



**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
BOXBOROUGH SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes
September 20, 2012**

Approved: October 15, 2012

PRESENT: Board of Selectmen - Les Fox, Chair; Frank Powers, Clerk; Raid Suleiman, Member; Vincent Amoroso, Member; and Robert Stemple, Member

Boxborough School Committee – Maria Neyland, Chair; Brigid Bieber, Vice Chair; and Tina Stevens

ALSO PRESENT: Boxborough School District Superintendent, Dr. Curtis Bates; Cheryl Mahoney, Department Assistant and Candidates: Mary Brolin, Kurt Hayes, Gary Kushner & Abigail Reip.

ABSENT: Selina Shaw, Town Administrator

The documents discussed herein have been included with the file copy of the agenda packet for the above referenced date and are hereby incorporated by reference.

Chair Fox called the meeting of the Boxborough Board of Selectmen to order at 8:22 P.M. in the Grange Meeting Room of Town Hall. He immediately announced that this meeting would be held jointly with the Boxborough School Committee.

Boxborough School Committee Chair, Maria Neyland, called the meeting of the Boxborough School Committee to order at 8:23 P.M. in the Grange Meeting Room of Town Hall.

Chair Neyland thanked the candidates for their willingness to participate in this format. She provided background as to what led to tonight's meeting and the process/procedures for these discussions. She specified that the new member would be determined by majority vote by both the School Committee and the Board of Selectmen. She gave the overview of the current vacancy and described the open term(s) as to this vacant position. She noted that though a current sitting member of the School Committee, Mary Brolin has been segregated from any School Committee or Selectmen communications in anticipation of these discussions.

INTERVIEW OF CANDIDATES TO FILL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VACANCY

Chair Neyland opened the interview process by asking the candidates to introduce themselves and to provide an opening statement.

Prior to her opening statement, Mary Brolin announced that she was recusing herself from the School Committee for the purposes of these discussions, and then provided her opening statement. The other candidates then provided their respective opening statements.

There was one question asked by each of the Board of Selectmen and School Committee, which was then responded to by each of the candidates. The panel of candidates rotated the order in which they responded to each question.

After the final question was answered by the panel, BSC Chair Neyland opened the floor for discussion and deliberation. There was another review of the process/procedures and the May 2013 election process. It was noted that these were four very high caliber candidates. Their knowledge and passion are an asset to our community.

APPOINTMENT TO AB REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (BY ROLL CALL VOTE OF THE SELECTMEN AND SCHOOL COMMITTEE.

The following was the result by Roll Call vote:

<u>Selectmen</u>	<u>Vote</u>	<u>School Committee</u>	<u>Vote</u>
Les Fox:	Brolin	Maria Neyland:	Brolin
Frank Powers:	Brolin	Brigid Bieber:	Brolin
Bob Stemple:	Hayes	Tina Stevens:	Brolin
Raid Suleiman:	Brolin		
Vince Amoroso:	Brolin		

Final Vote: Seven (7) votes for Brolin and one (1) vote for Hayes.

Mary Brolin accepted the appointment and then announced that she resigned from her current seat on the Local School Committee, effective immediately, and that she would be submitting her written resignation to the Town Clerk.

APPOINTMENT TO LOCAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (BY ROLL CALL VOTE OF THE ELECTMEN AND SCHOOL COMMITTEE.

With the preceding vote and Brolin’s resignation there was now a vacancy on the Local School Committee. A roll call vote was taken to fill this position.

<u>Selectmen</u>	<u>Vote</u>	<u>School Committee</u>	<u>Vote</u>
Les Fox:	Hayes	Maria Neyland:	Kushner
Frank Powers:	Hayes	Brigid Bieber:	Kushner
Bob Stemple:	Kushner	Tina Stevens:	Hayes
Raid Suleiman:	Kushner		
Vince Amoroso:	Kushner		

Final Vote: Five (5) votes for Kushner and three (3) vote for Hayes.

All of the candidates were again thanked for their participation and encouraged to consider running for the School Committee in May 2013.

ADJOURN

At 9:47 PM:

School Committee Member Bieber moved to adjourn. Seconded by School Committee Member Stevens. **Approved 3-0.**
Selectman Powers moved to adjourn. Seconded by Selectman Stemple. **Approved 5-0.**



**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
BOXBOROUGH SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

**Meeting Agenda
September 20, 2012
Boxborough Town Hall
Grange Meeting Room**

- 1. CALL TO ORDER, 8:15 PM**
- 2. INTERVIEW OF CANDIDATES TO FILL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VACANCY**
 - a) Mary Brolin
 - b) Kurt Hayes
 - c) Gary Kushner
 - d) Abigail Reip
- 3. APPOINTMENT TO AB REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (BY ROLL CALL VOTE OF THE BOS AND BSC)**
- 4. (POSSIBLE) APPOINTMENT TO LOCAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (BY ROLL CALL VOTE OF THE BOS AND BSC)**

[NB: This will be dependent upon outcome of item 3]
- 5. ADJOURN**

23 August, 2012

To: Boxborough School Committee Chair

From: Bruce Sabot

Maria:

Over eight years ago I decided to run for the local/regional school committee because I felt change was needed. At the local level our students were doing okay but it appeared they were falling behind as the curriculum was somewhat outdated. In addition, our professional development for our teachers needed to be expanded and our school administration had become less engaged with the parents and the community.

Since then much has changed for the better. We brought on Dr. Curtis Bates as the Superintendent/Curriculum Director. Working with the teachers, Dr. Bates revamped the curriculum which resulted in our students being better prepared for when they moved to regional school district. We invested wisely in technology which has allowed us to put Smartboards in every classroom and provide computers to all students and staff. We started our own Extended Day program which put money back into the district instead giving it to the region. We have used school choice in a very intelligent and respectful way to provide additional revenue to the school district. The list goes on.

It is now time for me to make a life changing decision. Based on a decision I have made I can no longer serve as a member of this committee. Please accept this letter as my resignation from the Boxborough School Committee. It has been an honor and a privilege to represent the community at the local and the region, to work with the administration of the Boxborough School District and to collaborate with my fellow school committee members. No one truly knows or understands the time commitment and dedication this position requires. We do not do it for the money, rather we do it because we deeply care about our community and the education of our children.

The future ahead for the Boxborough School District is still cloudy but if I may share my view as I depart the stage here is what I believe has to happen. Regionalization has to occur for the good of our students and ultimately the town. We really have no other option. This committee with the support of the Regionalization Sub-committee needs to make our town understand that no solution is perfect and we need to make some concessions in some areas while holding firm in others. I am confident that we will eventually get there. I am sorry I will not be able to witness the success first hand.

In closing I would like to thank the teachers and staff at Blanchard who educated my son Aaron and daughter Arielle. They are better students because of the education they received at Blanchard. I would like to thank Kathy Bower who was a big help to me especially during the two terms that I served as Chairperson of the committee. Next I would like to thank Dr. Curtis Bates and his past and current leadership team. Curt's vision for the school district has helped make the district what it is today. As the school committee was evaluating the various future directions for the district, Curt willingly took on

more responsibility. He did that despite several health challenges he personally faced and numerous situations that occurred within the district and required large amounts his time. His dedication and commitment to the school district is unparalleled. Thank you Curt for your partnership and extreme optimism. Finally I want to thank Maria, Brigid, Mary and Tina. Our working relationship has always been one of respect and partnership. We all shared the same goals for the school district and we did not let town politics get in the way. I applaud your dedication, thank you for your friendship and wish you continued success in the future.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bruce Sabot". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the "Best regards," text.

Bruce Sabot

Boxborough School Committee Vacancy

Bruce Sabot, after serving 12 years, has recently resigned from the Boxborough School Committee. We would like to thank Mr. Sabot for his effort and commitment to the Boxborough and Acton-Boxborough School Districts. Mr. Sabot held a combined seat and served on both the local (Boxborough) and regional (Acton-Boxborough) school committees. His resignation opens up a local/regional seat on the Boxborough and Acton-Boxborough School Committees. The seat has a three-year term that ends in May 2013. Massachusetts General Law provides that such a vacancy be filled by joint appointment of the Boxborough School Committee and Board of Selectmen.

The Boxborough School Committee and Board of Selectmen will interview interested candidates on September 20, 2012 at 8:15 pm in the Grange meeting room at Town Hall. Current school committee members who serve on only the local school committee are eligible to apply for this open seat. If any of the current local school committee members applies and is selected for the combined local/regional seat, there will then be an open seat on the local school committee. Therefore, interested parties should indicate in their application letters if they are interested in: 1) only the combined local/regional seat; 2) only the local seat; or 3) either seat. Application letters should also specify reason for interest in the position(s) and relevant experience.

Please send letters of interest to the Boxborough School Committee, Blanchard Memorial School, 493 Mass Ave, Boxborough, MA 01719. Deadline for submission is September 14, 2012. Please contact Maria Neyland at 978-264-1870 if you have any questions about the position.

POLICY ON JOINT ELECTIONS

BACKGROUND: On occasion, due to resignations or lack of candidates for elections, it is necessary for an elected Board/Committee and the Board of Selectmen to jointly elect a member of that Board/Committee to serve until the next Annual Town Election in May.

State Law requires that:

- The resignation is effective when delivered to the Town Clerk
- The Board/Committee must notify the Board of Selectmen, in writing, within 30 days of the resignation or lack of election. If not, only the Board of Selectmen may participate in the election of the new member.
- There must be seven days notice given of the Board of Selectmen Meeting at which the Election will take place.
- The Election must be done in a joint meeting.
- The Election must be a roll call vote.
- A majority of those eligible to vote must vote for the successful candidate.
- All phases of the process must follow the Open Meeting Law.

By policy, the Board of Selectmen requires that the election

- Be fair and open and appear to be fair and open
- Be joint between the two Boards

Fair and Open

The application process will be carried out by the Board/Committee needing a new member.

- 1) Application process should be public
 - announced in an Open Meeting
 - notices posted in the appropriate places (Town Hall, etc.)
 - publicity in the Beacon
- 2) Application process should be clear
 - how to apply and when
 - formal end date

Joint

- 1) If there are more than three candidates, the Board needing the member may conduct preliminary screening if desired but to no less than three finalist candidates. The Board of Selectmen should not be provided with one candidate.
- 2) Joint interviews should be held of the candidates/finalists



PART I ADMINISTRATION OF THE GOVERNMENT
(Chapters 1 through 182)

TITLE VII CITIES, TOWNS AND DISTRICTS

CHAPTER 41 OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES OF CITIES, TOWNS AND DISTRICTS

Section 11 Appointment to fill vacancy in town office

Section 11. As used in this section, the term "vacancy" includes a failure to elect. If a vacancy occurs in any town office, other than the office of selectman, town clerk, treasurer, collector of taxes or auditor, the selectmen shall in writing appoint a person to fill such vacancy. If there is a vacancy in a board consisting of two or more members, except a board whose members have been elected by proportional representation under chapter fifty-four A, the remaining members shall give written notice thereof, within one month of said vacancy, to the selectmen, who, with the remaining member or members of such board, shall, after one week's notice, fill such vacancy by roll call vote. The selectmen shall fill such vacancy if such board fails to give said notice within the time herein specified. A majority of the votes of the officers entitled to vote shall be necessary to such election. The person so appointed or elected shall be a registered voter of the town and shall perform the duties of the office until the next annual meeting or until another is qualified.

September 12, 2012

Ms. Maria Neyland
Chair
Boxborough School Committee
493 Massachusetts Avenue
Boxborough, MA 01719

Dear Ms. Neyland:

I am writing this letter to apply for the open Boxborough School Committee seat to serve on both the local (Boxborough) and regional (Acton-Boxborough) school committees. As you know, I am a current member of the Boxborough School Committee serving in a local seat. Over the past year or so I have been very involved in exploring the possibility of full regionalization with Acton and have become more familiar with the Acton/Boxborough Regional School District in the process. In addition, I currently have a daughter in the Region attending 8th grade at RJ Grey Junior High School and a daughter in 5th grade at Blanchard.

Since my oldest daughter entered the public school system I have been very involved in the schools and in the community. In 2004/2005 I served on Boxborough's School Council. From 2005 to 2008 I was the President of the Parent, Teachers, Friends organization at Blanchard. In 2008 I applied for the open local seat on the Boxborough School Committee (when you moved to the Local/Regional Seat) and was selected by the Boxborough School Committee and Board of Selectmen to fill that position. During my time on the Boxborough School Committee I have participated actively on the committee and on subcommittees. I believe this experience, as well as the full understanding of the time commitment involved, makes me a viable candidate for the open local/regional seat.

I look forward to continued service to the community of Boxborough.

Sincerely,

Mary F. Brolin

September 5, 2012

Dear Boxborough School Committee and Boxborough Board of Selectmen members:

I am writing you to submit my name as a candidate to fill the open seat on the Boxborough School Committee. Whether on the local level or the combined local/regional level, I would be honored to serve Boxborough as a member of the School Committee during this very important time.

If current local committee members Ms. Brolin and/or Ms. Stevens choose to seek the combined local/regional seat recently vacated by Mr. Sabot it would make perfect sense for you to fill the combined local/regional seat with a current, experienced local committee member. In that case, I would be interested in filling the then-open local seat. If Ms. Brolin and/or Ms. Stevens do not seek the combined local/regional seat I would be interested in filling the combined local/regional seat. Whether in a local or combined local/regional seat, I would look forward to working with and serving alongside Ms. Bieber, Ms. Brolin, Ms. Neyland, and Ms. Stevens as a local or local/regional member of the Boxborough School Committee.

As a Boxborough parent of three graduates of Blanchard Elementary who now attend Acton-Boxborough R.J. Grey Junior High School (Lindsey) and Acton-Boxborough Regional High School (Justin and Kyle), I have a vested interest in the work done by the Boxborough and Acton-Boxborough School Committees and the path we take in the future. Many School Committee and Board of Selectmen members may be aware that as a concerned citizen I have been involved in the current effort to evaluate the viability of the expansion of the Acton-Boxborough Regional School System to include grades PK-6.

Leveraging my professional background and experience, I have done research related to the financial and organizational implications of full regionalization and other models, attended meetings, and provided input to the Boxborough School Committee and the A-B Regionalization Study Committee. I spoke at the 2011 Annual Town Meeting in favor of moving forward with the study. As I said at that 2011 ATM and still say today, "I don't yet know if I'm for or against full regionalization, but I'm certainly in favor of continuing to explore it." Thankfully, the

majority of Boxborough Town Meeting members voted with the sentiment to continue the exploration as presented in "Sense of the Meeting" articles at both the 2011 and 2012 ATMs.

It has been clear for several years that the current model for our Boxborough elementary school system is unsustainable and unaffordable. With that backdrop, the path we take and decisions we make in the coming months and years are crucial to the future of our small town and excellent school system. My commitment as a member of the School Committee if I am fortunate enough to be chosen to serve is to methodically, objectively, and thoroughly analyze the options before us and dig deep to help uncover both the intended and unintended consequences of the options before us and the decisions we make. The School Committee members will continue to play a key part in raising awareness with the townspeople and educating them on the options that will be placed before them at Town Meeting in the spring of 2013. As a School Committee member I would work tirelessly to ensure that we present the findings, options, implications, rewards, and risks in a fact-based, objective, non-emotional manner. While this is a very emotionally charged issue with many, it is the responsibility of elected and appointed town officials to present the facts to the town and then let the voters decide the course Boxborough is to take into the future.

I look forward to meeting with the members of the Boxborough School Committee and Board of Selectmen for my interview on September 20, 2012 at 8:15 pm in the Grange meeting room at Boxborough Town Hall.

Sincerely,



Kurt Hayes



From: "Kushner, Gary" [REDACTED]

Date: September 11, 2012 10:08:48 PM EDT

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: school committee opening

Hello Maria, I would like to place my name in front of both the school committee and the BoS for the open position on the Boxborough school committee. I understand that you are collecting names/resumes for the open position.

I have been a member of the Boxborough Finance Committee for 12 out of the last 13 years. I was the liaison to the Acton Boxborough Regional school committee for at least 9 years and probably closer to 12. I am familiar with the workings of the ABRs committee more than the Blanchard School committee due to my liaison function over the years. I was associated with the JH and SH building committees for a number of years, but not part of the building committees. I started the Capital planning subcommittee a few years ago and remain on the sub committee in an AdHoc position. I expect to remain on the sub committee for a number of years until I am sure that the sub committee and its processes will continue to mature and evolve as needed without my guidance.

I believe in a strong school system. I know we have that today as our children easily fit into the regional school system when they move to 7th grade.

I have two children in Blanchard (grades 2 and 4). I have been a resident of the town for over 18 years.

In regards to regionalization, I have not yet made a final decision in case there are any questions. I am not sure if the Town can continue to support the school financially with the changing population and decreasing enrollments. I am also not sure if the Town can perform its functions with ~62% of the budget as an assessment to the region. I believe we need to see the regional agreement to determine what is best for Boxborough and our children and then let ATM speak its mind and heart.

Gary Kushner

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

I am writing to express interest in serving on the Boxborough School Committee. I understand that the current opening is for the local/regional seat, but would like to be considered only for the local seat should Mary Brolin be selected to serve on the regional board.

I have lived in Boxborough for nine years. Until July 2011, I had not served on any town boards, focusing only on school volunteer opportunities. Now that my children are older (one in college, two at ABRHS), I am ready and able to dedicate more time to helping on a broader level.

I am currently a member of the Energy Committee and am interested in giving back more to a community that serves its residents so well. Volunteers are the backbone of Boxborough, and I think that it is increasingly important for residents to step up and share the work that is needed to maintain the quality of life that we so enjoy here.

I have three children who have all graduated from Blanchard School. While at Blanchard, I served as a room parent (5 out of 7 years), Blanchard Band Parents Organization Vice-president (3 years), PTF volunteer (various activities), and yearbook coordinator (1 year). I am currently volunteering at the high school with the Acton-Boxborough Friends of Music, serving as the fundraising chair for our upcoming auction.

I was educated in public schools (elementary, secondary, and undergraduate) and believe strongly that we need to maintain the quality of our public education system. I would like the opportunity to serve on a board whose responsibility is just that!

Please let me know if you require any additional information for my consideration as a candidate. A hard copy of this letter will be delivered to the Blanchard School today (Friday, September 14, 2012) to insure receipt.

Thank you,

Abby Reip

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

1. The Town is currently looking into regionalization with Acton. The SC will vote and issue its recommendation to the Town. Should the School Committee's recommendation differ from the Town's ultimate decision and / or your personal view, how would you reconcile your personal feelings and ensure a smooth transition?
2. What personal or professional experience could you bring to the collective bargaining process and what would you do to ensure a positive atmosphere during the negotiation process?
3. What is your view on technology in the classroom?
4. In your opinion, what is the primary responsibility of the school committee and who are its constituents.
5. How do you see the relationship between the BOS, FinCom and School Committee?
6. As the financial pressures on the Town and School continue to pressure budgets, should cuts be needed, what broad categories would you look to? What would you suggest the SC do to help maintain support from the community and keep from dividing the community?
7. In your opinion, which is more important, a majority vote or a consensus on issues?
8. Please describe your understanding of the Open Meeting Law ?