

Andover School Committee
Minutes of Regular Meeting of May 20, 2009
School Administration Building - School Committee Room

Members in Attendance: Chair Debra Rahmin Silberstein, Richard J. Collins, Dennis Forgue, Annie Gilbert, David Birnbach and AHS Liaisons, Alex Macheras and Charlie Smith.

Others in Attendance: Dr. Claudia L. Bach, Superintendent, Dr. Susan Nicholson, Assistant Superintendent and David Keniston, Business Manager.

I. Regular meeting in the School Committee Room

Chair Deb Silberstein opened the Regular Session of the School Committee Meeting at 6:15 P.M. At 8:04 P.M. the Committee moved to Executive Session.

II. Executive Session

Chair Deb Silberstein called the Executive Session to order at 8:05 P.M. in the School Committee Meeting Room in the School Offices. Present were: Chair Deb Silberstein, and Committee Members Richard Collins, Dennis Forgue, Annie Gilbert and David Birnbach.

On a motion by Dennis Forgue and a second by Richard Collins it was voted to go into Executive Session to discuss the custodial contract and other contractual issues and to return to Open Session. Roll Call Vote: Chair Silberstein-Y, Members, D. Forgue-Y, R. Collins-Y, D. Birnbach-Y, and A. Gilbert-Y. On a motion duly made and seconded, it was voted to adjourn the Executive Session and to return to Open Session at 8:42 P.M. Roll Call Vote: Chair Silberstein-Y, Members, D. Birnbach-Y, R. Collins, D. Forgue-Y, and A. Gilbert-Y.

Also present in Executive Session: Dr. Claudia Bach, Dr. Susan Nicholson, Candace Hall, and David Keniston.

A. Salute to the Flag

Mr. Collins asked for a Moment of Silence in memory of Lauren Ciampa and Rebecca Solomon followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

B. Consent Agenda

Warrant: Dave Keniston said the Warrants are in order.

Minutes: School Committee Workshop Meeting Minutes of April 22, 2009.

Field Trips: DMS – Canobie Lake Park, June 25, 2009 Grades 8
DMS – Canobie Lake Park, June 25, 2009 Grade 7
Bancroft School - Canobie Lake Park, June 19, 2009 Grade 5
West Elementary School - Canobie Lake Park – Grade 5 June 18, 2009
High Plain Elementary – Grade 5, Nature’s Classroom, Greenfield, NH
West Elementary School, Grade 4 Christa McCauliffe Museum on June 8, 2009

Motion: Dennis Forgue motioned to approve the consent agenda items, which include the Warrant, Workshop Minutes of April 22, 2009 and the field trips listed above. The motion was seconded by Annie Gilbert and voted 3-0 to approve.

Budget Overview and Town Meeting Preparation

Dr. Bach began the budget overview by reviewing her recommended School Budget for FY2010 in the amount of \$60.4M, which consists of \$47,484,553 Personal Services and \$12,948,605 Expenses; with a budget shortfall of \$3.2M. Dr. Bach recapped the system non-staff reductions to date. The task ahead is to propose a plan for fees, redesign the elementary budget proposal, review options for the Stimulus Funds, plan for further reductions in revenue, and determine how to do more with less. The Elementary Schools will move from offering a stand-alone Health Program into an integrated Wellness Program, and a strategic plan will be developed for Media/Technology and Integrated Arts. Discussions are on-going for positioning for the future.

Peter Anderson provided an analysis of substitute use at Andover High based on 154 teachers at the high school. The School Committee will review the results of the analysis. Senior Internships and exhibitions will be encouraged to reduce study halls at the high school.

Dr. Bach said discussions from the State indicate they may reduce the Circuit Breaker revenue sent to cities/towns by utilizing Federal Stimulus dollars and the Governor may impose additional 9C budget cuts. Should the Circuit Breaker revenue be reduced from \$75,000 by the State, and additional 9C cuts be imposed, the school department budget shortfall could be as much as \$684,000 more than projected depending upon the Senate version of the budget.

The School Committee discussed what could happen if both the School Committee Budget number of \$60.4M and the Town Manager's recommended budget for the School Committee of \$59.9M are both presented at Town Meeting and the importance of residents to be in attendance to support the schools to vote for the \$60.4M. Deb Silberstein reviewed areas the Committee should be prepared to address, such as added positions (for Spec Ed In-house Programs), use of Stimulus dollars, Circuit Breaker funds, Chapter 70 monies, savings and economics, and Special Education mandates. The Finance Committee agreed to a budget of \$60.4M but voted \$59.9M unanimously. Should the \$60.4M be voted in at Town Meeting, they will leave with an unbalanced budget; a second Town Meeting in the fall will most likely be held and further reductions to balance the budget may occur.

The Committee discussed at length the process and preparations to prepare for Town Meeting to effectively communicate the school budget and the decrease in services and staff that will occur as a result of budget cuts.

Return to Regular Session:

C. Recognition of Achievement

Dr. Bach congratulated students Abigail Layman and Bridget Daggett from West Elementary School and Principal Liz Roos who will be recognized on June 9th at the State House for their designs submitted in the Massachusetts School Building Association School Contest. There were 2,500 entries received, 14 of which were selected statewide.

Dr. Bach recognized Nancy Durkin, Instructional Assistant at West Elementary who has saved the district thousands of dollars through her continual efforts and resourcefulness in coordinating remaining inventories of supplies throughout the various classrooms and reallocating and restoring them for further use.

Dr. Bach recognized School Committee Chair Debra Silberstein who successfully defended her dissertation at Brandeis University. Dr. Bach also recognized Human Resources Director Candace Hall who received her Masters in Science in Human Resources at Suffolk University.

C. Recognition of Achievement (Cont'd)

Dr. Bach congratulated AHS Drama Teacher Susan Choquette and members of the cast of "A Chorus Line" who were nominated for 8 awards by the North Shore Music Theatre. Awards will be presented on June 2nd.

E. Communications

Dr. Bach said there have been two confirmed cases of the H1N1 virus. The Director of Nursing and School Nurses are doing an excellent job of tracking the cases and communicating precautions throughout the district.

Dr. Bach referred to a letter received from the Landmark School, which states their intention to apply for program reconstruction and a price adjustment for FY2010. The Department of Education has approved the price adjustments. In response Dr. Bach will send a letter to the DESE to refute the increase in tuition rates at a time when school budgets can least afford it. A copy of the letter and her reply will also be sent to the Chairs of the Finance Committee and the Board of Selectmen.

Annie Gilbert on behalf of the School Building Committee said Warrant Article #59 – Bancroft Feasibility Study, which includes the option to investigate alleviating overcrowding at Shawsheen, are reducing the amount requested from \$725,000 to \$525,000.

Dr. Nicholson attended the Academic Award Ceremonies at DMS and said what a wonderful opportunity it was to see so many students receive academic honors. She also attended the All-Town Spring Concert at AHS last week and congratulated Joe Wright, Julie Diehl, and students on an outstanding performance. Dennis Fogue said he attended the All-string Elementary Concert with over 250 students performing and it was an incredible performance by all.

David Birnbach commended the AEA on the brochure they distributed highlighting the background and contributions of several Andover School Teachers.

Deb Silberstein attended the Founders' Day Ceremony on May 14th at the Indian Ridge Country Club and said how inspiring it was to see so many employees and teachers recognized for their years of service to the Town and Schools. She also congratulated Dr. Bach who was recognized at the Tribute to Women Luncheon sponsored by the YWCA; the School Principals nominated Dr. Bach for this award.

E. Communications

Dennis Fogue said he attended the Board of Selectmen's Meeting on Monday and reported on the outcome of the lengthy discussion on the additional Special Education Out of District funds in the amount of \$453,000 received from the State's Circuit Breaker Account. The Board of Selectmen voted to keep \$453,000 in Free Cash and for the School Department to use the \$453,000 to offset the deficit, maintaining the School Budget at \$59.9M with a \$500,000 deficit to cover. The School Committee discussed what this means to their target budget of \$60.4M for FY2010 and proceeded to move into the Budget Workshop.

F. Policy

The Committee said the second reading of the Anti-Fraud Policy would be continued at the next meeting.

G. Finance

1. Transportation bid awards

David Keniston reported on the Transportation bids (Yellow Bus Bids) received and included in the School Committee Packet. He is requesting approval of the bid awards by the Committee.

G. Finance

1. Transportation bid awards (Cont'd)

Dennis Forgue motioned Bid #023 Yellow Bus Bid (33 buses twice a day) be awarded to Trombly Motor Coach in the amount of \$4,212,660 for a three year period. The motion was seconded by David Birnbach, voted 5-0 and approved.

Dennis Forgue motioned Bid #024 –Mid-Day Kindergarten Transportation be awarded to Trombly Motor Coach in the amount of \$430,650 for a three year period. The motion was seconded by Richard Collins, voted 5-0 and approved.

Dennis Forge motioned Bid #025 Extra-curricular Field and Athletic Transportation be awarded to North Reading Transportation as recommended in the amount of \$91,800. The motion was seconded by David Birnbach, voted 5-0 and approved.

Warrant Articles

Article 19- Medicare Extension

Dennis Forgue motioned to recommend approval of Warrant Article #19-Medicare Extension. The motion was seconded by Annie Gilbert, and voted 5-0 to recommend approval.

Article 21-Stabilization Fund

Article 21 to be withdrawn by Bill Pennington (P) at Town Meeting, no vote required.

Article 59-Bancroft Feasibility Study

The Committee discussed who would speak in support of to this article at Town Meeting.

H. Citizen Input None

I. Motion to Adjourn

Dennis Forgue motioned to adjourn the Regular Meeting of the School Committee. The motion was seconded by Richard Collins, voted 5-0-0 and approved. The meeting adjourned at 10:25 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Dec DeLorenzo, Recorder