

Attleboro Public Schools
Attleboro, Massachusetts
Special School Committee Meeting
March 23, 2015

School Committee Conference Room - Attleboro High School

Present: David Murphy, Chairman (At-Large); Lori Scales, Vice Chairperson (Ward IV); William Larson, Secretary (Ward II), Stephen Withers, Jr. (Ward III); Julienne Singer (At-Large);

Absent: Dianne Sawyer, (Ward I); Frances Zito (Ward V); James Stors (At-Large); Michael Tyler, (Ward VI).

Administration Present: David Sawyer, Assistant Superintendent; Marc Furtado, Director of Finance/Controller; Joan DeAngelis, Director of Student Services; and Jack Flynn, Student Representative

The Meeting was called to order at 7:15 p.m. The Chairman led the Committee in the Pledge of Allegiance and noted the meeting was being electronically recorded.

At 7:20 p.m. the following Motion was made:

A motion was made to enter into Executive Session pursuant to M.G.L. c.30A §21(a)(3) to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the school committee. The School Committee will reconvene in Open Session at approximately 7:30 p.m.

Roll Call:

Ms. Singer: Yes
Mr. Larson: Yes
Mr. Murphy: Yes
Ms. Scales: Yes
Mr. Withers: Yes

Vote: 5-0

At 7:40 p.m. the Committee re-entered Open Session: the Chairman reiterated that the meeting was being electronically recorded.

Open Forum: The Chairman explained the rules for Open Forum. There were no participants. Open Forum was closed.

Around Attleboro - Upcoming Events: Jack Flynn the SAC Student Representative to the School Committee briefed the Committee on the upcoming events; one being the transitional expo on Saturday, April 11th from 9:00 to 3:00. The event was described in detail.

Business Agenda:

K Open House Recap and Enrollment/Registration Process Discussion: The Director of Student Services, Joan DeAngelis briefed the Committee on the recent Open Houses held at the individual schools for kindergarten registration. The turnout was comparative to last year. Both Hyman Fine and Hill-Roberts had a larger turnout. These numbers will be watched. Ms. DeAngelis explained that this was advertised on the websites, in the local newspaper, on local the local cable channel, via e-mail, and through the mail system. Ms. DeAngelis briefed the Committee on the planned "day in the life of a kindergartener" planned for June 16th. (Flyer attached hereto and therefore made a part hereof). Kindergarten students will experience a bus ride, tour their schools, meet teachers, and enjoy a snack in the cafeteria.

The Committee asked if there were any other items of concern. It was noted that the class sizes for Grade 7 and 8 are at and above capacity in some schools. The administration will continue to watch this area.

PARCC Administration Briefing: The Assistant Superintendent, David Sawyer summarized the process that took place last week in preparation for the PARCC testing which began this morning. It was noted that Grades 3-8 took the PARCC science test; and Grade 9 students also are undergoing PARCC testing. Grades 10 students still are required to take the MCAS testing, and Grade 11 students were exempt at this time. Both elementary and high school were testing through computers. The middle school students were taking the paper test. There were a few technology challenges with the current systems in place. Mr. Sawyer stated the first day of testing went well.

The Committee inquired as to the status of the Technology Project to-date. There was a municipal technology plan in place that was put on hold in anticipation of the grant funding. When the grant funding failed, an attempt to revive the municipal funds was done and failed. Mr. Furtado was not aware of any new talks, but will keep the Committee apprised of any new information.

The Committee inquired as to the PARCC timeline. The administration noted the testing was a three-week process. The Department of Education is committed to the PARCC testing and is scheduled to make a final decision on the PARCC testing sometime in the fall.

School/Community Communications: The Assistant Superintendent summarized of the communication process. A more in depth presentation will be done at a later date. The strategic plan in place for expansion of the social media communications was discussed. For example: Facebook pages for each school. The ASPEN system is being utilized for e-mail communication. This process is almost complete with a majority of e-mail contacts in the system for families. ASPEN announced the use of a phone app and Attleboro plans to review and utilize this as an option for parents. ASPEN also offers an Easy IEP process which assists with the special education process. A plan will be in place for the fall. The Committee asked that by June a more in depth presentation be given.

Proposed Collective Bargaining Agreements: Clerical; Custodial; Maintenance & Trades: the Director of Finance/Controller, Marc Furtado noted the contracts were consistent across the district and the unions were thanked for bargaining in good faith. The agreements reached are beneficial to both sides.

Motion to approve the proposed collective bargaining agreement for the Clerical Union: Discussion: None: Vote: 5-0

Motion to approve the proposed collective bargaining agreement for the Custodial Union: Discussion: None: Vote: 5-0

Motion to approve the proposed collective bargaining agreement for the Maintenance & Trades Union: Discussion: None: Vote: 5-0.

The Committee thanked Mr. Furtado for his assistance with this process.

Finance and Budget Subcommittee: Mr. Larson briefed the Committee on the meeting of 3-10-15. The decision to freeze the budget spending was discussed. Utility costs to date are still trending high and are being carefully watched. Due to the excessive snow fall, the snow removal budget is over-extended. The district has submitted these costs to the City to be included in the FEMA reimbursement process. A percentage of these costs will come back to the district, but unfortunately will not come to fruition for approximately 20 months. The transportation department is in a somewhat better position, but still at a \$40,000 deficit to-date. Mr. Larson gave a brief overview of the FY16 Budget process and noted this is in the preliminary stages. Mr. Larson noted between the increased utility costs, snow removal costs, and increase in medical expenses this budget as well as the FY16 Budget will be quite challenging.

The Committee inquired where the \$40,000 deficit transportation originated from. This was a deficit from the budget that was passed by City Council.

Special Education Update: The full presentation will be done in April. Mr. Furtado briefed the Committee from a budgetary standpoint on the Special Education challenges. Mr. Furtado noted in terms of personnel and tuition, both are over budget. The out-of-district expenses are high and in terms of personnel the district has been scrambling all year to staff the programs we have in place in an appropriate manner. The FY16 Budget will reflect some of these items. It is a challenge across the board.

The Committee asked about the challenges. There are two areas: one being the restructuring which is currently being addressed by Dr. McSweeney and the second being the delivery of services. The delivery of services needs to be reviewed and revised.

The Chairman reiterated without the Special Education Director and Superintendent here, these items cannot be fully addressed. The concerns have been voiced by the Committee and a clear and articulated plan will be presented with substantive results at the April Meeting.

Minutes: Motion to approve the Minutes from 03-09-15 and the Special Meeting on 03-17-15: Discussion: None: Vote: 5-0

Consent Agenda:

Motion to approve a donation of three (3) Cheetah Television Mounts (APTMM28) valued at \$26.89 each for a total of \$86.07 to the Willett Elementary School: Discussion: None: Vote: 5-0

Motion to approve a donation of two (2) JENSEN® CD-560 (a stylish portable stereo with Bluetooth connectivity) valued at \$39.99 for a total of \$79.98 to the Willett Elementary School: Discussion: None: Vote: 5-0

Motion to approve a Field Trip Proposal for Brennan Middle School for approximately 100 Grade 8 students to attend High Meadows on June 16, 2015: student funded: Discussion: None: Vote: 5-0

Executive Session:

Motion to enter into Executive Session pursuant to M.G.L. c.30A §21(a)(3) to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the school committee. The school committee will not reconvene in Open Session: Discussion: None:

Roll Call:

Ms. Singer: Yes
Mr. Larson: Yes
Mr. Murphy: Yes
Ms. Scales: Yes
Mr. Withers: Yes

Vote: 5-0

The Meeting adjourned at 8:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

William Larson, Secretary

Attachments:

- Agenda
- Draft Minutes: 03-09-15
- Draft Minutes: 03-17-15
- Kindergarten Flyer
- AACS Disc: 03-23-15