

Andover School Committee
Minutes of Thursday, January 9, 2020

Members in Attendance: Chair, Joel Blumstein, Vice-Chair, Tracey Spruce, Paul Murphy, Susan McCready, and Shannon Scully.

Others in Attendance: Superintendent Berman, Paul Szymanski Assist. Superintendent Finance & Administration, Assist. Superintendent Teaching & Learning Sandra Trach, Asst. Superintendent of Student Services Dr. Sara Stetson, and AHS Liaison Ben Roldan.

I. School Committee Regular Meeting- Call to Order

Joel Blumstein called the School Committee to order at 6:30 P.M. in the School Committee Meeting Room located in the School Administration Building.

II. Executive Session

Paul Murphy moved for the School Committee to enter into executive session pursuant to M.G.L. chapter 30A, sec. 21(a) for the following purpose: **Purpose 3:** to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining and litigation with the Andover Education Association Unit A because an open session may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining and litigating position of the Committee and to reconvene in Open Session at approximately 7:30 P.M. The Chair declared that an open discussion may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining and litigating position of the Committee. The motion was seconded by Susan McCready. Roll call vote: S. Scully-Y, S. McCready-Y, T. Spruce-Y, P. Murphy -Y, J. Blumstein-Y.

III. Regular Meeting

A. Call to Order/Opening Ceremonies

The Chair reconvened the School Committee at 7:35 P.M.

The meeting began with a Moment of Silence followed by a Salute to the Flag.

B. Recognition

The Chair recognized Jordan Ricciardi, Sanborn School Art Teacher, for the wonderful display of student art in the School Committee Room and throughout the hallways in the School Administration Building.

Sandy Trach participated in a conference call with the Massachusetts Secretary of Education this week as part of the Kaleidoscope Initiative, asking Districts to consider participating in an alternate Science Assessment for 5th and 8th grade students in 2021. Districts interested are asked to send a letter of interest to DESE.

School Start Time Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) update: parents have been selected by school principals and PAC/PTO leaders at the schools and the members are listed on the APS Website under the School Start Time link; the first meetings will be held on January 14th. Thank you to all of the forty-one parents who volunteered. The new SEPAC will meet on January 29th at 7:30 P.M. in the WMS Library to work on their by-laws. Sara Stetson encourages all families to come out and join them. Sara will begin working with the State

Task Force on developing guidance on how to work with students with language disabilities next week and will be reporting on results of their work as they go along.

Shannon Scully reported on the Informal School Forum that she and Joel participated in on Tuesday at Memorial Hall Library. Parents raised concerns on the accelerated math for students in middle school which they feel is not challenging enough. The parents were advised to speak with Sandy Trach. Parents raised concerns about the traffic patterns at AHS, Emergency Management Team to consider the Stop the Bleed Program (already in place), and Blizzard Bags (DESE has discontinued). One parent was pleased with the smooth transition her children experienced being new to Andover.

Shannon and Dr. Berman presented the proposal for the elimination of FDK Tuition Fees next school year to the Finance Committee and they voted 6-1 to approve the proposal. The proposal will be presented to the Select Board for their approval on Monday, January 13, 2020.

Susan McCreedy and Joel Blumstein participated in the Community Visioning Meeting for the new West Elementary School. They discussed the possibility of relocating our pre-school to the West Elementary site.

Joel reported on the Revenue & Expenditure Task Force (reports to Town Manager) which recently finalized its report on various elements of the Town's Budget which they have been exploring. Joel has concerns about the overall slant the report takes and will be preparing a set of comments on the report. He suggested the other School Committee members also look at the report. Dr. Berman said one of the items discussed was whether they would continue to look at the Town's long-term deficit and methods by which the Town can make progress without cutting services, including by enhancing the Town's revenue. The Task Force would benefit from looking at and providing information on a broader perspective of issues.

Dr. Berman discussed with the MSBA how they determined the utilization rate at AHS (83%) which is the main reason they did not approve our proposal for a funding partnership. Our configuration shows the utilization rate at 117%. Their formula uses the total square footage of the building including the AHS Foyer, Collins Center and Field House which cannot be used for instructional activities, but are included in MSBA's calculations.

C. Public Input

Brad Weeden, 5 Summer Street, attended a meeting at AHS with Gail Koutroubas, her staff and others who work with the Food Rescue Program, to talk about how to improve the program and waste management issues in general. They are advocating for dishwashers in schools to wash combustible eating utensils that would benefit the environment and would provide a two-year return on investment.

D. Response to Public Input

Paul Szymanski reported that Gail Koutroubas already has three bids for dishwashers; however, the funding needs to be determined. They have taken steps with the program and will continue discussions with Janet Nicosia to hopefully come to a positive resolution.

E. Education

1. Field Trip: AHS Students to France via French Exchange Program Oct 8 – Oct. 18, 2020

Susan McCready moved that the Andover School Committee vote to approve the proposed extracurricular trip for Andover High School Students to France on October 8-18, 2020 as presented and in accordance with the provisions set forth in the Andover School Committee Policy entitled “APS School-sponsored Trip and Student Travel Policy”. The motion was seconded by Tracey Spruce and voted 5-0 to approve.

2. Field Trip: AHS Students to Ecuador and Galapagos Islands: April 17-25, 2021

Shannon Scully moved that the Andover School Committee vote to approve the proposed extracurricular trip for Andover High School Students to Ecuador and Galapagos Islands on April 17-25, 2021 as presented and in accordance with the provisions set forth in the Andover School Committee Policy entitled “APS School-sponsored Trip and Student Travel Policy”. The motion was seconded by Susan McCready and voted 5-0 to approve.

3. Tiered Focused Monitoring Report: Sara Stetson, Sandra Trach, Jorge Allen

Previously titled the Coordinated Program Review, Tiered Focused Monitoring is a Compliance Review Process by DESE that includes Special Education, Civil Rights, and English Learner Education and involves review of many components. The last review conducted six years ago was on a slightly different model and found numerous deficiencies. This time, no deficiencies were found. This is a major accomplishment and appreciation was expressed by the Committee.

F. Continuing Business

School Committee Budget Hearings will be held on Tuesday, January 14th and Wednesday, January 15th in the School Committee Room starting at 7:00 P.M.

1. Update: FY21 Budget

Dr. Berman provided information on the Fine Arts Stipends that are funded and those waiting for funding. He also reported on the stability in enrollment across the district with a slight decline in the middle schools and a slight increase in AHS. General staffing is and should remain stable; however, there are emerging needs in Special Education that needs to be addressed.

FY21 Budget Drivers:

Spec Ed Trans	(\$627,526) 0.7%
Step & Trach changes	(\$1,251,344 or 1.46%)
Negotiated Settlement with unions – unknown	
Legal costs for negotiations	(\$75,000)
Athletic program	(\$99,306)
Homeless Transportation	(\$45,000)
Spec Ed Staffing (BRIDGE, AHS Program Head, Tier 3 Program Staffing)	

Dr. Berman showed the Special Needs In-Town and Summer Transportation costs and talked about the reason for the increases.

In-Town Spec Ed Rate Increase	\$ 48,780
Summer Transportation Increase	\$ 10,896

Five Additional vans	\$198,000
Addition of 14 Monitors	\$ 64,800
OOD SPED Trans increase	\$ 223,798
Other In-Town SpecEd Trans Increases	<u>\$ 81,252</u>
Total increase in Costs	\$627,526

Currently, there is a \$500,000 deficit in the transportation area. Increases are based on unexpected needs of special needs children. We have quite a few in-district programs and other special education needs at different levels. We cannot draw on Circuit Breaker funds for transportation because those funds are needed for OOD Tuitions. The OOD Placement Expenditures did not anticipate the excessive cost for two new students. Budget priority requests will be explained in more detail at the Budget Hearings.

Level Services budget without any additions would be about a 3.6% increase.

Personnel	\$72,323,121	
General Expense	\$16,678,319	
Total	<u>\$89,001,440</u>	3.57%
Town Manager's Recommended Budget	<u>\$89,246,699</u>	3.86%

Given our needs, Shelley expects we will exceed a 3.86% increase in the School Department Budget for FY-21. Budget slides will be posted on the APS Website

G. New Business

Due to upcoming retirements (Paul Szymanski and Mary Lu Walsh), the job descriptions for these positions have been updated to better reflect the real nature of the positions.

1. COO/Asst. Superintendent of Finance and Administration Position

Tracey Spruce moved that the Andover School Committee vote to approve the job description of the COO Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Administration as presented. The motion was seconded by Susan McCready and voted 5-0 to approve.

2. Transportation Administrator Position

On a motion by Shannon Scully seconded by Susan McCready, the Andover School Committee voted 5-0 to approve the job description of the Transportation Administrator as presented.

H. Consent Agenda

1. Grants/Donations to District Eight (8) grants in the amount of \$34,300

2. Minutes November 21, 2019, and December 19, 2019

On a motion by Susan McCready seconded by Paul Murphy, the School Committee voted 5-0 to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

I. Adjournment

At 9:41 P.M. on a motion by Tracey Spruce seconded by Susan McCready, the School Committee voted 5-0 to adjourn from the meeting of January 9, 2020.

Respectfully submitted,

Dee DeLorenzo

Dee DeLorenzo, Recording Secretary