

# Vocational Education Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

October 1 2015

7:00 a.m.

Boxborough Town Hall

PRESENT: Susan Bak, Gary Kushner, Hugh Fortmiller, Anne McNeece, Brigid Bieber, Cheryl Mahoney (guest)

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 a.m.

1. The minutes of the September 16th meeting were accepted as written.

2. Discussion and Updates:

A. Meeting at Minuteman on 9/28:

The committee attended an informational meeting about the new building project at Minuteman on 9/28. There are still unresolved questions about the size. There is a lack of confidence in the project by the shareholders. Gary is looking into the historical records of attendance from the various 16 member towns.

Questions:

Should they build a smaller school without state money?

Did they plan the new building around the programs they want to have?

Cheryl said the current number of 628 was a compromise between towns that wanted 800 and those that wanted 425. Simon may be able to clarify some of these questions; he will be invited to an upcoming meeting.

B. Meeting with Nashoba School Committee Chair. On September 25<sup>th</sup> Anne and Hugh met with Jennifer Rhodes the chair of the Nashoba Tech School Committee. Hugh's report on this meeting was reviewed. Highlights include:

Out of district students get the same choices and district students.

They have no capital plans for the future.

They have lower per pupil fees.

They have fewer older P.G. students.

We don't know what the "buy in" would be.

We need to compare the programs offered at Nashoba and Minuteman

C. Meetings with other Voc Ed schools:

Brigid will contact Assabet. We will wait to go there until we have been to Minuteman and Nashoba

Response from DESE to Susan's questions was unsatisfactory. Susan will contact town council for clarifications.

D. Interviews with Parents:

Anne & Brigid met with the Toups family and the Whitcomb families. All comments about Minuteman were positive. Some noted lacks were band, drama, and an auditorium. Children from these families were all high achievers who participated in higher-level classes and many extracurricular activities. It was noted that M.M. has smaller class sizes than A.B. and a better teacher student ratio. Many graduates have greater choices than those from A.B. Some answers to why so few students from Boxborough go there included: Parents don't know about Minuteman; there is an erroneous idea the graduates don't go to college; people don't know that there is transportation; people think that the academic program is limited. Anne & Brigid will write up a report.

3. Susan will ask Vince to meet with us on 10/20. If he can't make it he will ask Simon.

4. Our next meeting will be 10/20 at 7:00 a.m. at Town Hall.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:20 a.m.  
Respectfully Submitted:

Anne McNeece