

**School Committee Ad Hoc Task Force on School Names**

**Monday, June 18, 2018**

5:30 PM – 7:00 PM

School Committee Room, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Town Hall

Ad Hoc Task Force Members Present: Helen Charlupski, Barbara Brown, Malcolm Cawthorne, John Dempsey, Lloyd Gellineau, Mark Gray, Ken Liss, and Pam Roberts.

Ad Hoc Task Force Members Absent: Sari Gubar, Misti Jaynes, and Farah Mamedova.

Staff Present: Robin Coyne.

Others Present: School Committee Members David Pollak and Jennifer Monopoli, Town Meeting Article 23 Petitioner Deborah Brown, and Town Meeting Member (Precinct 9)

Raul Fernandez.

**1) Approval of Minutes of the June 11, 2018 Meeting**

On a motion of Dr. Brown and seconded by Mr. Cawthorne, the School Committee Ad Hoc Task Force on School Names voted (Dr. Gellineau abstained because he was not at the June 11, 2018 meeting) to approve the June 11, 2018 minutes.

**2) Update on School Renaming Process**

Ms. Charlupski reported that the School Committee and Superintendent will be developing an inclusive, community process to select a new name. She will provide an update at the next meeting.

**3) Presentation of Research on Lincoln School Name**

Dr. Gellineau presented research on the Lincoln School name.

William Henry Lincoln was born on June 13, 1835. He grew up in Brookline, Massachusetts on Still Street. William was the son of Henry and Charlotte A. Lewis Lincoln. His father Henry Lincoln owned a shipping business in exporting merchant and owned clipper ships. When William had reached age 18 he began working at his father's business as an office clerk. In 1856, William then became the partner of management in sailing. Later on, he then created a partnership with Frank Thayer in which they owned a line of sailing ships and a chandlery business. This shipping business allowed William to become handsomely wealthy.

William, throughout his life, had become successful and participated in the community. During 1857 to 1861, Mr. Lincoln served as the secretary for the Christian Association for Young Men in Boston. He also served the role of vice president for the association in 1860. While participating in the church he helped the homeless in the community by providing shelter for these individuals. For several years in 1877 to 1904 he also became president of the Brookline Savings Bank. In between that timeframe he also served as the president of the Boston Commercial Club from 1883 to 1886. Another role he played in the community included serving as the Boston Chamber of Commerce from 1888 to 1895. He then went on to serve on the Parks Commission for about nine years.

Aside from Mr. Lincoln's participation in the Boston area, he had a great impact on the town of Brookline. He had a passion for education and contributed to it through the Brookline School Committee. Lincoln had a role of chairmanship and membership of this committee. For 22 years, he served as a member as well as chosen chairmen for sixteen consecutive elections.

In honor of William Henry Lincoln, the W. H. Lincoln School was established in 1883. The wealth in which Mr. Lincoln possessed had been shared with the school. In 1910, he installed an endowment in which would be given to deserving graduating Lincoln students. The purpose was to allow these students to continue on in their education. Also in 1895, Mr. Lincoln had played the role of a trustee at Wellesley College and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

William H. Lincoln led a long life of 91 years young. He passed away on November 10, 1926. Mr. Lincoln had lived a successful and meaningful life. He was passionate and committed to making a positive impact on the community in many ways. All of his achievements and contributions to the community have made him an influential leader.

#### Ad Hoc Task Force Discussion

Ad Hoc Task Force members suggested adding a section on Mr. Lincoln's gift of a set of plaster panels of the Parthenon Frieze. Ordered from the British Museum through the curator at the Museum of Fine Arts, the panels were installed first in the 19<sup>th</sup> century Lincoln School and then in the auditorium of the new school that followed in 1931. In 2003 the panels were moved to the Brookline High School Atrium.

Ad Hoc Task Force members noted Mr. Lincoln was an accomplished person who was civically engaged and contributed time and personal wealth to support various institutions, most notably the Brookline Schools. Members would be interested in getting additional information relating to his shipping business and trade with the south.

#### **4) Discussion of Report/Recommendations to School Committee**

##### Ad Hoc Task Force Discussion

Mr. Liss reported that Elizabeth Cabot was the first woman to serve on the Brookline School Committee (this question was raised at an earlier meeting).

Ad Hoc Task Force members discussed the need for additional research on the Heath School name before making a recommendation to the School Committee. Members noted that the school was named for the location on Heath Street and not to honor the family, but felt that it was important to dig deeper given that we know members of the Heath family owned slaves. Mr. Liss stated that the Massachusetts Historical Society has extensive Heath family correspondence. Perhaps a student would be interested in taking on this research. Members suggested that it would be helpful to have a family tree of the Heath family in Brookline and to address questions such as the following: Who lived on Heath Street? Was it the nuclear or extended Heath family? Did anyone else live on Heath Street? Were there other Heaths in Brookline? If yes, where did they live and what were their connections? Did any of the Heaths of the time say or do anything to

oppose slavery? What happened to the enslaved people? How did the family earn its wealth and how was it passed down? Who was the unnamed Heath slave owner?

The consensus of the Ad Hoc Task Force was to investigate who might do this research effectively, looking at primary sources such as Massachusetts Historical Society documents. Some thought that a Brookline High School student might be available to work on this research. Mr. Cawthorne will see if any Brookline High School students would be interested in working on this project. Others thought that a scholar would best lead this research. Dr. Brown will contact Boston University Professor Linda Heywood to see if she knows of any graduate students that might be willing to take on this project. Mr. Gray suggested also contacting University of Wisconsin Professor Stephen Kantrowitz to see if he has any suggestions. The Ad Hoc Task Force discussed whether there might be funds available for a graduate student stipend. The Ad Hoc Task Force agreed to first see if the work could be done for credit as an independent study.

Mr. Dempsey volunteered to research the Baldwin School name and provide a report at the next meeting.

#### Public Comment

Mr. Pollak requested that the Ad Hoc Task Force Report identify and include links to primary sources. Mr. Fernandez agreed with members that it is very important to follow up on the Heath name questions. The community will be able to learn a lot from this process. Ms. Brown thanked the Ad Hoc Task Force members for their work. She encouraged the Ad Hoc Task Force to scope out areas for additional research and then to hire someone, perhaps a graduate student familiar with these issues, to dig deep. Ms. Brown stated that she sent an email to the School Committee suggesting that they pay someone to conduct additional research on the school names.

#### **5) Meeting Schedule and Agenda for Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Ad Hoc Task Force will take place on Monday, August 6, 2018, 5:30 PM-7:00 PM, in the Walsh School Committee Room, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Town Hall. The agenda will include an update on the school naming process, presentation of Ad Hoc Task Force research on the Baldwin School, an update and discussion on Heath School name research (efforts to get student researchers and the scope and timeline of research), discussion of the report to the School Committee, and future meeting date(s).

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 PM.