

**REGULAR SESSION MINUTES**  
**January 14, 2015**

A meeting of the Swampscott School Committee was held in Room B208 at Swampscott High School commencing at 7:02 p.m. with the following members present: Ms. Carin Marshall, Vice Chairman; Ms. Amy OConnor, Ms. Suzanne Wright and Ms. Gargi Cooper. Also Present: Ms. Pamela Angelakis, M.A. M.Ed., Superintendent of Schools and Lois Longin, Director of Curriculum and Instruction and Student Representatives Megan Russo and Ian Crimmins. Mr. Ted Delano, Chairman was absent.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

David Townsend came forward to speak on behalf of the Technology Committee. He explained that he works in the technology field and stressed the importance of technology within the District. He added that the level of tech in our District is further behind than any other around world and that students need exposure to high technology for student skills and job skills. He stated it should be made a top priority in education.

Margarett Ardman, a 6<sup>th</sup> grade Science teacher at the Middle School, stated she was surprised at the level of technology when she came to the District. She stated that the lack of tech makes it difficult to access programs as well as difficulties in supporting students especially in the sciences. She added that students know what is available and wonder why they aren't utilizing it.

Catie Porter, the science curriculum coordinator at the Middle School, came forward to give the Committee some examples of the technology issues she faces at the Middle School, including real-time work with students. She added that there would be difficulties going forward with curriculum changes as most new textbooks involve a digital component and the current computers can't support them. She added that she was happy to see all of the support for tech improvements and thanked the Committee as well as the PTO for their work thus far to increase technology.

Heidi McCoy spoke about her concerns with bringing Wi-Fi into the schools and the ability to monitor how students are using it. She stated she has no concerns with the educational factors but with the distractions of other devices.

**COMMITTEE COMMENT**

There was none.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

**Business & Operations Manager – vote required**

Ms. Angelakis gave some background into the posting of the Business & Operations Manager position as well as how Mr. Castellarin has functioned within the District since June of 2014. She spoke about the candidates and interview process and explained that throughout the interviews she realized that one candidate rose to the top and she was presenting Mr. Evan Katz to the Committee as her candidate for School Business Administrator. She explained that there were several reasons for the change, but that when the initial process started she didn't think they would find a candidate as qualified as Mr. Katz and that she felt he was a perfect fit for the District. She gave the Committee Mr. Katz's background and introduced him for any questions. Mr. Katz explained that he felt his background in both school and town government would be beneficial to the District and explained some of his past experience, including the MSBA school building process. Ms. OConnor questioned if Mr. Castellarin and Mr. Younger were involved in the process. Ms. Angelakis stated Mr. Castellarin was on the interview committee and very involved in the process and that she had shared information with Mr. Younger. Ms. OConnor said she felt it was what the District needed, but was surprised at the change. Ms. Angelakis spoke about how invaluable Mr. Castellarin has been and that she didn't think they would find a candidate like Mr. Katz. She added that Mr. Castellarin was a part of the process and gave his stamp of approval. Ms. OConnor asked Mr. Katz if he was comfortable with the change in job title. Mr. Katz said that he had read the job description and was comfortable performing the job however the Superintendent defines it. Ms. OConnor questioned what Mr. Katz sees the biggest problems in the District in the next few years. Mr. Katz referred to the school buildings and said the challenges of finances will always be ongoing and that he tries to present things as a

matter of choices. Ms. Cooper expressed concern with the planning of the upcoming budget season. Ms. Angelakis stated that she was proposing a start date of March 23<sup>rd</sup> for Mr. Katz and that Mr. Castellarin would continue through this current budget process. Ms. Cooper questioned Mr. Katz's experience with the MSBA process due to the state of some of our buildings. Ms. Angelakis said the District was targeting next January for resubmission of the statement of interest. Ms. Cooper said she was more referring to any available state money for repairs. Mr. Katz stated he would work whichever way the District wanted to go. Ms. Marshall questioned how much of the MSBA process Mr. Katz was involved in. He stated it was 75% complete. Ms. Marshall asked whether he had ever been involved in a process that didn't pass. Mr. Katz stated he had not but that it was important to learn from the failure and apply that to the next time.

Ms. Angelakis referred to the attached updated contract. Ms. Marshall questioned whether the contract could be put on the next agenda for discussion in Executive Session. Ms. Angelakis explained they were hoping to finalize this evening and that the contract was reviewed by legal counsel and that it was her recommendation to accept and approve the appointment. Ms. Cooper was concerned with having the time to review the contract. Ms. Wright added that it looked standard and that the two pieces to be discussed were length of contract and salary and wondered if the Committee had a say in that. Ms. Angelakis stated it was a three-year contract with salary starting at \$118,000. Ms. OConnor suggested moving on to the next agenda item and coming back at the conclusion of the meeting for further discussion. Ms. Marshall agreed.

### **Technology – current state & 5 year plan**

Ms. Angelakis explained that DESE requires the District to have a Technology Plan and invited Mr. Kaczynski to come forward to present to the Committee the 5 year plan. Mr. Kaczynski explained that the report was put together by a group of 12 people as part of the Tech Committee. He gave an overview of the current state and conditions of the SPS technology throughout the District's schools. Mr. Kaczynski then reviewed the report's six recommendations for the District which included replacing aging equipment, updating infrastructure, establishing a replacement cycle, increasing staffing for tech support, maintaining software licenses and Professional Development for staff. He further reviewed the categories of focus including hardware, software, Wi-Fi, funding, professional development, communications and curriculum.

Ms. Wright questioned whether the Committee would be voting on the plan. Mr. Kaczynski stated it was just a presentation. Ms. Marshall stated it was for information and if the District wanted to proceed with the recommendations it would need to figure out the money end of it. Ms. Wright stated her passion is with technology and she knew that the District was starting well behind the starting line but that while she appreciated the effort put into the plan she felt the document read more like a procurement wish list. She expressed concern that she didn't feel the document addressed what the District truly needed and the reasons for need. She felt it was a great wish-list but didn't speak to a strategy or plan to build the District technology and that it was difficult to assess expenditures without strategy and purpose. Ms. Angelakis stated she heard what was being said and that this should be taken more as a report, and to keep in mind that in her entry plan findings she would be developing a theory of action. Ms. Wright questioned what the purpose of the report was then and Ms. Angelakis stated it was the current state of technology in the District. Ms. OConnor agreed with Ms. Wright that she felt the Committee wasn't presented with what was needed and felt that more information was necessary to determine where the District was going rather than just saying things are out of date. Ms. Cooper expressed concerns about the "now" and how textbooks are out of date and other Districts use e-books that our District's technology cannot support. Ms. Marshall added that she was expecting something different as well. Ms. Angelakis asked for clarification on what the Committee was looking to the Tech Committee to clarify. There was a lengthy discussion on the items that the Committee would like to learn from the Tech Committee. Ms. Marshall suggested possibly meeting with the Tech Committee to gain further understanding of the plan. Ms. Angelakis agreed that was a good first step.

*At 9:00 p.m. a break was taken. Session resumed at 9:09 p.m.*

### **Business & Operations Manager – vote required**

Ms. Marshall asked if there was any discussion before entertaining a motion to approve the contract and appointment of Mr. Katz.

**MOTION:**

It was moved by Ms. Wright and seconded by Ms. OConnor to approve the appointment and contract of Evan Katz as School Business Administrator.

Ms. OConnor clarified that the contract has been okayed by legal counsel. Ms. Angelakis stated it had.

**VOTE ON MOTION:**

The motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Katz thanked the Committee and stated he was excited to begin working with everyone. Ms. Angelakis thanked the Committee for supporting her recommendation. Ms. OConnor explained that she thought they were talking a leap of faith, but were trusting in Ms. Angelakis. Ms. Angelakis stated she was 100% confident with the decision and felt Mr. Katz was the missing piece to the puzzle in the District.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Swampscott SC Protocols – draft**

**MOTION:**

It was moved by Ms. OConnor and seconded by Ms. Cooper to table the matter under New Business until the next meeting of January 26, 2015. The motion passed 4-0.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:**

At 9:15 p.m., it was moved by Ms. OConnor and seconded by Ms. Wright to adjourn. The motion passed 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela R.H. Angelakis, M.A., M.Ed.  
Superintendent of Schools  
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Date: