

REPORT ON THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING OF January 29, 2014

Prepared by Rick Cliffe

Note: (1). These are not official minutes -- -- just notes taken by me. Official minutes will be available from the Town Office and will be posted on the Town web site following School Committee approval at the next meeting.

(2). If anyone wishes to stop receiving these reports, they may simply hit "Reply" and request to be deleted from the list or say "Unsubscribe."

(3). Reports of earlier meetings and some supplementary materials are available at Rick Freeman's Town Meeting website:

www.singingbridge.net

THE MEETING: There were 2 members of the public present. Mary McDonald also attended most of the meeting.

The minutes of the meeting of November 25, 2013 were approved. They will be posted on the school and town websites within the next couple of days.

MOST IMPORTANT/INTERESTING ITEMS: In my judgment, the following items were the most important things covered during the meeting.

EDUCATION PRESENTATIONS: Attendees at the meeting went to classrooms for 20 minute presentations by teachers and students. Both sessions were interesting and informative.

Members of the 4th grade class presented an overview of their recent dissection of a clam, showing what each part/organ is. They did formal presentation and then brought a tray around to show and answer questions. Another group of students discussed their work on a writing piece and then had all attendees participate in an exercise to demonstrate what/how they developed their stories.

Members of the 2nd grade class demonstrated their development of an imaginary community using Mind Craft on their IPADs. They demonstrated what they'd already created, how to navigate and how to build using the tool. Their community uses many features from Georgetown (e.g. fire station, store, post office, etc.) as well as other buildings (e.g. hospital, grocery store, etc.) needed in a self-supporting community.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT: Matt quickly reviewed a number of recent events and activities at the school. He highlighted their local "geek squad" program focused on STEM (science, technology, engineering, math) and building robots. Evan James is leading the "engineering is elementary" effort. Eileen pointed out that his work is outstanding and they are trying to have him work with other teachers in the district.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

Current Budget: Eileen passed out a summary report showing current budget status. It is tracking closely to plan and the school year is about 50% complete. She also provided handouts for power and heating oil showing current trends compared to the last two school years. She expects heating oil to be more expensive (\$3.50 vs \$3.10) next year and that will impact the proposed school budget.

Proposed 2014/15 Budget: Eileen passed out a first draft proposed budget for next year. She then went through it in detail, explaining changes from the current budget for each/every line item. She also answered a number of questions about specific details and provided a couple of additional information sheets as backup. She also explained that there are a few items (e.g. State food service subsidy) which will have to be resolved before the budget goes to the Town for review/approval. There were a few suggestions on where/how specific items should be identified. Nina requested that Matt investigate the feasibility/cost of having the Bath Bus Service provide transportation between Georgetown and Woolwich for those 7/8 students who attend WCS.

Note: There are no really "big hitter" specific differences from the 2013/14 budget. As presented, it represents an increase of approximately \$55,000 overall. If you have an interest in understanding the details, I encourage you to come to the next couple of School Committee meetings and ask questions.

School Network: Shawn Carlson provided a very brief update on development of the AOS 98 technology plan. He also noted that the GCS network is not adequate for all of the laptop/IPAD users. He is investigating options/costs and this item will be addressed in the proposed budget (currently has a \$25,000 placeholder).

AOS 98 Website: Shawn noted that the AOS 98 website is up and operating. The address is aos98schools.org/. Check it out.

OLD BUSINESS:

Farm to Table in Maine and UMaine Cooperative: Shawn will investigate what is available from the UMaine Cooperative. There was a brief discussion of the greenhouse and garden useage, particularly how to tie work in them back into the classroom curriculum. Colleen offered to come in on Mondays to help teachers in any way she can. She also offered to provide off-time support as needed.

NEW BUSINESS:

Six Grade Fundraising: Matt gave an overview of current finances indicating that a little more than \$500 is still needed to support 6th grade trips, so one more fundraiser is needed. Mary suggested the students write a letter to the Community Center asking for support. There was also a discussion of transportation alternatives for the trip to the Science Museum in Boston.

ITEMS NEEDING SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVAL:

The Committee will do a first reading of the policy Administration of Medication to Students.

The next meeting of the School Committee will be at 4:30 PM on Tuesday, February 11, 2014 at the School Library.

Prepared and distributed by Rick Cliffe