

REGULAR SESSION MINUTES
August 4, 2014

A meeting of the Swampscott School Committee was held in Room B208 at Swampscott High School commencing at 7:00 p.m. with the following members present: Mr. Ted Delano, Chairman; Ms. Carin Marshall, Vice Chairman; Ms. Amy OConnor and Ms. Suzanne Wright. Also Present: Ms. Pamela Angelakis, M.A. M.Ed., Superintendent of Schools, Dave Castellarin, Town Accountant and Student Representatives Megan Russo and Ian Crimmins. Ms. Gargi Cooper was absent.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Matt Strauss, the Chair of the Board of Selectmen, came forward to speak about the concept of a town central Business Office and to show his support for that proposal as well as to commend the Committee for taking the first step.

Laura Spathanas, a member of the Board of Selectmen and liaison to the School Committee came to introduce herself to the Committee and stated she looked forward to working with them.

COMMITTEE COMMENT

Ms. OConnor commented on what Mr. Strauss had spoken to and add that she felt as a Committee member she had some hesitation in that she felt her first role was to the kids in the school system and that it would be a delicate balance. Mr. Strauss requested to respond. He agreed with Ms. OConnor and added that while the concept is not a perfect fit, he could see a lot of positives to an arrangement.

Mr. Delano updated the Committee on some housekeeping issues. He advised that the workshop on the 18th would be postponed. The opening day convocation is August 25th at 8:30 a.m. He added that the Committee needed to agree on a future date for a workshop meeting for the Superintendent's evaluation. Mr. Delano also thanked Mr. Castellarin for attending and for all of his hard work.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approval of the minutes from the July 21, 2014 meeting will be added to the next meeting agenda as Ms. Wright and Ms. Marshall would need to abstain from voting.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Donation – M.S. PTO \$17,000 to fund Chromebooks/Nexus 7 Tablets

Ms. Angelakis invited forward Middle School teachers Natalie Paine and Adam Scharfenberger to give a presentation of how the Chromebooks and tablets will be used. Ms. Paine explained that the need for more resources in the computer lab came after an earlier faculty meeting in which teachers expressed a greater need for use of the labs. Ms. Paine gave an overview of the equipment acquired over the last five years as well as an inventory of the current technology available at the middle school. Mr. Scharfenberger then explained the proposed purchases of Chromebooks and their uses for the students. Ms. Paine reviewed the benefits for the students of using Google apps and having assigned Google accounts. Mr. Scharfenberger reviewed the purchase of Nexus 7 tablets and explained their proposed uses. He added that they were very honored to have the support of the PTO and the District to make this happen. Ms. OConnor questioned the timeframe of getting the products into the schools. Ms. Paine stated the tablets had already been ordered. Ian Crimmins asked about a plan for insurance if anything should break. Mr. Scharfenberger stated they had looked into the insurance but that it wasn't always worth adding. Ms. Angelakis thanked both for their presentation and for leading the charge in bringing great things to the District. Mr. Delano stated he would entertain a motion to accept the donation of \$17,000 from the Middle School PTO and that traditionally there is presented a donation slip and that it would be presented at the next meeting but he felt comfortable accepting the donation tonight.

MOTION:

It was moved by Ms. OConnor and seconded by Ms. Marshall to approve the \$17,000 donation from the Middle School PTO to fund Chromebooks and Nexus 7 tablets for use in math and science classrooms in all four grades.

Ms. Wright questioned whether Mr. Kaczynski felt that the technology could be supported with the current set-up. He stated it could.

VOTE ON MOTION: The motion passed 4-0.

MOTION: It was moved by Ms. Marshall and seconded by Ms. O'Connor to move up in the agenda for discussion only the issue of the Business Office Personnel/Town Accountant. The motion passed 4-0.

NEW BUSINESS

Business Office Personnel/Town Accountant

Ms. Angelakis explained that when Mr. White left the business office in the spring she felt it was time to pause and make some decisions for the next step. She added that through discussions at the Tri-Chair meetings it was discussed how to move forward and they discussed sharing accounting services of the Town Accountant to get through this period until a permanent decision is made. She explained to the Committee that Mr. Castellarin has been helping out in the business office as well as working on the general government side and that it has been working out beautifully. She added that it is refreshing to have someone in the business office that she can ask a question and who also provides education on laws and regulations. She reminded the Committee that they were still waiting for a report from the DOR and its recommendations which could help direct how the District moves forward. Ms. Angelakis stated she was hoping for input of the Committee on the subject. Mr. Delano asked Mr. Castellarin to explain the upcoming MUNIS training for District employees. Mr. Castellarin gave the Committee an overview of the scheduled training on August 20 and 21 and explained how requisitions used to be handled and the proposed new plan for each building as the District now has building based budgets. He further explained it will allow for more transparency within spending. Ms. Angelakis agreed that it was much more exact and allows less room for error. Ms. Wright brought up the issue of possible hours to be spent on the town government side as sharing with the District. There was a lengthy discussion regarding the creation of a job description from Ms. Angelakis for Finance and Operations being separate jobs. Mr. Delano questioned whether Ms. Angelakis could do that and she stated she would. Mr. Castellarin explained the issues he felt need to be worked out including location. He stated there was some discussion of moving to one location and possibly using the former Senior Center as a central office location. Ms. Angelakis stressed her office would not be relocated, only the business office was being discussed. Ms. Wright expressed some concern in which department was paying for which services. Ms. Marshall stated that a job description needs to be created to determine if Mr. Castellarin wants the job and if the District wants him. Ms. Wright further added that a job description was important because the District needs to nail down what it wishes the job to look like for any future arrangement as well as currently. Ms. Angelakis suggested waiting to see what the recommendations of the DOR are as well. There was discussion regarding facilities and it was discussed that Mr. Delano would contact Mr. Younger to further those conversations. It was decided to schedule the next meeting of the Committee for August 27th and Mr. Delano entertained a motion to schedule the meeting.

MOTION: It was moved by Ms. Marshall and seconded by Ms. O'Connor to schedule the next meeting of the School Committee for August 27, 2014. The motion passed 4-0.

MOTION: It was moved by Ms. Marshall and seconded by Ms. O'Connor to return to the Superintendent's Report. The motion passed 4-0.

Ms. Angelakis stated she would move and address some of the issues in her report at the August 27th meeting. She further advised the Committee of an issue regarding the elementary start and stop times. She explained that she previously misspoke regarding a paragraph in the collective bargaining and that any change to the start and stop times needs to be negotiated and voted by the teachers and therefore the times would have to remain as previously reported with the stop times for elementary and Middle School both being 2:20. Ms. O'Connor expressed concern about parents having conflicts with that schedule. It was decided to communicate any possible change to the times if a vote by the teachers could be taken on August 25th.

Ms. Angelakis reported to the Committee her involvement in the Roland Jackson Scholarship Committee. She gave the Committee an overview of the Scholarship Committee and told all that it was a wonderful experience and that she was happy to be part of it.

Ms. Angelakis also updated that at last week's MSBA meeting final approval was received for the new proposed elementary school and that it would now go before special town meeting in October and determine the future of the project.

Middle School Math books surplus

Ms. Angelakis presented a letter from Principal Murphy who was looking for approval to dispose of some out of date math books. Mr. Delano requested it be added to the next meeting agenda as it wasn't proposed as vote requested.

Homework Guide

Ms. Angelakis stated they have revisited the homework guidelines have produced a recommended homework guide to be used with students and families. She added it will be posted on the District website as well as going home in back to school packets. Ms. OConnor questioned whether it was only elementary level. Ms. Angelakis stated it goes for each class. Ian Crimmins questioned the high school level amounts and Ms. Angelakis stated it was a total not per class and reminded all it was only a guide.

Governor's Safety & Security Task Force Report.

Ms. Angelakis shared the Governor's Safety & Security Task Force report with the Committee. She stated that she had reviewed the report with the School Resource Officer and was pleased to announce that they have already worked to accomplish or complete many of the items recommended at the District level. She gave an overview of some of the things which had been accomplished.

Superintendent's Entry Plan

Ms. Angelakis presented the Committee with her entry plan and stated that she would have a report for presentation in January. She added that compiling the plan has given her time to pause and reflect on what her initial beliefs and goals are. She read to the Committee her statement on core beliefs as well as explained that she had created a survey to solicit feedback. She gave an overview of the information which she will review and stated that the three question survey was available on the District website.

Ms. Angelakis concluded her report.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Transportation of Student Contract – vote requested

Ms. Angelakis presented the answers to questions to the contract which were submitted at a prior meeting. Ms. Wright questioned the trips as it related to athletic teams. Mr. Castellarin felt with athletics it was considered one trip for each athletic event. Mr. Delano questioned whether the Committee wished to vote on a two year contract with an one year extension as opposed to a three year contract. Ms. Marshall questioned if there were an pros or cons to that idea. Mr. Castellarin stated it was put out for a three year bid and his recommendation was to go with the three year contract. Mr. Delano stated he would entertain a motion to approve the three year contract.

MOTION:

It was moved by Ms. OConnor and seconded by Ms. Marshall to approve a three-year contract with NRT Bus, Inc. The motion passed 4-0.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Background Check Policy – first read

Ms. Marshall stated all members should have a copy of the proposed policy. She stated they had received a template for the policy from MASC but read the highlighted portions which pertained to the votes which the Committee had previously approved. She stated it would be added to the next meeting agenda for vote. Ms. OConnor questioned after-school enrichment staff who may not be employed by the District or volunteers. Ms. Angelakis stated she thought the issue had been discussed and that Ms. Cooper had stated that PTO would inform

the enrichment people that they would need to be fingerprinted. Ms. Marshall stated she would look for additional wording for that group.

Policy changes relating to new student discipline law

Ms. Marshall explained there were some policy changes relating to new student discipline and referred to the documents which the Committee had for first read. There was a discussion regarding the student absence policy and Mr. Delano stated there was a number in which the School Resource Officer should be notified. Ms. Angelakis stated she was aware of that and did have the number. Ms. Wright gave the Committee a rundown of the substantive changes to each of the policies. Ms. Marshall stated each member could review the documents and they could be voted on at the next meeting. Ms. Wright stated the portion regarding the Resource Officer being notified could be added as well.

Ms. Wright reported that the Communications Subcommittee had not met recently.

Mr. Delano reported that Finance Subcommittee would be meeting tomorrow at 11:30 at the Superintendent's Office.

Ms. Marshall stated that policy review had been started.

Ms. OConnor added that the Finance Subcommittee would be discussing how to handle warrants and would keep the Committee updated.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION:

At 9:43 p.m., it was moved by Ms. Marshall 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: