

Minutes of Health Safety and Facilities subcommittee January 30 1pm GMS conference room

Call to order by Katie Caron at 1:07pm

In attendance, Katie Caron chair, Cameron Ward, Adrienne Nunez and phone in Susan Hollins

1. No public comment

2. KC asks to be brought up to speed on what priorities have been worked on and where committee members think we should focus our attention. specifically FRTA bussing

CW speaks about our decision to wait to discuss further until all the shelters are in place and all of the stops have been completely placed and made safe. He also mentions that perhaps high school students are where we should consider placing this program and how do we continue to maintain a level of safety for our children.

AN mentions that in November or December we had requested a full report from the transportation department and it has not been received

CW reminds us that it was brought to full committee and the committee turned it down at the time for safety concerns

AN will follow up with the report from Mike Howes

CW says he has spoken to The athletic Director about the banners at the high school after hearing from many community members about their condition as well as the appearance. He was told they will be attended to during February vacation and we should follow up in our next meeting. They will be worked on by central maintenance. He was also informed that they are thinking about a fundraiser for selling off old banners to get money to replace them. Also wonders why they are placed where they are? why not on sides?

KC mentions that not only does it look nice for alumni it is a place we can represent our school to the best of its ability so we shouldn't over look it

CW suggests we put it in the March agenda

CW talks about the passage way at Federal Street School, has been brought up before but not sure where that lies, people are using it as a cut through from Federal to Franklin

SH we just need gates, children can leave and sneak out, Seems like they were meant to be there in the beginning simple fix of just purchase and then install

KC brought up the large area people can enter and or escape from the school grounds at Four Corners that is right on Bernardston rd

CW believed that Superintendent Harper was going to speak to administrators, and that the concern was more that people were cutting through the grounds leaving it hard for us to control the environment for the children

AN these are considered capital expenses

SH capital expenses are for large purchases roofs and paving. two years ago or so the Dept of Public Works took over signs

AN spoke to Nancy Putnam that this in fact a concern for many and perhaps a sign could help. there is no signage for the school zone other then what is painted on the road

1:25 Principal Jake Toomey and Principal Melanie Goodwin join us

SH suggests a priority of us looking at the policy manual specifically EB safety Program and deciding on its need to be updated and more in depth

AN suggest we become more educated on our many different substance abuse prevention curriculums, get a report to see how we are doing and perhaps have Sarah Ahearn come speak to the full committee

SH agrees and thinks looking at our policy on health service education is a good idea as well, and looking into how our health services are coordinated

KC brings up scheduling feels that every other month should work

CW agrees and reminds us that we can call another meeting as long as we have 48 hours notice  
KC will send out schedule of second Tuesday of every other month

SH asks to go back to FRTA. mayor made comment about other communities using public transportation and taking on the research of that and using not instead of our own busing but to augment for families without other resources kids in school is the goal

CW mentions that the stops are there any one can use the stops but the goal presented by the mayor was to use FRTA instead of not as well as

SH agrees

KC encourages SH to take on the research

AN speaks about needing a large cultural shift to make it work, worth noting parents are already not using the buses for safety concerns suggest looking at Brattleboro they are a similar community and they may be utilizing public transport already

KC mentions having lived in larger cities where this is norm but it does have a lot of drawbacks and is clearly a cultural shift

3. KC glad to have both Principal Jake Toomey and Principal Melanie Goodwin hear to speak about our next agenda item parking, pick up and drop off at our schools.

JT picking up is our biggest issue, stagger release times to help, traffic congestion on Ferrante Ave as well as Bernardston Rd avg of 41 personal vehicles daily driving down and 34 parking on the road, narrow road, no way for emergency vehicles or snow plows to get through factors contributing small neighborhood school with more than just the neighborhood school choice and societal culture no one is walking and people aren't taking the bus we do have crossing guards on Federal and Silver. mornings are an issue but not as bad AEL is also a struggle but the new parking lot helped and signs

AN asks the principals to speak to the role of the building monitor, a place people are always quick to try and cut

JT they are our first and last line of defense, last check in for walkers, traffic directors and the first line of defense if an unsafe situation appears, parent unable to care for the child, disagreements about parking between parents or community members

MG does bussing the building monitor knows every car, creating a faster pick up, has come up with and tried many different plans Then she spoke on her own school issues, everyone is in a hurry, she has asked the police officer that lives on her street for help and was denied. the parking lot is too small, not enough for the teachers. the huge pot hole at the entrance of the driveway people are waiting in line all the way back to the registry. Largest concern is a policy on what to do if parents do not pick up the child, children repeatedly at the school til 5 waiting to be picked up, children riding the bus home to no parent and returning on the same bus to the school(kindergarteners must be released to an adult) Why doesn't the bus company call the parents at that point .She is also hearing about delays being an issue for parents since the schools have different start times, and overlapping release times for Newton and GMS are an issue Children aren't riding the busses because of safety concerns, she has had two bus monitors that quit

AN asks what adults are aiding in the process

MG principal, counselor and mostly paraprofessionals children don't go to the same place every day

CW blown away, at what point does our responsibility end, they come back to the school?

KC this is when our job as mandated reporters comes into play correct?

SH yes

MG we have reported

JT we would if it happened

KC there seems to be another piece of this is the overlapping dismissal times, of AEL and Four Corners and Federal Street as well as Newton and Middle School

MG we are the last run if someone needs to be somewhere else they come to us last

KC I have heard that Federal Street is having issues where the few spots they have are not plowed appropriately

SH asks if moving the fourth grade back exacerbated the situation? and brainstorms about shuttling all pick up students to one location allowing for less staff needed to stay and wait if no parent shows Where? community center?

AN likes the creative thinking our number 1 priority is safety parents are concerned for safety so they aren't putting kids on busses so solving that by driving, and it is too cold to walk but also sidewalks aren't shoveled so that is hindering as well our parents seems to need more resources than the schools are required to provide, a manifestation of a larger community issue, and needs a larger community response, police and city community action, need to dedicate time to looking at late pick up policy

SH agrees immediate safety focus and long term community issue don't forget it isn't just school families but residents as well.

JT lots of resident complaints, blocked driveways and fire hydrants parked in the wrong direction

KC beginning of the year parking enforcement was there

SH there is no way to make parking lots bigger

AN we should consider including city officials

SH would like to hear what solutions have been considered, perhaps one way roads during certain hours would help

KC clearly a lot to work on and we are grateful for input, we will need to prioritize safety and then go from there a lot to digest and think on

Adjournment 2:16