LENOX PUBLIC SCHOOLS SCHOOL COMMITTEE
LENOX TOWN HALL
2ND FLOOR SELECTMEN’S ROOM
October 19, 2015 at 7p.m.

Present: Veronica Fenton, Robert Vaughan, Fran Sorrentino, Robert Munch
Absent: Neal Maxymillan, Mike Moran

I. CALL TO ORDER – 7pm

II. HEARING OF VISITORS

A. Student Representative – None
B. Public Comment - None

III. BOARD REPORT

A. Minutes of October 5 (Open & Executive Session)
   a. Open Minutes – Motion made and seconded by FS and VF to approve the
   meeting minutes.
   VF aye, RV aye, FS aye, RM aye
   b. Executive Session Minutes – Motion made and seconded by FS and VF to
   approve the meeting minutes.
   VF aye, RV aye, FS aye, RM aye
B. School Committee Member Selection, November 4 – RV – we are accepting
   applications up through October 30, 2015. Send to Robert Vaughan’s attention at 6
   Walker Street, Lenox, MA 01240.
C. MASC – RV - annual meeting is Nov. 4, 2015. I would like to congratulate Robert
   Munch for finished his 8 hours of SC training.
D. Taking of minutes, discussion – moved to next meeting

IV. SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

A. Superintendent's Introduction of School Reports – Tim Lee reviewed the 2015 MCAS
   Report and the 2015-2016 School Improvement Plans. State Department has not issued
   accountability ratings have not been assigned. RV – it is possible for November 19,
   2015.
B. LMMHS MCAS Data, 2015-16 School Improvement Plan – Mike Knybel and Brian
   Cogswell reviewed their MCAS Data and the SIP plan. Mike Knybel - this is the
   combined average for 6th through 10th grade. MK – dip in the middle school Math.
We’ve seen this downward slide slowly overtime. Numbers in 7th and 8th grade are quite concerning and we are looking into this and how to improve them. Robert Munch – 8th grade 46% of kids need improvement. Brian Cogswell – yes that is correct. Brian Cogswell - we do feel like we are rating high with the remainder of the state. We now receive details linked within our classroom and we can identify where our weaknesses are within our instruction. One student had a 260 on MCAS their growth score was a 3 or 4. We do have students who had perfect scores in 6th and 7th grade MCAS. Mike Knybel -½ the class in honors algebra 1. RV – SGP’s begins to show value added in the classroom.

ELA and Social Studies – we spent 2 years making sure we hit benchmarks. This year we are concentrating on Math Dept and Science Dept. to try to align each other’s curriculum. Tim Lee – is there a possible new curriculum program adoption? MK – absolutely – Go Math, etc. Robert Munch – is there an effort to address kids that didn’t score well in the 8th grade? Mike K – yes we are, because we recognize this as a problem area and we don’t want this to follow them to the 10th grade. Brian Cogswell – NEASC report – becoming all online. MK – now all the info can be scanned and live on line. Can also use video conference to make it easier for teachers to view it and collect on their time. I can see two sides, yes participating is a lot of work and is distracting, however we are a small school and for our caliber for the school to be recognized on a high level. Mike K - NEASC does not want us to do something different than our Strategic Plan. RV – given the chart with all the #’s with state performance and our performance. My speculation is schools stayed taking MCAS were suburban schools. Mike K – Brian and I attended a multi-day workshop that touched solely on that personal connection. Brian Cogs – Community Service is very important to us. Brian reviewed some things our kids got involved in. Peer Education program is very important and many kids are involved.

C. Morris MCAS Data, 2015-16 School Improvement Plan – Carolyn Boyce. Across the board we did generally pretty well this year. In 2015 we are above state averages. Definitely a highlight is our 3rd grade Math – highest it’s ever been and is the first group to go through GO MATH. Science – 69% proficient, 51% of our students were advanced and doubled from last year (2014 was 26%). Real testament to our teachers because it is a cumulative test. SGP’s are remaining pretty high. (see highlights on pg.6). RV – look at the 4th grade, that test is the historically the hardest test. To perform 20% higher than the state is great. TL – Economically Disadvantage comes from outside and decision making process by local and state agencies. RV – changes in the writing program? Carolyn – work with the curriculum ways to supplement our reading program. There are different grade levels that are bringing in other ideas. Been a bit of a challenge to identify a program in this area. VF – aligning Morris Curriculum with the Middle school. Carolyn – definitely feeding and building into what they are doing in Middle school. GO MATH – had a 5 year contract – we paid in the beginning and each year get student workbooks. Now there is a 2015 version – Mary Cherry and some teachers are looking at the two versions (2012 what we currently use and the 2015 version). It will take a fair amount of convincing that we should change because we are doing so well with Go MATH. RM – do you have a weekly/monthly staff meeting? Carolyn – we do have a monthly staff meeting. Create curriculum guides – we are going to try to roll it out so we come out with a common template. Then spread work out of the 5 years of the plan in conjunction with LMMHS. Stripes, (Tiger Mascot for Morris) has brought so much energy to our school. Our kids are in it to win it with stripes. RV – Turnaround practices
for schools that are struggling - Intentionality of programs, student-specific interventions and school culture. Those are the practices other schools are working on to meet the exemplary work that is done here. TL – The School Improvement plans will be posted on our website soon.

D. **Student Services Report – Ellen Farris – Director of Student Services.** Not a huge change in special education over the years. Our support teams have been really good. RV – seems like a remarkably small number. ELL – biggest area of growth. We added another position at LMMHS for ELL instruction. Spring 2014 12 in Elementary and 4 in LMMHS. Since 2012 the district wide number going up. TL – is this an increase statewide. EF – yes. RV – how many languages? EF – 1 Chinese and the rest Spanish. VF – we have documents on website in Spanish. TL – not all documents are out there yet. We started “PAC” Parents Advisory Counsel for Special Ed. VF – does anyone know do you see some parents struggling? Mike K – we send them invitations to attend. We are fortunate to have Vicky Holt to connect with these families.

**Public Comment: Pam Keuber – at Morris Elementary.** We have ELL in the teens and then it drops in LMMHS. Why does this happen? Mike K. some have scored out of services. They score out by taking a state test every year. They take it every year and give us ELL across 4 domains and they also take it in Kindergarten. Once they get to the 6th level, they test out. Carolyn – it takes about 5 years for them to get to a point like their typical peers. EF – pretty typically have 1 or 2 kids in each grade. I think we have many families of younger kids in. EL – preschool program had a 11th hour change. In order to have a viable program we had to think about how to best serve them. We decided to offer expanded program to 3 and 4 year olds. It has worked out very well. Carolyn – we are continuing to have conversations with Marykay Pinkham and Ellen Farris to stay on top of the need and keep a viable program going and have it based on student need. RM – Can you tell me about this Instagram account? Mike K. – junior Luke Bartini approached his guidance counselor because he wanted to do an internship. He wrote an awesome proposal. Lenox Millionaires, you can send picture if you’re at an event, email it to Luke and he can post it. Both outside of school and in school. It is moderated through Luke and I review also. There are no comments. We have 183 followers.

V. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

A. **Enrollment Information – Reformatted Summary – Data presentation by Pam Keuber.** TL – last year had many discussions on “optimal” grade size. RM – these are compatible with space. TL – yes. Target Enrollment for 2020 = 735. One key goal is to increase resident enrollment. Students new to Lenox after losing choice lottery – not on the goal sheets, curious. RV – this will be a harder number to determine. RV – this is a great visual for this goal. VF – in the future for the students going to private school - why they choose to go there might be good to capture.

**Public Comment – Molly Elliott - families who decide to choice in - What helps influence their decisions?**

B. **Acceptance of amended Lee-Lenox Shared Services Agreement – RV – Lee SC accepted the revised version.**
C. **New Policy on Transgender Students** – 3rd Reading, recommended edits to be distributed at meeting. – Tim Lee – sent draft policy draft to Jeff Perrotti – director of Safe Schools program for LGBTQ Students – He wrote the MA DESE & MA Commission on LGBTQ Youth. He really liked our policy and only had a few edits. Tim reviewed his changes. RM – is he saying that Massachusetts law may identify a name on official records?

**Motion made and seconded by RM and VF to accept policy with the edits made by Jeff Perrotti.**
VF aye, RV aye, FS aye, RM aye

VI. **DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION**

A. **Request from Berkshire County Education Task Force** – RV looking for support in the nature of $500 to support the work of the committee. Task force is estimating a cost in the $30,000 range to get all the work done. Task force said that if a pledge of $500 from each was done it would help leverage more. Trying to get this commitment done by November 13th. TL - In the budget for SC there is an area under dues if not look into Superintendent Office to transfer over. VF – we are participating, but I struggle with some of the assumptions of what are going to happen. Whether this group has a pre-identified agenda, I’m a little concerned. I’m struggling with someone else making the decisions not us for our district. It’s about whose driving the bus. RV – asking someone to come to some modeling of 4 different models with no clout. This group has no voting abilities. Robert Munch – I share some of your same concerns. I do feel that the more eyes on this the better. Motion to approve did not pass, put on next meeting agenda.

VII. **NEW BUSINESS**

A. **Shared Superintendent, Discussion** – RV - Tim has expressed an interest to apply for the Shared Superintendent position if he had our permission to pursue this. There’s another superintendent in the area who has received permission to pursue it. I wanted this to be a vote to allow our superintendent to pursue a shared superintendent if one came up. VF - he has a right to apply for whatever he wants to apply for. Clearly looking to share a super and have shared responsibilities.

If we want to get serious about sharing, there has to be some sort of administrative link between the 2 schools. Then I look at independent school district but also to explore other options.

**Public Comment: Pam Keuber** – I’m really against these discussions with Lee for 2 reasons:
1. No road map on these discussions
2. Strategic Plan investigation of collaboration. Where’s the work on the other collaborations?

RV – topic moved to next meeting.

**Motion made and seconded by RM and VF adjourn meeting at 9:37pm.**
VF aye, RV aye, FS aye, RM aye