trip was held a couple of years ago and was very successful. Dr. Lacroix mentioned that she is very pleased that middle school teachers are willing to plan and chaperone a field trip on a vacation week. The plan is to have a chaperone to student ratio of 10:1. Two teachers are currently committed to doing the trip and several others are willing if the need arises. Cost is approximately \$1,100 per student.

Mr. Pierce made the following motion:

**MOVED: That the School Committee approve the field trip to Key Largo, Florida during April 16 – April 20, 2011 for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders at no cost to the school.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. O’Gara**

**MOTION APPROVED: 4-0**

The second field trip presented was the ROTC field trip for students to travel to Alexandria, NH in order for the cadet senior leadership corps to develop team building and communication skills. There is no cost to the student or the school.

Mr. Pierce made the following motion:

**MOVED: That the School Committee approve a field trip for twenty ROTC students to travel to Cardigan Lodge in Alexandria, NH for team and communications skill building on November 5-7, 2010 at no cost to the schools.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. O’Gara**

**MOTION APPROVED: 4-0**

Dr. LaCroix announced the resignation of Jennifer Cooper Ilchuk, a Teaching Assistant at Lane School.

#### **4. Announcement of Impact Aid Grant – Representative C. Murphy**

Representative Charley Murphy addressed the School Committee to announce Bedford's award of Military Mitigation Impact Aid funds. He began the presentation by thanking Dr. LaCroix for her help over the years. He also thanked Susan Fargo State Senator for her help in getting Bedford military funding reimbursement.

Mr. Murphy said that Bedford would get \$562,503 in reimbursement for supporting the students of military families at Hanscom Air Force Base. Mr. Murphy said that he hopes that this will be an annual event though right now it is a new line item in the State budget. He will continue to work hard to ensure Bedford continues to get this support.

Mr. Pierce thanked Representative Murphy for his work on this endeavor. Mr. Pierce said that Hanscom Air Force Base is important to the town and educating their children is also important to Bedford Public Schools.

Ms. O'Gara seconded Mr. Pierce's comments.

Ms. Seibert thanked Representative Murphy especially for his understanding of the priority of being reimbursed for all that we do to educate the Hanscom Airforce Base students.

Representative Murphy asked everyone to thank Susan Fargo too, which they did.

#### **5. Presentation: Energy Task Force/Green Communities Act**

Juliette Costa, Chair of Bedford Energy Task Force, introduced the Task Force to the School Committee and asked the School Committee to support many of its initiatives.

Ms. Costa explained that the Energy Task Force was appointed by the Selectmen in 2008. Its mission is:

“Working in conjunction with town leadership, the Energy Task Force will proactively seek to identify strategies and potential funding partnerships in order to lower municipal and school energy expenditures and community greenhouse gas emissions.”

Ms. Costa explained that the primary objective is to reduce municipal energy use but the Task Force does seek to reduce residential energy consumption through public outreach.

Some of the accomplishments of the group include:

- A \$150,000 grant awarded toward an energy efficiency project at Lane School
- Conducting energy audits of town buildings
- Public outreach during town events, local TV and newspaper
- Awarded free planning assistance from the State for Green Communities application

The Task Force is also busy working on a town energy policy and beginning the process to have Bedford designated a “Green Community” through Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources.

Ms. Costa reported that the Schools have decreased energy consumption by 39% in the last five years which equates to a savings of \$532,908. Ms. Costa said she was happy to hear that the Superintendent and Mr. Richard Jones, Facilities Director, have committed to a further reduction in energy use of 5%.

Ms. Costa said that she would like to work with the School Committee to achieve some of the Energy Task Force goals. She noted that the Schools consume 50% of the energy budget of the entire town so the partnership makes sense. She hopes that the School Committee will support and adopt the Energy Policy and support the town's Green Communities application. She also hopes that staff and students will get involved.

Ms. Costa explained a little bit more about the Green Communities Act and application process. Currently, there are 10 million dollars allocated annually for energy efficient projects and these funds are available to communities who are designated "Green". There are currently 35 "Green" communities in the State. Five criteria must be met including a plan to reduce energy consumption by 20% in five years and adoption of more stringent energy efficient building code (known as "the stretch code"). Also, a vehicle policy of purchasing only fuel-efficient vehicles would be required.

Ms. Costa explained that the Energy Plan would have to be approved by both the School Committee and the Selectmen.

Mr. Pierce asked when a draft of the energy policy would be available for the School Committee to look at. Ms. Costa said she hopes to have something in hand in the January/February timeframe.

Mr. Pierce asked about the source of the \$10 million funding for Green Communities. Ms. Costa (and other members of the Task Force in the audience) said that it comes from Stimulus funds and from the various energy companies. Mr. Pierce said he wonders how long these funds will be available.

Ms. O'Gara thanked Ms. Costa and the Task Force for their hard work. She wondered if Bedford would be penalized if the town ends up not meeting the agreed upon energy reduction percentage. Ms. Costa said no, that the State would not take money away.

Ms. Seibert asked if the School Committee has to approve the energy policy before Town Meeting. Ms. Costa said no but the School Department will be part of the overall town energy reduction plan.

Ms. Seibert complimented the group's efforts and said she enjoyed working with everyone last year when she served on the Task Force.

Mr. Hafer thanked Ms. Costa and the Energy Task Force members for presenting.

#### **6. Presentation Facilities: Richard Jones, Director of Facilities.**

Mr. Jones gave an update on the Facilities Department. He explained that the organization was created 10 years ago and that it is a blended organization between the Town and the Schools.

The mission of the Facilities Department is:

“ In a cost effective customer oriented manner, protect the capital investment made by the residents of Bedford in their public facilities and maintain a safe, comfortable and functional environment for all building occupants.”

Mr. Jones explained that school buildings make up approximately 74% of the total town building inventory. He has 19 custodians employed to take care of the buildings. He also has 6.4 FTE maintenance staff including electricians (1.4 FTE), a plumber, a HVAC and refrigeration specialist, a boiler technician and two carpenter/general maintenance workers. Mr. Jones explained that the maintenance staffing levels puts Bedford in between a “reactive” and “managed” building on the building maintenance scale – an industry measure based on levels of maintenance staffing needed to maintain 1 million gross square feet. Mr. Jones commented that he feels this is a good place to be and an accurate reflection.

Mr. Jones also described some of his major responsibilities. They include:

- Personnel management
- Preparing and managing the Capital Budget
- Preparing and managing the Operating Budget
- Purchasing including quotes, bids and RFPs for goods, services and construction projects
- Accounts Payables
- Work order system
- Energy Management (monitoring use and procurement)
- Environmental and regulatory compliance

Accomplishments of the Facilities Department include:

- Processing 2,717 invoices for FY’10
- Created Ids for all school employees.
- Assisted Finance Director with preparation of final MSBA reports
- Updated Finance Committee and Capital Expenditures Committee on long term facilities maintenance costs and need for long term capital project planning and funding.
- Completed K-8 enrollment and space changes study.
- Worked with DPW to develop a long term capital maintenance plan for school grounds.
- Established FY05 base line for energy use and monitored usage since.
- Reduced energy usage by 39% since FY05.
- Awarded a DOER grant for HVAC control upgrade at Lane School (worth \$150,000)
- Installed LED lamps and light fixtures at JGMS to test installation, review color and light levels.
- Working with Town Energy Task Force to develop energy policy and to apply for Green Communities Act.

Mr. Jones also discussed his maintenance responsibilities including scheduling preventive maintenance and routine/emergency repairs.

Mr. Jones also accomplished implementing some space study changes at Lane and Davis. He also installed new signage at the middle school.

Mr. Jones discussed the many accomplishments of the custodial staff and successes with Project Management responsibilities.

The School Committee had a few questions.

Mr. Pierce thanked Mr. Jones for his hard work and accomplishments especially those in energy conservations and establishing the 20 year building maintenance plan.

Ms. O’Gara said that it was nice to see a comprehensive plan and to realize that Bedford has high standards. “His organization does great work and really supports learning.”

Ms. Seibert asked what happened to the plans to hire a professional painter. Mr. Jones explained that the Town did hire a painter in the summer and used the operating budget. Mr. Jones said that he prefers to use the capital budget and that he did not hire a painter because we have staff who can do it. However, a professional will be necessary to do the high ceilings and high outside areas.

Ms. Seibert asked if the custodians would do special cleaning this winter to combat cold/flu germs again this year. Mr. Jones said that right now, there are no special guidelines for extra sanitation but he will be ready to act if the need arises.

Ms. Seibert asked for Mr. Jones’ hope for the future of the Facilities Department. He said he hopes that the Town will adopt a funding plan for maintenance of the buildings and the grounds as well as having a funding plan for capital budget projects.

Mr. Hafer thanked Mr. Jones for all the work that he and his department does. He asked if Mr. Jones was comfortable with where Bedford is on the building maintenance rating scale. Mr. Jones said yes.

Mr. Hafer asked how the School Committee could be involved in the DPW’s grounds plan. Mr. Jones suggested having the DPW come to a School Committee and that the department needs the Schools to advocate for school ground projects because the DPW has lost funding.

## **7. Class Size Report**

Dr. LaCroix reported that the High School has 818 sections. Fourteen sections have fewer than 10 students and sixteen classes have more than 25 students of which three are English and three are Social Studies.

BHS Enrollment by class is as follows:

9 <sup>th</sup> grade	196
10 <sup>th</sup> grade	218
11 <sup>th</sup> grade	185
12 <sup>th</sup> grade	183
Total	782

The Middle School has 571 total enrollment, which is at capacity. Sixth grade has 190 students, seventh has 183 students and eighth grade has 198 students. Dr. LaCroix noted that this enrollment has a significant effect on space in the building.

Mr. Pierce noted that it seems like the number of students in classes have increased over the years.

Ms. O’Gara said that she knows that we are committed to keeping the number of students in core classes low but she is concerned that the other classes may start to see behavioral issues due to the large number of students.

Ms. Seibert said that the Class Size Report for the Middle School is a “startling” document. She asked if teachers are voicing concern over the class sizes. Dr. LaCroix said she has not heard much since the beginning of year but will monitor the situation.

#### **8. Approval: Anti-Bullying Policy**

Dr. LaCroix presented a newly combined Bedford/MASC anti-bullying policy. The School Committee submitted some minor edits to Dr. LaCroix.

Mr. Pierce made the following motion:

**MOVED: That the School Committee approve policy JICFB Bedford Public Schools Bullying Prevention policy.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. O’Gara**

**MOTION APPROVED: 4-0**

Dr. LaCroix said that the Anti-Bullying Task Force will meet in a few weeks. Also, Principals have started working on their building plan and curriculum.

Dr. LaCroix feels that Bedford is ahead in this area compared to other school districts however the work and pace must continue forward.

#### **9. Presentation: Exhaust Policy**

Mr. Coelho explained that State law now requires that all vehicles can only idle five minutes when near school property. School busses have exceptions to the time limit. As a result, Bedford must develop a policy and create signage to enforce the new policy.

Dr. LaCroix presented a draft of a policy to the School Committee to review. Mr. Pierce said that he was concerned that meeting the requirements of the new law may extend into private property. Therefore he would like more information before approving a policy.

Dr. LaCroix agrees and is concerned that the School Committee is not an enforcement agency. She suggests having the Selectmen also review the new policy.

Ms. O’Gara asked if any other school districts have implemented such a policy. Mr. Coelho said he did not know and that this did not seem to be a priority or topic of conversation whenever he speaks to colleagues in other districts.

Ms. Seibert said she is concerned because the law is not well defined and she agrees with Dr. LaCroix’s concern about enforcement.

Dr. LaCroix said that the School Department has made new signage and has asked the bus company to comply with the no idling law whenever possible. She believes the schools and the bus company are trying to obey the spirit of the law.

The members of the School Committee agreed that the schools need to comply with the law and that the policy should be shared with the Selectmen. They also suggested that future Handbooks should include information about no idling near school grounds.

Mr. Hafer suggested prefacing the policy with “In accordance to Massachusetts General Law.”

Dr. LaCroix agreed to share the policy with the Selectmen and will take into consideration recommendations. The new policy will again be presented to the School Committee for review.

**10. Approval: Capital Budget**

Mr. Coelho reviewed the capital project requests currently on the table:

Technology	4 projects	\$269,3000
FF &E	2 projects	\$506,395
School Building Capital Maintenance	20 projects	\$1,413,000
One Time Improvements	23 projects	\$1,205,000

Dr. LaCroix and Mr. Coelho discussed how difficult it is to prioritize the requests this year because each category of capital requests is so important and that there are multiple competing needs.

Mr. Jones said he went through the master list of capital budget requests and updated it based on the comments from the last School Committee meeting. He removed many projects and reorganized some.

Mr. Pierce wondered if it would make sense to make tiered priorities for submission to the Capital Expenditure Committee. Mr. Coelho said that we could do this but the CEC is not ready to accept a different format.

Ms. Seibert said that the Capital Expenditure Committee and Finance Committee are trying to figure out how to approach this problem of trying to prioritize capital maintenance and program change capital projects.

Mr. Pierce said that it is imperative for the Schools to explain that if the schools are to continue to save money in out-of-district placements by creating in-house programs than the schools must invest in changes to the buildings to accommodate these new programs. Somehow we need to highlight the cost avoidance and explain the space and programming implications.

Dr. LaCroix said that she is working on a space study presentation for the CEC and she will add cost avoidance to the presentation and remind everyone why programs are being created in-house.

Ms Seibert suggests presenting some of the space need changes for potential bond funding.

Mr. Pierce suggested putting money saved when Davis and Lane bonding comes to the end of its term into a “maintenance fund”. Mr. Jones thought this was a good idea.

The School Committee agreed that some kind of recommendation on project funding must be presented to the CEC tomorrow even if it ends up being a point of discussion. Therefore, after much discussion, Mr. Pierce made the following motion:

**MOVED: That the School Committee agreed to forward to the Capital Expenditures Committee the following prioritized requests:**

- A) **Technology, Furniture and Equipment**
  - 1) **Network Upgrade \$35,500**
  - 2) **Copier Replacements \$22, 195**
  - 3) **One to One Computing \$65,000**
- B) **School Facilities**

- 1) Capital Maintenance \$175,465
- 2) Space Modifications \$157,360
- 3) Energy \$360,971

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. O’Gara**

**MOTION APPROVED: 4-0**

### **11. Superintendent’s Report**

Dr. LaCroix sadly informed the School Committee about the passing of Ann Milligan, Secretary at the High School. She said Ann worked in Student Services since 1994 and has left behind a great legacy. She was very connected to the community and to the students. She battled an illness with incredible courage. A scholarship will be established in her name.

### **12. Liaison Reports**

Mr. Pierce reported that the work of the Hanscom Task Force continues.

Ms. O’Gara reminded everyone about the BEF fundraiser, “Bedford’s Got Talent” on October 30<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Seibert said November 8<sup>th</sup> will be the date of the Community Dinner celebrating Bedford as “100 Best Communities” designation.

Mr. Hafer said Fiscal Planning will meet this week.

### **13. Donations to Computer Department**

Mr. Coelho notified the School Committee about two generous donations of equipment. MIT Lincoln Labs donated 12 Dell Pentium PCs and 20 monitors and Mr. Capobianco donated 2 Dell Computers each with a monitor.

Ms. O’Gara made the following motion:

**MOVED: That the School Committee accept 12 Dell Pentium Processor PCs and 20 Monitors from MIT Lincoln Labs and two Dell Computers each with a 17 inch monitor from Mr. Ross Capobianco of Home Instead Senior Care, Foxtrot Tango Corp. of Melrose.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Pierce**

**MOTION APPROVED: 4-0**

The School Committee thanked both Lincoln Labs and Mr. Capobianco for these generous gifts.

### **14. Minutes for Review**

Ms. O’Gara made the following motion:

**MOVED: That the School Committee approve the minutes of the September 28, 2010 School Committee meeting as amended.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Pierce**

**MOTION APPROVED: 4-0**

### **15. Future Agenda**

Budget season is approaching.

**16. Adjournment**

Ms O’Gara made the following motion:

**MOVED:** Motion to adjourn at 10:50.

**MOTION SECONDED** by Mr. Pierce

**MOTION APPROVED: 4-0**

**Roll Call Vote:**

<b>Mr. Pierce</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Ms. Seibert</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Mr. Hafer</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Ms. Bickford</b>	<b>absent</b>
<b>Ms. O’Gara</b>	<b>Yes</b>

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School Committee Secretary

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Date

**BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE**  
**October 12, 2010**  
**Exhibits/Documents**

- Draft job description for Occupational Therapist position
- Presentation: Energy Task Force
- Presentation: Facilities Department
- Bedford Public Schools Policy JICFB Bullying Prevention
- Regulation of Motor Vehicle Idling on School Grounds
- Draft policy on motor vehicle idling on school grounds
- FY2010-FY2017 Capital Budget Requests
- Draft of minutes from the September 28, 2010 School Committee meeting