

Andover School Committee
Regular Meeting of November 17, 2011
School Administration Building - School Committee Room

Members in Attendance: Chairwoman Annie Gilbert, Vice- Chair Paula Colby-Clements, Secretary, Dennis Forgue, and Richard Collins

Others in Attendance: Dr. Marinel McGrath, Superintendent, Nancy A. Duclos, Assistant Superintendent Curriculum & Instruction, and Paul Szymanski, Assistant Superintendent, Finance & Administration, AHS Liaison-Colin Johnson

I. Executive Session

At 6:06 P.M. the School Committee entered into Executive Session on a motion by Dennis Forgue with a second by Paula Colby-Clements for the purpose of discussing matters related to litigation and collective bargaining strategy and to return to Open Session. Roll call vote: A. Gilbert-Y, D. Forgue-Y, P. Colby-Clements-Y, and R. Collins-Y. At 7:00 P.M. on a motion by Dennis Forgue with a second by Paula Colby-Clements, it was voted 4-0 to adjourn from Executive Session and to move to Open Session. Roll call vote: A. Gilbert-Y, D. Forgue-Y, P. Colby-Clements-Y, and R. Collins-Y.

II. Regular Meeting

A. Call to Order

The Regular Meeting of the School Committee was opened at 7:12 P.M. by Chairwoman Gilbert.

B. Opening Ceremonies

Mr. Collins asked for a moment of silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Victoria Yin, a sophomore at Andover High School and an accomplished artist. On behalf of the School Committee Mr. Collins presented Victoria with a certificate of appreciation.

C. Recognition

AHS Principal Tom Sharkey introduced Melanie Cutler a Science teacher at AHS and the catalyst behind the recycling effort at AHS, and who was instrumental in the creation of the sustainable garden and organizing the student's work in composting. AHS received the Gold K-12 Recycling Award from Mass Recycles in the School Category in recognition of their outstanding efforts to reduce waste through recycling.

Paula Colby-Clements wished the AHS Girls' Swim & Dive Team and the AHS Girls' Field Hockey Team the best of luck as they compete in the State Championships this weekend.

Annie Gilbert recognized AHS Art teacher Megan Michaud and Assistant Superintendent Nancy Duclos for organizing the lecture on STEM to STEAM by John Maeda, President of the Rhode Island School of Design held on Monday, November 13th. The lecture was exciting and attended by a diverse audience. Assistant Superintendent Nancy Duclos also recognized Megan Michaud who in addition to being a lead teacher of Art at AHS, sits on the Board of Trustees of RISD. The lecture by Dr. Maeda was a great event attended by many community members, educators and administrators.

D. Communications

Superintendent McGrath announced the search for a new principal at AHS has begun. The process will

include meeting with AHS faculty, the AHS PAC, establishing Focus Group meetings, and selecting a

D. Communications (Cont'd)

Search Team. The Search Team will review applications, interviews will be scheduled, and off-site visits of the candidates selected arranged. The deadline for applications is January 3, 2012 and the goal is to select a new principal by February 1, 2012 and to begin on July 1, 2012.

An update on the status of negotiations with the Andover Educator's Association was provided by Annie Gilbert. A public letter from the School Committee on the status of the process was published in the Andover Townsman and is also available on the Andover Public School website. Progress was made in the mediation session on October 24th and they were hoping to reach an agreement at the November 7th mediation session; however, that dialogue did not happen. The mediator released the School Committee at that time and currently they are waiting for direction on the next steps. A proposal from the AEA was received today and the School Committee is meeting on Tuesday to discuss its' contents. Dennis Forgue added that they did reach agreement on some positions with the help of the mediator. They agreed to not change the amount of planning time at the elementary and middle school levels, and to establish a new high school schedule to be determined by a joint committee which would address some of the challenges faced with the current block schedule. The School Committee would like to initiate changes in professional development courses that would not rely solely on internal course offerings but include graduate level courses, and offer COLA increases totaling 5% over four years. Annie Gilbert reiterated that changes to the high school schedule would be determined by a Joint Committee (to be established), not by the School Committee.

E. Citizen Input

AHS Teacher Mary Robb recognized the students at AHS who participated in a community service project raising \$2,432.45 for Operation Heroes and Hounds to benefit Veterans. She also spoke about the letter from the School Committee published in the Andover Townsman and remarked that the timeline to construct, investigate, and decide upon a new schedule is too short, there are other ways to increase continuity in the content area besides a schedule change, and a greater investment from the community is needed to continue the accomplishments of students and teachers. Don't expect the teachers to help deconstruct the educational system currently in place.

Brian Shea, AHS English Teacher said the block schedule offers creative and dynamic opportunities for students and teachers, and the Professional Development Program in Andover offers professional and dynamic in-house programs that are applicable to what they are teaching.

Jen Meagher, Vice President of the AEA, stated that the delay in the teacher's response at the last mediation was due to the detailed timeline of the high school schedule presented outside of collective bargaining, which created anxiety among staff. The tasks and timeline clearly indicates there is a plan already in place without teacher input. She alleges the School Committee has a clear vision of what they want, and their educational rationale is disingenuous; always presented as a cost issue not an educational purpose. If the goal is cost reduction, it means a reduction in staff which in turn will result in a reduction of services.

F. Education

1. Bancroft School Project Update

Town Counsel Tom Urbelis, DPW Interim Director Chris Cronin, and Public Health Director Tom

Carbone provided a review of the steps that led to the discovery of arsenic in the sediment at the bottom of the water tank located next to the Bancroft School Property and the status of the findings.

1. Bancroft School Project Update (Cont'd)

They assured the School Committee everything is being done correctly to make sure the public is confident in the results of the testing of the water by hiring a public lab to test the water samples and all information and results are provided to the EPA and DEP. The EPA conducted a site visit and took samples of the water which was tested and found to meet EPA and DEP standards.

Annie Gilbert said the School Building Committee is holding a community forum on Tuesday, December 6th at 7:00 P.M. at Bancroft School on the water issue and the Superintendent sent out a letter to all Andover families and is available on the school website.

2. APS Strategic Plan

Superintendent McGrath introduced members of the Strategic Plan Steering Committee who will be participating in tonight's presentation of the Strategic Plan. Dr. McGrath said the Strategic Plan will become our guiding star document; it is a fluid document which will be evaluated, analyzed and revised as the plan is rolled forward. The members of the Steering Committee reported on the various aspects of the Strategic Plan which includes the Mission, Core Values, Vision, and the five Strategic Areas of Focus: 1) High Academic Achievement for All; 2) Technology Supported Learning; 3) Teaching and Learning; 4) Communications, Planning, and Partnerships; and 5) Educational Funding, Financial Management, and Infrastructure. Progress updates will be communicated to the public through benchmarks, action plans, identified targets, a yearly progress report, and an annual report.

Kerry Costello, President of the AEA read a statement that the AEA has not taken an official position on the Strategic Plan. However, teachers will play a pivotal role in the plan and are concerned about the detailed implementation plan. Staffing is already reduced, workloads have increased, and there is list of inadequacies across the district; what faith do they have that re-investment in education is on the horizon.

Motion: Paula Colby-Clements motioned that the Andover School Committee vote to adopt the APS Strategic Plan for 2011-2014 as presented. The motion was seconded by Richard Collins, and voted 4-0 to approve.

The Strategic Plan is available on the Andover Public School website at www.aps1.net

3. State & Federal Changes to School Nutrition Regulations

Director of School Food & Nutrition Services, Gail Koutroubas, and Assistant Director Ruth Olney explained the new Massachusetts School Nutrition Bill which was signed into law in July of 2010 and goes into effect in August of 2012. The goal of the Nutrition Bill is to ensure that public schools offer students food and beverage choices that will enhance learning, contribute to healthy growth and development and cultivate life long healthy eating behaviors. The regulations apply to food/beverage "competitive food" offered to students 30 minutes prior to the start of the school and 30 minutes at the close of school and food/beverages sold in vending machines must be in compliance at all times. There are concerns with implementing the mandates and Food Services will work with the school community, PTO/PAC's, parents and students to properly educate everyone on the new regulations

and also implement an interactive school nutrition website.

G. Old Business

1. Policy: 2nd Reading & Vote on Pediculosis (Head Lice) Management Policy

Motion: Paula Colby-Clements motioned that the Andover School Committee vote to approve the policy entitled "Pediculosis (Head Lice) Management" as presented. The motion was seconded by Dennis Forgue and voted 4-0 to approve.

2. Andover Youth Center Warrant Article

Diane Costagliola of the Andover Youth Foundation explained the process followed to come to an agreement on finances being requested from the Town to build the Youth Center; the amount of \$2M was reasonable and doable within the Town's operating budget. Andover Youth Foundation will be supplying the first \$2M plus \$30,000 per year for operating costs. The Finance Committee voted 4-3 in support of the Youth Center Warrant Article and the Board of Selectmen voted 4-1 in support of the Youth Center Warrant Article. Those opposed were opposed to the funding source, not the Youth Center Building; they felt the funding should be through debt exclusion and spread over several years, instead of the operating budget. Youth Services is asking the School Committee to trust the guidance of the Town Officials and vote to recommend approval.

Tom Deso supports the Youth Center but not the funding from the General Fund budget. He feels a debt exclusion vote would be less of a drain on the operating budget and therefore less of a reduction in dollars for other items.

School Committee discussion: Dennis Forgue suggested alternative ideas to support the funding; i.e., Wood Fund, Phillips Academy Funds etc. and opposes the use of funding from the operating budget because it will take away funds from the school operating budget. Paula Colby-Clements understands the obligation to be an advocate for the schools but also recognizes the need for the Youth Center to augment the services the schools provide and feels it can be paid for within the Town's Operating Budget. She will vote to support the warrant article. Annie Gilbert does not view the project as one that would be competing for school dollars but rather one that would be complementing school activities. The Youth Center services many kids in our community and offers an opportunity to increase the programs currently offered by Andover Youth Services.

Motion: Paula Colby-Clements motioned for the Andover School Committee to vote to support the Warrant Article for the Andover Youth Center. The motion was seconded by Richard Collins and voted 3-1 to support. Dennis Forgue voted in opposition.

3. Financials

Paul Szymanski gave an overview of the financial information provided in the School Committee packet, and stated that we received \$121,000 more than anticipated for the FY-12 Circuit Breaker Funds. The Team is reviewing the line items for Student Services/Therapies and the GLEC contract and looking for new opportunities for next year. There are also watching the school utilities account which has less than \$500,000 remaining.

Motion: On a motion by Paula Colby-Clements with a second by Dennis Forgue the Andover School Committee voted 4-0 to approve the General Fund Transfers as recommended in the School Committee Packet.

H. New Business

1. Update on Solar Project

Paul Materazzo, Director of Planning for the Town updated the School Committee on the status of the Solar Feasibility Study and the four locations being considered for the installation of solar panels and talked about the educational opportunities and savings should this project go forward.

2. 2011-2012 Calendar Change: Approve December 7th Full In-service Day

Motion: Dennis Forgue motioned to approve that the Andover School Committee vote to approve December 7th as a Full In-service Day with the day to be made up at the end of the school year. The motion was seconded by Paula Colby-Clements and voted 4-0 to approve.

3. Vote: Warrant Article 2: Bancroft Easements

Motion: On a motion by Paula Colby-Clements with a second by Richard Collins, the Andover School Committee voted 4-0 to support Warrant Article 2 for the Bancroft Easement.

4. Vote: Warrant Article 4: Youth Center – Scrivener’s Error

Motion: On a motion by Dennis Forgue with a second by Richard Collins, the Andover School Committee voted 4-0 to support Warrant Article 4 for the Andover Youth Center – Transfer of Land.

I. Consent Agenda

1. Minutes: Minutes of October 20, 2011 and Triboard Meeting of October 13, 2011
2. Warrants: Assistant Superintendent Szymanski stated that the Warrants are in order and provided highlights of Expense Warrants #SW120 and SW1209A, and Payroll Warrants #12SS08, #12S019, and #12S020.

Motion: On a motion by Paula Colby-Clements with a second by Richard Collins the Andover School Committee voted 4-0 to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

J. Adjournment

On a motion by Paula Colby-Clements and seconded by Richard Collins, it was voted 4-0 to adjourn the Regular Meeting at 10:29 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Dee DeLorenzo

Recorder

Documents: Massachusetts School Nutrition Bill Presentation
Strategic Plan Executive Summary 2011-2014
Pediculosis Management Policy
Warrant Articles for Special Town Meeting
Timeline for AHS Principal Search
Solar Feasibility Study
Year to Date Budget Financials
School Warrants for November 10th and 17th

School Committee Minutes: October 20, 2011
Triboard Meeting Minutes: October 13, 2011