

Attleboro Public Schools
Attleboro, Massachusetts
School Committee Meeting
Monday, September 10, 2012 @ 7:00 p.m.
School Committee Conference Room - Attleboro High School
Minutes

Present: Michael Tyler, (At Large), Chairman, Brenda Furtado, (Ward IV), Vice Chairperson, William Larson, (Ward II), Christopher O'Neil (Ward III), Frances Zito, (Ward V), Kenneth Parent, (Ward VI), David Murphy, (At Large)

Absent: Barbara Crow (At Large) and Teri Enegren, (Ward I)

Also Present: Pia Durkin, Ph.D., Superintendent, Dave Sawyer, Assistant Superintendent, Tom Rose, Business Manager, Student Representative, Keith Drucker, and Judy Nelson, Recording Secretary.

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m.

Salute to the Flag: Mr. Tyler led the Committee in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Notice of Electronic Recording: Chairman Tyler noted the meeting was being electronically recorded.

The Chairman congratulated the administration and welcomed everyone back. Mr. Tyler stated the district was currently working on a few kinks in the system.

Recognitions: Mr. Tyler explained for those unaware, there was contested contractual language with the initial bid process for the landscaping contract. This language was redone and the contract was placed back out to bid. This left the district without landscaping services during a crucial time of the months of June, July, and August. The maintenance staff stepped up and maintained the fields during this time. Mr. Murphy and Mr. O'Neil presented the awards.

Mr. Murphy noted Mr. Parenteau who is in charge of the facilities was not here this evening. Mr. Parenteau was critical in providing the leadership and organization to ensure the work was completed successfully. The Committee recognized the following members of the custodial staff for their assistance with the care of the school grounds during this process: Jeff Brousseau; Paul Bellevance; Charles Bradshaw; Franco Cerrone; Robert Cerrone; Norberto Dourado; Andre Faria; John Faria; Ricardo Faria, Joseph Furtado, Richard McLaughlin; Manuel Silva; and Antonio Sousa.

Community Update: School Sponsored Events: Chairman Tyler welcomed student representative, Keith Drucker. Mr. Drucker updated the committee on the school sponsored events (attached hereto and therefore made a part hereof).

Minutes: 08-20-12: A motion was made to approve the School Committee Minutes from the Meeting held on August 20, 2012 as presented: Discussion: None: Vote: 7-0

Open Forum: Mr. Tyler explained the guidelines of Open Forum. There were no participants.

Consent Agenda:

A motion was made to accept an anonymous donation in the amount of \$1,000 to the to the Thacher Elementary School gifts/donation line for the Accelerated Reader Program: Discussion: None: Vote: 7-0

A motion was made to accept a donation in the amount of \$420 from the New York Life Foundation to the Thacher Elementary School gifts/donation line: Discussion: None: Vote: 7-0

A motion was made to accept a donation in the amount of \$2,718 from the Bluefish Boosters which represents the 2011 Rome Boulevard Race proceeds allocated for pool improvements at Attleboro High School: Discussion: None: Vote:7-0

A motion was made to accept the donation of a wooden clarinet from the family of the late Ralph Cooper Woodworth Class of 1942 with an estimated value of \$200: Discussion: None: Vote: 7-0

A motion was made to declare one (1) Emerson Cabinet Grand Piano and one (1) Fischer Studio upright piano as surplus at Hyman Fine Elementary School as they are damaged and no longer being used: Discussion: None: Vote: 7-0

A motion was made to declare two (2) AMF Automatic Waste Compactors at Hyman Fine Elementary School as surplus as they are antiquated and no longer being used: Discussion: None: Vote: 7-0

New Business:

School Opening Report: The Superintendent noted the theme of the work this year is “high expectations” which is not different than years’ past and resonates with the adults and students. If we expect more from ourselves, we get more from our children. The Superintendent summarized each of the school openings.

Attleboro High School: Mr. Runey addressed all students stressing the phrase “Blue Pride”: the words mean Personal Responsibility Is Developed Everyday. Mr. Runey framed what personal responsibility means as a student. Mr. Sawyer, in his new role, will continue to hold his advisory sessions with the sophomores. Communication was a bit hampered, but there were back up plans in place for this problem. Mr. Runey in his entry to the building has shown what he is about and what he stands for in terms of the leader of this building. Several students who currently attend other high schools have come to learn more about Attleboro High School. Tours have been arranged. This is a credit to our staff.

Coelho Middle School: Mr. Boles addressed every student and encouraged students to do their best. His own personal challenge is that within two weeks, he will learn every 5th and 6th Graders names. Many team meetings are planned over the next few weeks to stress the theme of high expectations particularly for Coelho where our performance could be more.

Brennan Middle School: Ms. Saltzman met with every class and spoke about her goals and in turn asked students to set their own goals both individually and by grade level.

Wamsutta Middle School: Grade Level Teams met and decided what their grade level goals and norms were going to be. Students actively read the Student Handbook, and the student decided what was most important for them to keep their school safe and ensure a respectful environment.

Hill-Roberts Elementary: The focus for the year will be work and effort.

Hyman- Fine Elementary: opened many newcomer programs and the ELL Kindergarten of which this year there are ten languages (last year there were 16). The students were asked to answer the question: what makes you so smart?

Studley Elementary: Ms. McSweeney instilled the confidence in every student as they exited their buses. When the student was asked if they needed someone to walk with them to their classroom, the students were comfortable finding their own classroom.

Willett Elementary: Ms. Campbell’s presence was throughout. The students were quite excited about Ms. Campbell’s school spirit challenge. The student will name and talk about what Willett school spirit will look like.

Thacher Elementary: Thacher Pre-School opened today. The students were very excited. The Superintendent commented on the repaired sidewalks in the Thacher area. The whole staff pitched in with the number of buses and number of student with so many different needs.

The Superintendent noted an extremely successful opening with a few hiccups which Mr. Rose will address. Each day as we talk about high expectations and continuous improvement, we are getting better.

Ms. Furtado asked if the Coelho Principal, Mr. Boles could be scheduled to address the committee on the specials schedule as this is being done differently and she has received inquiries from constituents. Ms. Furtado would like the committee be updated on this item.

The Superintendent stated an update would be done, but asked the committee to consider waiting a month to see how this process is working. The process focuses more on in depth area of the elective. For example: instead of having: art, music, technology, the student would have art for a period of 4 or 5 weeks, then music, then technology. A summary will be provided to the committee and in October the middle school principals will attend to describe the process. Mr. Boles sent a letter home to families regarding this matter. The Superintendent encouraged anyone with questions to contact Mr. Boles.

Mr. Murphy congratulated the administration on the successful opening particularly with the number of new members joining the district in leadership roles. Mr. Murphy commented on a few of the events held: the Back to School Bash wherein principals were handing out backpacks and helping out; and the 9th Grade Welcome presentation at the high school. Mr. Murphy noted the tremendous turnout and also commended Mr. Drucker on his speech and thanked him for offering to help his peers.

Transportation Update: Mr. Tyler reminded the committee the administration is currently tying up any loose ends and hopes to have this resolved by the first week in October. There should be a clearer picture at that time especially with regard to the fee for service application process. The administration will work out any issues and report to the committee around the first week in October.

Business Manager, Tom Rose thanked the principals and staff for an amazing job working with the students, the bus company, and the transportation department. There has been huge progress made since last Thursday and Friday with a significant decline in calls, e-mails, and/or alerts. Currently there are 27 regular buses and 11 mini-buses with approximately 4500 students eligible to be transported. Later this month, as we review the fee for services, a more specific head count will be available.

The next step will be for the schools to feel comfortable that their bus list files are accurate. This process involves ten files: nine for the schools and one for the ELC. Bloom Transportation worked over the weekend to complete four of the files and completed two additional files this morning. These files will be forwarded to the schools to be reviewed for accuracy. This will be an ongoing process. Communication between the schools and Bloom Transportation is working.

The fee for service should be completed by the first week in October. Mr. Rose explained the changes being made at the different levels. Time will allow the district to work through the process of determining how many individuals are on each bus, he noted the four different start and end times throughout the district explaining some buses might have four different runs. The goal is to configure how many students are on each bus, finalize the student list, and review the fee for service applications to make the necessary determinations in conjunction with Bloom Transportation in early October.

Mr. Parent noted the district placed more responsibility on Bloom with regard to the scheduling and asked if there was something Attleboro Schools could have done to be better partners with regard to transferring information to Bloom in a more efficient format. Mr. Parent asked if the district has learned anything from this experience that might be useful next year to allow for a smoother process.

Some things could be done better to ensure a better start to FY14, but this was still a work in progress. Files were transferred to Bloom in late June. The transportation office worked hand-in-hand with Bloom to work toward an effective and smooth process. Bloom was asked to assume several new responsibilities. For example: route development and management of the call center being the point of contact and this will be reviewed for further improvement. Mr. Rose stressed the importance of the bus list files.

Mr. Murphy commented that before Mr. Rose's tenure the school department decided to hold the bus vendor responsible for the determination of bus routes. It is the bus company's job to drive the student and Attleboro's responsibility to educate the students. Collaboration is required by both parties. He stressed the importance of cooperation on the parts of both parties.

Mr. Rose noted our transportation office has worked very hard on this transition with the Bloom Transportation Company.

Mr. Murphy stated the importance of noting which variables changed and what impact those variables may or may not have had.

Ms. Furtado asked if Bloom had a full-time terminal manager dispatching from the beginning of the day to the end of the day.

Mr. Rose confirmed this.

Ms. Furtado stated in the previous contract Bloom did have the responsibility for bus scheduling and for the past three years should have just needed to be updated. Ms. Furtado expressed confusion over the statement that this was a "new responsibility".

Mr. Rose clarified the reference was to the development of the routes. Specifically in the past, the routes were developed by our transportation office. The reason being, the transportation office knew the area very well. All pertinent information was transferred to Bloom Transportation. We are currently working with Bloom to finalize this process. For example: before the bus routes were published in the newspaper, Bloom provided this information to the transportation office for review and/or any necessary changes. Bloom incorporated any changes and then the routes were published in the Sun Chronicle. This demonstrates a very good collaborative relationship. Going forward Bloom will be involved in this process.

Ms. Furtado noted the district is currently abiding by the contract noting over the next two years, Bloom will handle this process. Attleboro will provide the enrollment. This process should be smoother in the future. She thanked Mr. Rose for holding the vendor to the obligations of the contract.

The district will continue to update the list noting there will always be changes occurring. Both parties have a strong interest to ensure these lists remain up-to-date.

Ms. Furtado thanked Mr. Rose for being on top of this process.

Mr. Parent commented on the bid documents with regard to requirements of numbers of buses and inquired about the estimated number of small buses.

Mr. Rose asked for clarification.

Mr. Parent stated when the district went out to bid there were 29 buses in the bid specs. Mr. Parent did not recall on the estimated number of small buses needed.

Mr. Rose noted the number of small buses was 11.

Mr. Parent noted we are currently right on with that number and asked if there were any reason to believe would exceed that capacity.

It was too early to determine. At this time there are 27 regular buses on the ground. This is currently working well. The mini buses are currently maxed. We do not want to add unnecessary vehicles and the district will continue to work with Bloom.

Mr. Parent asked that when the report is done in October that we keep in mind the numbers of buses.

Ms. Furtado inquired about the two buses currently not being used. Are they considered spares and how does this process work.

Mr. Rose explained his guidance to Bloom Transportation was to use 26 buses. The routes were developed to utilize 26 buses. A decision was made the Friday before school began to add the additional bus. At this time we have not determined if the additional two buses will be necessary. Mr. Rose noted the billing received will be based on the number of buses used.

Mr. Parent asked how information is forwarded to Bloom.

In late June all Attleboro files were transferred electronically to Bloom via flash-drive. Bloom used these files as their basis for route development and creation of the lists currently being updated. When the school receives a new student, the school secretary completes a transportation request form which is faxed to Bloom Transportation. Bloom uses that document to update the list keeping the information accurate and up-to-date.

Mr. O'Neil asked if the district would meet the 45-minute target for bus route times.

Bloom is aware of this requirement and designed the routes to comply with the 45-minute requirement. The driver will exercise safety first by all means. Mr. Rose it will take time to determine how realistic that 45 minute time frame was; where there might be gaps; and where adjustments are needed. A solution will be reached with Bloom Transportation in conjunction with our transportation office and if need be with the School Committee.

Mr. Murphy noted when talking about variables that change from year-to-year with regard to bus policies pertaining to the 45-minute policy Mr. O'Neil mentioned, one of the variables that will not change is the speed that the buses will travel. The first priority is safe transportation of the students.

Dr. Durkin stated the district will not compromise a child's safety to meet a policy or requirement and noted if issues arise regarding the 45-minutes, the committee will be informed.

Mr. Murphy reiterated the drivers are aware of the first priority, the safe transportation of the student and asked that any issues be communicated with the committee.

The Superintendent explained Mr. Rose spent a great deal of time talking with Bloom Transportation. The Superintendent stressed how important this message was for the person behind the wheel. There is no undue pressure when we are discussing the safety of our students. The Superintendent explained some students, for example: a kindergarten student may take longer to get off and on a bus. This takes time. We are transporting roughly 4500 students per day. She thanked the committee for their patience.

Mr. Parent noted it does not involve just the administration, principals, teachers, and school committee patience. Mr. Parent asked that parents at home to be patient as well. He again stressed the most important factor is safety.

Professional Development Summary: Mr. Sawyer noted a busy summer with educators doing important work. Mr. Sawyer noted five (5) key areas. Teachers worked on curriculum: English, Math, Science, Social Studies, and ESL, content special pedagogy especially in the areas of English, Math, and ESL. Some teachers participated in state training in English, Math, and the Race to the Top initiatives that Attleboro is involved with regard to the grant. Some teachers were trained in WIDA which is the new curriculum for our ESL students. A number of teachers were trained on the data warehouse which is how the state shares assessment data with the district. Work was done on induction which is how a new educator is brought into the district and trained on what it means to be an educator in Attleboro. The new teacher orientation was held at the end of August as well as the mentor refresher training. Lastly, there was a lot of work done on evaluation.

There is a new evaluation system that we are very proud of. In order to ensure it works, we must ensure everyone knows what needs to be done. Evaluators began training in August and will log more hours this fall to ensure all evaluators are capable of doing the work. The educators began with the Superintendent discussing the evaluation tool during convocation and then received 45 minutes of training in their buildings. The next training for that evaluation system will be held on the September 19th early release day. Mr. Sawyer reminded everyone this date was moved and has been noted on the calendar.

Mr. Murphy asked for clarification on the induction process with regard to new teachers versus an experienced educator entering the Attleboro district.

Mr. Sawyer explained the two types of mentors in the district: Component A and Component B mentors. Component "A" means people new to education who receive very specialized training. Component "B" means educators are new to Attleboro, but not new to teaching.

Dr. Durkin noted how important it is for the induction to teach the culture of Attleboro and the expectations here in Attleboro.

Mr. Murphy noted it is an Attleboro induction to education rather than a general induction.

Mr. Sawyer explained that when teachers are initially licensed, this licensure is referred to as an initial licensure which requires the educator to participate in an induction program. There are guidelines set by the state that the Attleboro induction program needs abide by. The educator needs to prove induction participation when applying for the professional licensure. Component A learns what Attleboro expects during induction and work to meet the state requirements. Component B has met these requirements and is taught what it means to teach in Attleboro.

Mr. Murphy inquired how teachers have staff mentors.

Every new educator has a mentor for at least the first year. Mr. Sawyer noted the induction program has just recently been revised. He will inquire about the length of mentorship and report back to the committee.

Mr. Tyler asked when the teacher evaluation process starts to take place.

Mr. Sawyer explained the process as it relates to the new evaluation system. People are being trained in whatever aspect is being worked on before an expectation is required. Most of the system will come on line after the training on September 19th. People are conducting daily observations and this is an acceptable practice. The real components to the system will be covered during the training on September 19th.

Ms. Furtado asked if an update on the MCAS information could be given as she has received constituent inquiries. People were asking when the scores would be presented at a public meeting.

Dr. Durkin noted the preliminary data for ELA was received in June. The preliminary Math data was received in August. Last week more district data was received. The Superintendent estimates before the next scheduled meeting, the Commissioner will release information. There is a tentative scheduled presentation for the September 24th meeting. If the data remains embargoed then a presentation will be done at the first meeting in October. The Superintendent explained the information is embargoed until the commissioner makes it public.

Mr. Sawyer noted historically it would be soon, but stated concern that release on some of the data that the administration has been allowed to preview was released very late, which reveals the state is struggling to meet some of the changes it has created for itself. Therefore, it might be a little later than we are used to. Historically, we would be ready for the next meeting.

Dr. Durkin noted another important factor is that we are in a new accountability system this year. Massachusetts requested and successfully got approved for a waiver from the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) system which basically was you meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) "yes" or "no". We were in all different levels of AYP for example: restructuring or needs improvement. There are now five (5) levels: Level 1 being the best, Level 5 would require a state takeover. The explanation of this accountability will be explained to the committee: what the accountability system means, where does Attleboro fall as a district, and where to the schools fall. The Superintendent reiterated the mandate requiring the information to remain embargoed. The Superintendent noted once the commissioner releases this information, a meeting has been held in the past.

Personnel Report: David Sawyer, Assistant Superintendent: Mr. Sawyer noted three resignations and 18 appointments (see Personnel Report dated 09-10-12 attached hereto and therefore made a part hereof).

Superintendent's Recommendation to Approve: Mr. Tyler asked the Superintendent to give a brief overlay.

The Superintendent explained these positions are known to the committee each year according to Massachusetts Laws. The school physician: Dr. Entwistle who has been the physician on call. Dr. Entwistle is consulted regarding policies and any medical emergencies. John Newport is not a supervisor of attendance, he is an attendance officer. The title is in the policy, but Attleboro has only had one attendance officer. Mr. Newport has been with Attleboro several years and does a wonderful job working with residency issues when there is a question. There are two school nurses because of retirements; one at Thacher and one at Hill-Roberts.

A motion was made to approve in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, Section 53: School Physician: Raymond Entwistle, M.D.; School Nurse: Lisa Gleason; School Nurse: Sherri Knight-Cloud and in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 76, Section 19: Supervisor of Attendance: John Newport: Discussion:

Ms. Furtado asked for clarification that there was only one attendance officer.

This was confirmed.

Ms. Furtado noted the policy states supervisors of attendance. Ms. Furtado asked if there had been more and this position was cut due to fiscal constraints.

The Superintendent noted since her tenure there has only been one attendance officer. The committee could chose to amend the policy with language such as "and/or attendance officer". It was placed on the agenda as supervisor because that is how the policy reads.

Ms. Furtado asked the schedule of the attendance officer and if this was a full-time position.

It was noted Mr. Newport works many hours some during the weekend because of the need to follow up with families. Dr. Durkin noted this is a stipend position.

Ms. Furtado noted the reason for questions was that we have one person for Grades K-12. She noted this was a lot for one person to cover.

Vote: 7-0

Committee Reports

Finance, Facilities and Procurement Sub-Committee: Mr. Parent asked for an overview of the parking lot progress.

Mr. Rose explained the work for the parking lot will take place in October. The advertisement was similar to the athletic trainer contract. We will advertise in the Goods and Services Bulletin on September 17th; the Central Register on September 19th; and in the Sun Chronicle on both September 17th and September 24th. There will be a two-week timeframe to submit bids for repaving, sealing, and patching the high school parking lot. There is a Request for Proposal (RFP) available for 7,000 linear feet to be repaved, repainted with new lines. Bids are due October 3rd at 10:00 a.m. A vendor will be selected to be presented to the Finance Committee for approval. This will be brought to full committee and once approved the work will begin. There should be sufficient time to get the job completed this fall.

Mr. Tyler asked for clarification as to whether we were repaving or crack filling.

Mr. Rose read the specifics of the bid into record. The plan is to seal approximately 7,000 linear feet of cracks ¼ inch by ¼ inch by cleaning with blown air. We will apply poly-fiber re-enforced joint sealant that meets or exceeds federal highway speculation on the parking area of approximately 176,400 square feet, clean the area of dirt and debris using high power blowers, and chemically treat stains, apply two coats of car-tar emulsion which meets or exceeds government specs, apply a third coat of sealant to the entrances and travel lanes where applicable, and repaint lines and pavement markings as existing which includes 520 lines, six handicap, two no parking, 300 feet for fire lanes, four areas of hash, two crosswalks, and 300 linear feet of curbing.

Mr. Parent commented the price would be under \$25,000 and that we would not have to accept a bid that comes in higher.

Mr. Rose asked that we wait to see what bids come in on October 3rd. We know how much money we want to spend and the hope is to come up with some savings. The key is to thoroughly advertise, get as many people interested as possible to create a good competitive environment, and get a good vendor at a good price to move forward with the job in the fall.

Mr. Parent asked Mr. Rose to place this item on the Finance Sub-Committee Meeting Agenda for September 19th.

Ms. Furtado questioned the other schools regarding the lines in the parking lot and crosswalks and whose responsibility that was. Ms. Furtado noted at some of the middle schools the crosswalks, where the students line up to get on the buses, are no longer visible.

Mr. Rose will get back to the committee with this information. Mr. Rose asked that Ms. Furtado provide more specifics as to her inquiry for example: what school and what lines.

Ms. Furtado noted at Wamsutta Middle School: the lining in the parking lot there is hardly any, but the main concern is where the students need to cross to get on the bus, they need to cross as walkers, a lot of those lines need to be re-lined. Ms. Furtado had been at Brennan Middle School and did not see lines there either. Ms. Furtado noted at one point there was discussion for relining the high school and we thought about getting a bid done for all the schools sealed and lined in an attempt to group the bid for a better price.

Mr. Rose noted we were unable to do that due to the cost.

Ms. Furtado stated her concerns were the lines and crosswalks in the school parking lots for safety reasons.

Mr. Murphy asked that a review be done to ensure we were not missing crosswalks that were necessary. Mr. Murphy noted crosswalk painting would be an easy enough job to complete and we would not want to wait to bid for safety reasons.

Ms. Furtado noted the principals and teachers are crossing the children to ensure safety. There is no safety issue at this time, but felt it should be done.

Mr. Parent noted since the packets would be going out this week for Finance, please include the athletic trainer information.

Notification of bills and warrants:

Warrant: 5CS007: 08-22-12	\$350,929.54
Warrant: 5CS008: 08-29-12	\$281,177.71

Mr. Parent asked if the Superintendent had a conflict with this date as it is the night of the Open Houses at the elementary schools. The Superintendent stated she might be a bit late, but Mr. Rose would be present. She thanked Mr. Parent. The next meeting will be held on 09-19-12 @ 7:00 p.m.

Curriculum and Instruction Sub-Committee: Mr. O'Neil noted the next meeting will be held on 10-16-12 @ 6:30 p.m.

Mr. O'Neil noted the Bergevine Scholarship Foundation would be holding their dance this weekend at the Elks Club.

Policy Sub-Committee: Ms. Furtado stated the next meeting will be held on 09-17-12 @ 7:00 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Tyler, Chairman

Attachments:

1. Agenda dated 09-10-12
2. School Sponsored Events; 09-10-12
3. Draft Minutes 08-20-12
4. School Committee Personnel Report – September 10, 2012
5. Policy BDC:
6. Announcement of Vacancy Packet (06-13-12)
7. Warrant: 5CS007
8. Warrant: 5CS008