

REGULAR SESSION MINUTES

October 22, 2013

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. Rick Kraft, Chairman; Mr. Ted Delano, Vice Chairman; Ms. Marianne Speranza-Hartmann and Ms. Carin Marshall. Also Present: Dr. Garry P. Murphy, Ph.D., Interim Superintendent, Ms. Pamela Angelakis, Assistant Superintendent; Mr. Ed Cronin, Business Manager, Christopher Thomsen and Tristan Smith, Student Representatives. Ms. Amy OConnor was absent.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Kraft asked that those present to speak regarding the library hold their comments until after the library presentation.

Ellen Erlich, a resident and teacher from Swampscott came forward to speak about the teacher's contract and the ability for teachers who live outside of the District to enroll their children in Swampscott. She questioned how the procedure would work. Mr. Kraft stated that it was within the discretion of the Superintendent and that it would be evaluated yearly to determine if and how many spaces might be available. Ms. Erlich expressed concern regarding reimbursement from another town for the student. Mr. Kraft explained there would be no reimbursement as there would be no significant added cost. Ms. Marshall added that cost would be fixed and that only if there was an open seat in an existing classroom would the enrollment be possible. Ms. Erlich brought up the concern of a potential special education student and the cost to tax payers associated with that student and suggested that all issues should be explored before adopting such a policy. Ms. Speranza-Hartmann agreed that all issues need to be explored thoroughly.

COMMITTEE COMMENT

Mr. Delano reminded the community of a public forum regarding the next Superintendent which would be held at the High School on Thursday, October 24th. He further stated that Lisa Brown in the High School Guidance office had recently taken a fall and reminded senior parents who may be calling the high school that Guidance is working with students and parents and he also wished Ms. Brown the best. Mr. Delano thanked the businesses that contributed to the Taste of Swampscott event. He also commented on the generator issue at the high school which seems to be worked out. Mr. Delano also brought the issue of public comment to the attention of the Policy Subcommittee for further review.

Ms. Speranza-Hartmann also spoke regarding the Taste of Swampscott event and thanked Mr. Bennett and Mr. Tenney for their fundraising efforts and added it was a great event. She also congratulated Matt Mahoney who set a new course record for the Cross Country Team recently.

Chris Thomsen spoke regarding the upcoming SHS Drama Club play called the Laramie Project and stated they would be holding a public forum on October 29th and the play would be held on November 1st and 2nd.

Tristan Smith added he was happy to see the library issue on the agenda.

NEW BUSINESS

Senator Tom McGee

Senator McGee thanked the Committee for the invitation to the meeting. He spoke regarding Chapter 70 funding and building support for communities in regards to funding. He stated it has been his priority since 2007 to make progress on this issue and stated that he looked forward to working on the issue with the Committee. Mr. Kraft asked if Senator McGee had any suggestions on how to get the message out on the issue. Senator McGee stated it was an ongoing effort and he recognized the efforts of Dave Whelan in bringing attention to the matter and added that any way you can reach out to other communities will bring attention. Dr. Murphy noted that Senator McGee has been very helpful in increasing circuit breaker funding. Ms. Speranza-Hartmann questioned ways to impact other representatives from other towns. Senator McGee suggested attending ways and means hearings or sending a letter of support from the Committee. Mr. Delano thanked Senator McGee for attending the meeting and added he

would love to have him back to update the Committee at a later time. Dr. Murphy added that both Senator McGee and Representative Erlich have both been very responsive to calls and in working with the Committee.

Mr. Kraft stated that the approval of the Agreement with the Swampscott Education Association would be postponed until the whole Committee could be present.

MOTION: It was moved by Ms. Marshall and seconded by Ms. Speranza-Hartmann to postpone the approval of the Memorandum of Agreement with the Swampscott Education Association.

Ms. Speranza-Hartmann added that postponement of approval would also give the Committee time to explore the issue with non-resident teachers enrolling their children in the District.

VOTE ON MOTION: The motion passed 4-0.

Presentation on Impact of Library Programs on Student Achievement

Mr. Kraft gave a history on the elimination of librarians within the District and that the Committee had received a lot of input from the community regarding that loss. Dr. Murphy added that since his arrival the library has been an issue which has come up frequently and added that he had met with Ms. Angelakis and the Leadership of the PTA's across the District and that he was quite certain that he would be coming to the Committee with a proposal to put into place a K-12 library media center. Melissa DiFillippi came forward and introduced Judi Paradis, the President of the Massachusetts School Library Association and Sharon Hamer, a library teacher in Saugus. Ms. DiFillippi gave some background on the research she did into the elimination of school librarians in the District. She explained that she identified three main concerns which were staffing, curriculum and technology. Ms. DiFillippi explained that she had contacted the 65 Districts that were above Swampscott in the Boston Magazine rankings to inquire of their libraries and reported that of the 68% she heard back from Swampscott is the only High School that does not have a full-time licensed librarian. She also spoke about the NEASC standards in relation to library services and as well added that she looked into the Committee's policies regarding libraries which she did not feel was being adhered to. She gave the Committee information regarding technology and software programs which could be utilized within a 21st century Media Center. Ms. DiFillippi introduced Judi Paradis who came forward to speak about the role of the school librarian and how it has evolved in a teaching position. She also spoke about the role of librarians versus library aides and the connection between library programs and curriculum as related to common core as well as the PARCC testing. Ms. Paradis explained the steps to building a library program to the Committee and stated that their goal should be to have a professional librarian in each school building. She stated she could put the Committee in contact with local communities who have great programs to see how theirs are set up. The presentation was turned over to Sharon Hamer who is a librarian in the Saugus Belmonte Middle School. Ms. Hamer explained how with the help of the Superintendent in Saugus she was able to revive their library program and showed the Committee some slides of how the program evolved. Ms. DiFillippi thanked the Committee and Dr. Murphy. Ms. Speranza-Hartmann stated she was thrilled that Dr. Murphy would be exploring possible options and thanked all for their presentation. Mr. Kraft added that he was excited to see a plan come together. Mr. Delano thanked the residents in attendance for coming and commended Ms. DiFillippi for her presentation. Ms. Marshall added that she was also very impressed with the presentation and asked whether librarians today are versed in grant writing. Ms. Paradis said many librarians are familiar with available grants and with the right, motivated person they are able to bring great things to a program. Mr. Kraft called upon those who had signed up for public comment in regards to the library.

Chloe Howe, a 7th grade student at Swampscott Middle School read a statement about her concerns with the librarians and stated she hoped the Committee could bring back the librarian at the Middle School.

Meredith Zimmer, a 7th grader at the Middle School spoke about her experiences in the elementary schools and also hoped that the librarian could be restored at the Middle School.

Sydney Pierce, a parent, who was the volunteer library coordinator at Clarke for three years came forward to speak about restoring the librarians. She spoke about the difference in her son's experience and her daughter's with librarians being cut and knows that there was something missing with no librarian. She added that the aides are able to get books into kids' hands but that they don't teach kids what they need to know about books.

Janet Frasca was the librarian at Hadley in 2007 when she was told the position was being cut and applauded Ms. DiFillippi for her presentation and stated that she supports the vision and hope it can be achieved.

Mr. Kraft thanked all who came and stated that it shows the Committee the importance of the issue and that the Committee does recognize its importance. Gargi Cooper questioned if parents would be informed of next steps in process. Dr. Murphy stated that the building principals and the Leadership Team would bring forward requests for consideration for funding in next year's budget and that he expected that librarians would be part of that discussion. He added that he will share information during the monthly PTA meetings as well and that he anticipated looking forward to come up with a plan for funding.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION:

It was moved by Mr. Delano and seconded by Ms. Speranza-Hartmann to accept the meeting minutes of October 8, 2013. The motion passed 4-0.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Principals' Recognition

Dr. Murphy stated in honor of National Principal Recognition Week he would be presenting a small token of appreciation to each building principal. High School Principal Ed Rozmiarek and Stanley School Principal Tom Daniels were in attendance.

H.S. Open House

Mr. Rozmiarek informed the Committee about the open house program held on Wednesday, October 23rd for prospective students. He stated he felt it was important to let people know about good things that the SHS has to offer and that the program would consist of a presentation about the school, curriculum offerings as well extracurriculars and also there would also be tables set up to represent clubs and activities. He stated all prospective students and parents were invited to attend.

H.S. Open Campus Update

Mr. Rozmiarek reported that the Open Campus program was up and running. He added that Mr. Kowalski had worked with guidance to review first quarter progress reports before the start of open campus. He added that campus monitors have been surprised at the low number of tardies leading up to the institution of open campus. He related that seniors are wanting to earn and keep the privilege and that everything is off to a good start and the students are happy with it.

Enrollment Information

Dr. Murphy stated the Committee had received an update on FY14 student enrollment and that he would review the information with the Leadership Team at a future date. Mr. Kraft questioned the METCO enrollment at the elementary level and Ms. Angelakis stated it was a change by the Leadership Team in which they felt it was difficult for the younger students having them have to be on the bus so early to attend school.

October 1 Report to DESE

Dr. Murphy announced that the District had completed all necessary work to upload the October 1 report to DESE.

Job Sharing with Nahant Public Schools

Dr. Murphy stated he had had conversations with Phil Deveau the Nahant Superintendent and also with Kevin Kaczynski and Stephen Silbert in the Tech Department regarding a proposal to share technology services. The proposal was to have Mr. Silbert spend two afternoons per week in Nahant working on their tech issues. Dr. Murphy stated it would be helpful to both Nahant and our District for data tracking for students who eventually are

enrolled at the Middle School. He added that Nahant would pay for the services of the Tech person and that he wished to run this by the Committee before making any formal plan. Mr. Kraft stated it sounded like a great first step. Dr. Murphy said he would make further arrangements with Nahant.

Dr. Murphy also reported on a presentation by School Resource Officer Rose Cheever in regards to ALICE Training. He added that the Policy Subcommittee may want to review the policy and make some recommendation for changes but that he was just bringing in forward for their information.

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Speranza-Hartmann and seconded by Mr. Delano to move up in the agenda item B under Additional New Business. The motion passed 4-0.

SHS – Field Trip to Nicaragua

Ms. Gahm-Diaz came forward to speak about a service trip planned to Nicaragua. She explained that it was proposed to be a ten day trip during April vacation where students would work with BARCA working on sustainable water projects. She stated she has spoken with people who have gone on trips through the travel organization and all reports have been favorable. She asked Tristan Smith to comment on his recent trip to Nicaragua and he stated it was a great experience and that he would recommend that it pass and that he would love others to have the opportunity to participate. Dr. Murphy commended Ms. Gahm-Diaz for putting the trip together and stated it was his recommendation that the trip be approved. Mr. Delano asked Mr. Smith if there were any issues with his trip and Mr. Smith said there were not. Mr. Kraft stated it sounded like a great program.

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Speranza-Hartmann and seconded by Mr. Delano to approve the SHS Field Trip to Nicaragua. The motion passed 4-0.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was none.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Mr. Delano stated that the Finance Subcommittee would be meeting on the 21st at 11:30. Dr. Murphy added he would confirm the date and have the meeting posted.

Ms. Marshall stated she had met with the Regionalization Committee and would report back with any information relative to the District. She added that the School Building Committee's next step would be a meeting in November.

Mr. Kraft stated that in regards to the Negotiations Subcommittee that the Teachers Union had approved the memorandum but that this Committee would be postponing action until the next meeting.

ADDITIONAL NEW BUSINESS

Amendment to Anti-Bullying Policy – first read

Ms. Speranza-Hartmann read language changes to the policy which were standard across the state as a first read. She stated once voted it would be submitted as a change. Mr. Kraft commented that the change would be adding school staff as part of the policy.

Gift- upright piano from Marianne Hartmann to Hadley School

Ms. Speranza-Hartmann informed the Committee that the gift was from her parents Fred and Fran Speranza.

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Delano and seconded by Ms. Marshall to accept the gift of an upright piano.

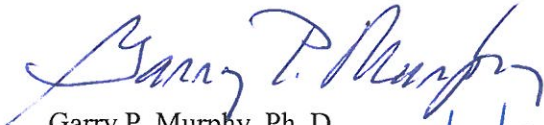
Mr. Kraft and Ms. Marshall both thanked Ms. Speranza-Hartmann for the gift.

VOTE ON MOTION: The motion passed 4-0.

ADJOURNMENT
MOTION:

At 9:25 p.m. it was moved by Mr. Delano, seconded by Ms. Marshall and voted by roll call vote to enter into executive session for the purpose of collective bargaining and strategy with respect to contracts. Ms. Marshall – yes; Ms. Speranza-Hartmann – yes; Mr. Delano – yes; Mr. Kraft – yes.

Respectfully submitted,


Garry P. Murphy, Ph. D.
Superintendent of Schools 11/26/13

/pan