

**MINUTES  
TOWN OF BELMONT  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
SELECTMEN'S MEETING ROOM  
Monday, November 17, 2014  
8:00 AM**

2015 FEB 25 AM 10:08

**CALL TO ORDER**

A joint meeting of the Board and the School Committee (SC) was called to order in open session at 8:06 a.m. by Chair Rojas in the Selectmen's Meeting Room. Selectmen Baghdady and Paolillo were present.

SC Members present: Chair Laurie Slap, Ms. Laurie Graham, Ms. Anne Lougee, Ms. Elyse Shuster, and Dr. Lisa Fiore

Mr. John Phelan, Superintendent, and Ms. Janice Darius, Assistant Superintendent

SC Chair Slap called the SC meeting to order at 8:07 a.m.

**Interview School Committee Candidates**

Chair Rojas welcomed the candidates, and SC Chair Slap reviewed the morning's format. She briefly explained the voting process. Because of illness, Ms. Jamie Kang will need to withdraw as a candidate.

Each candidate introduced her/himself to the SC and to the Board, and each offered her/his reasons for seeking the SC position.

The candidates were then asked to respond to three questions.

***Question 1: What is the greatest strength of the Belmont Public Schools? the greatest challenge?***

Ms. Tara Donner spoke to the strong outcomes, teachers, and parents as strengths. Challenges include budget constraints and increasing enrollment.

Ms. Maura Fennelly spoke to teachers, resources, and the community as strengths. Challenges focus on increasing enrollment and budget building.

Ms. Erica Zidel spoke to innovation as a strength and increasing enrollment as a challenge, and further mentioned keeping the curriculum enriched as a challenge.

Mr. Ike Papadopoulos noted that enrollment, budget issues, and the need for a new high school are challenges. Strengths include the AAA bond rating and strong academics.

Ms. Susan Burgess-Cox said the overall system and teachers are strong, while challenges include increasing enrollment.

Mr. Tom Caputo said teachers and community involvement are among the strengths, and challenges include budget constraints and increasing enrollment.

Ms. Kim O'Mahoney noted that the system is strong and attracts families, while challenges include expanding enrollment.

***Question 2: What new skill set or capability would your appointment add that is currently lacking from the School Committee?***

Ms. Kim O'Mahoney noted that she will bring an accounting, finance, and business analysis perspective to the table, and noted also her role as an early childhood educator.

Mr. Tom Caputo highlighted his business/finance background as well as his understanding of technology.

Ms. Susan Burgess-Cox offered that her legal, policy, and administrative background would be assets on the SC.

Mr. Ike Papadopoulos spoke to his background in finance, specifically in managing budgets.

Ms. Erica Zidel noted that as a management consultant she has experience analyzing complex issues and offering innovative solutions.

Ms. Maura Fennelly offered that she would provide an outsider's perspective as well as experience in technology.

Ms. Tara Donner said she has the perspective of being a parent of elementary students and she has the perspective of a public school teacher.

***Question 3: How much time do you expect to have available for SC work? How will SC service fit in among all your activities and commitments?***

Each candidate expressed that she/he thought long and hard about the commitment (before applying) and would be dedicated to carving out the time needed to meet the needs of the SC.

Each candidate was given one minute to offer closing statements.

### **Vote to Appoint SC Member**

The Board of Selectmen vote: Two votes for Mr. Tom Caputo, and one vote for Mr. Ike Papadopoulos.

The School Committee vote: Two votes for Mr. Tom Caputo, two votes for Ms. Susan Burgess

Cox, and one vote for Ms. Erica Zidel.

The two candidates who received the most votes (Mr. Caputo and Ms. Burgess Cox) each made an additional statement.

The final vote (both boards): six votes for Mr. Caputo and two votes for Ms. Burgess Cox.

The SC voted to appoint Mr. Tom Caputo to the SC and the motion passed unanimously.

The Board then voted.

*The Board moved:* To appoint Mr. Tom Caputo to the SC.  
The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

The Board moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:13 a.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'DKale', is written over a horizontal line.

Mr. David Kale, Town Administrator