DENNIS-YARMOUTH REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
Minutes of a School Committee Meeting
Thursday, June 29, 2023

A Dennis-Yarmouth Regional School Committee meeting was held on Thursday, June 29, 2023, at the Dennis-Yarmouth Regional High School Library in South Yarmouth, Massachusetts.

Members Present: Jeni Landers, Chairperson; Jennifer Rose, Vice Chairperson; Marilyn Bemis, Secretary; Tomas Tolentino, Treasurer; Joseph Tierney; Phillip Morris; and Joe Glynn.

Others Present: Carol Woodbury, Superintendent of Schools; David Flynn, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations; Eileen Whalen, Recording Secretary to the School Committee; Mrs. Maria Lopes; Dr. Marc Smith; Sherry Santini, Director of Humanities and the Arts; Betsy Pontius, Director of STEM Instruction; Kevin Depin, Principal, Ezra H. Baker Innovation School; Michelle Dunn; Pat Plucinski; Holly Poor.

At 6:06 p.m., Jeni Landers, Chairperson, called the meeting to order. Chair Landers explained how the interview process would proceed for this evening.

Interview Candidates for Superintendent
Dr. Marc Smith was interviewed by the School Committee.
The School Committee recessed from 6:45 p.m. to 6:53 p.m.
Mrs. Maria Lopes was interviewed by the School Committee.
The School Committee recessed from 7:22 to 7:32.

School Committee Deliberation on Candidates
Mr. Morris is impressed with both of the applicants. He appreciates Dr. Smith's sense of humor. He feels that Mrs. Lopes has done a good job and will be voting for her but would like it to be a unanimous vote.

Mr. Tierney says it will be a difficult decision with two highly qualified applicants. The subcommittee worked very hard. He felt that Dr. Smith gave very good answers.

Mr. Tolentino said he is approaching this decision as objectively as possible. The growth of the district is important. Both applicants had great answers. He feels that we need someone who will stick up for the district when it comes to budgets.   He said we need a leader who understands that; with experience and finance knowledge. He feels Dr. Smith is the best business person and that we need a leader for the next level.

Mr. Glynn thanked the search committee for their efforts. He said that even if the vote is not unanimous, once a new superintendent is chosen the decision will become unanimous.

Ms. Bemis said she had reviewed both candidate's resumes and applications and she also attended the forum. She is focused on what the system needs now. What are the challenges moving ahead? She feels that Dr. Smith has strong leadership skills and budget experience.

Ms. Rose feels positively regarding both candidates. She said that Dr. Smith is rational and practical and has realistic experience with budgets. She said that Mrs. Lopes has many relationships within the district and has taken different career steps. Ms. Rose attended the forum.

Chair Landers reviewed the work of the Superintendent Search Committee. It was hard work and there is an important decision to be made. There were 14 applicants and the search committee reviewed each application. The committee narrowed it down to 4 candidates; they interviewed 3. She says now there are 2 qualified candidates who are willing and able. She said that emotions have to be taken out of the decision. Ms. Landers said Mrs. Lopes has passion for students and good ideas for the transition period. She would seek input from the staff. She has a lot of experience in SPED. She also has strong relationship skills. Ms. Landers said she is extremely impressed with Dr. Smith's answers. She said he talked about things she hasn't heard such as a small response team. She felt his leadership and management style, experience with budgets, curriculum, and diversity along with knowledge of the community were all very important.

Mr. Morris spoke about the D-Y school system along with small town politics. He feels that the budget is not that complicated. He said he understands Dr. Smith's style. He feels that Mrs. Lopes has met the challenge; that she has already done so much for the district and is very positive.

Mr. Tierney said he is only one vote and that he is looking toward who would move the district forward in the best manner. He feels that Mrs. Lopes understands the specific role and knows the challenges moving forward. He said we are fortunate to have two great candidates.

Mr. Tolentino said that there are two very strong candidates and if Dr. Smith is chosen there would be a strong superintendent and assistant superintendent team. Mrs. Lopes has a lot of relationships with the staff and has served the district well. He said that he and the Committee will support whoever is chosen. He will vote for Dr. Smith.

Mr. Glynn said he will withhold his opinion until the vote is held.

Ms. Bemis likes both candidates and indicated that she will vote for Dr. Smith.

Ms. Rose will withhold her opinion until the vote.

Chair Landers said she attended the forums and read the feedback forms as well as the parent surveys that were distributed at an earlier date. She feels there is dissatisfaction with the status quo and a push for a new voice and new ideas. She got a sense of strong support for Dr. Smith.

Mr. Morris said that Carol Woodbury wrote a letter of support for Mrs. Lopes. He added that one decision will affect two others.

Mr. Glynn said that while surveys are important that this is not a popular vote; it is a subset of the two towns.

Vote on Superintendent Appointment

On a motion by Tomas Tolentino, seconded by Marilyn Bemis, and carried 4-3 it was

VOTED: To appoint Dr. Marc J. Smith as Superintendent of the Dennis-Yarmouth Regional School District.

On a motion by Phillip Morris, seconded by Joe Glynn and carried unanimously it was

VOTED: To move unanimous consent of the vote to appoint Dr. Smith as superintendent.

Items Distributed at Meeting

Entry Plan – Maria Lopes

Adjournment

At 8:27 p.m., on a motion by Joe Glynn, seconded by Marilyn Bemis, and carried unanimously 7-0; it was

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting.

Minutes recorded and prepared by,

Eileen M. Whalen, Assistant Secretary