

TRANSCRIPT OF PUBLIC RECORD

OF

THE METHUEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE

BUSINESS SESSION

OF

OCTOBER 13, 2015

SUBMITTED FOR THE APPROVAL OF:

THE METHUEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE

AND

THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

“AN OPEN MEETING ADVANTAGE FOR THE COMMUNITY OF METHUEN”

RECORDED BY:

DEIDRE RUNGE, PUBLIC RECORDER

TRANSCRIPT OF PUBLIC RECORD
METHUEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
BUSINESS SESSION
OCTOBER 13, 2015

This meeting of the Methuen School Committee was held in the Media Center at Methuen High School and was posted for 6:30 PM.

ROLL CALL

Mr. Dennis D.J. Deeb	YES
Mr. Rober F. Vogler	YES
Ms. Lynne Hajjar Kumm, Vice Chairperson	YES
Ms. Mary Jean Fawcett, Secretary	YES
Mr. Bryan P. Sweet	YES
Ms. Jana DiNatale	YES
Mayor Stephen N. Zanni, Chairperson	YES

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Mayor Stephen N. Zanni, Chairperson
Ms. Lynne Hajjar Kumm, Vice Chairperson
Ms. Mary Jean Fawcett, Secretary
Mr. Dennis D.J. Deeb
Ms. Jana DiNatale
Mr. Bryan P. Sweet
Mr. Rober F. Vogler

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Ms. Judith Scannell, Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Brandi Kwong, Assistant Superintendent
Mr. Ian Gosselin, Business Administrator
Ms. Deidre Runge, Public Recorder

1. Call to Order

Mayor Zanni called this meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. with a quorum of members in attendance, and listed above.

a. Flag Salute

Emma Falorni, a 4th grade student at the Timony Grammar School, led the Committee in Opening Exercises of this meeting.

2. Participation by Others

a. SOAR Award

Nyomi White was the recipient of the S.O.A.R. Award at this meeting. The English Department chose Nyomi for this Award.

b. Student Advisory Committee

Danielle Fortier MHS Senior spoke about the 43 Italy Exchange Students.

Jenna Ciccotelli MHS Senior spoke about the varsity sports teams and how all love the new fields.

Selina DeLeon MHS Junior spoke about the new Principal Barden and the great role model he is. He wants us to perform well and he earnestly cares.

c. Public

Mr. Adam Chiocca from 8 Marie Street told the Committee how pleased he was with the recycling program in the schools.

d. Staff – None

3. Approval of Minutes – Transcript of the Workshop of August 24, 2015 and Business Session September 14, 2015

MOTION: Mr. Vogler moved to adopt the Recorded Transcripts of August 24, 2015 as presented and waived the reading;

Ms. DiNatale seconded the motion to approve as presented.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Deeb asked to change page 6 for the Mayor’s roll call from no to absent or not present.

VOTE: 7-0-0 UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

MOTION: Mr. Vogler moved to adopt the Recorded Transcripts of September 14, 2015 as presented and waived the reading;

Ms. Fawcett seconded the motion to approve as presented.

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: 6-0-1 APPROVED (Mayor voted present)

4. Staff Reports

a. Superintendent’s Monthly Report-Superintendents Scannell took a minute to introduce Angelica Oyola a sophomore that was the Camera Woman for the meeting. She reviewed her Monthly Report telling the Committee about all the upcoming events. Ms. Kumm – Can you give us a brief update on the District wide Math Night? Dr. Kwong – It was a well attended event. All 4 grammar schools were evenly represented. We had energetic conversations on how to help students at home. We gave them some ideas how they can help them at home. We are moving forward. A parent asked if we can hold another meeting in January or February. We agreed. I am updating parent resources on the curriculum website regularly. I am also asking everyone that hears anyone asking about the Math initiative to point them to our website.

Mr. Vogler – It was very informative. Parents asked a lot of questions and you answered them a way they can understand and provided the links to your website.

1. Dual Enrollment Update req: by Committee Member Vogler

Mr. Barden – Last year we joined a partnership with Northern Essex. In one class we had 20 students and the other had 28 students. 35 of those students were not duplicated and all received credit for the classes. They have the potential to get 6 college credits that can be used in a Community College for sure and other Colleges that accept dual credits. Merrimack College lets our kids attend at no cost to them but we need to work on their schedules here to make it happen. But we are thankful for the opportunity and make it work. Northern Essex’ Grant gives us the opportunity to increase our dual

enrollment by 300%. This is a way students can earn enough credits that they can get a degree for a lot less money.

Mr. Vogler – I am psyched. I have been an advocate for the last 4 years. I want to see this expanded. It is a great opportunity for our students. It offers them the opportunity to graduate high school and possibly enter as a sophomore in College. It also offers a rigorous course. I know we have a great A.P. program but this gives the College Credits too.

b. Instructional Technology Monthly Report

Ms. Kumm asked for an iPad update and if Mr. Lussier was planning to attend parent nights.

Superintendent – I am happy to say all students have now received their iPads. And yes they are tweaking out the final plans for parent night.

c. Facilities and Grounds Monthly Update

Ms. Kumm –

Superintendent- The top lot at Rangerland is a wonderful set up and very secure. We are having a very successful start up with the ice rink. A lot has to do with the new compressor.

Mayor – Yes the top lot was \$68,000 and Consigli is paying some of this also.

d. Physical Education, Health, Family Consumer Science & Wellness Monthly Update

Ms. Kumm – Is the Methuen Youth Risk Behavior Survey Optional?

Superintendent – Yes there is an opt out.

Ms. Kumm – Does the Committee see this first?

Superintendent – No

Ms. Kumm – Is it a modified survey?

Superintendent – I believe so but I will check with Mr. Osgood and let you know.

Mr. Barden – Families do have the option to sign the opt out form. We will be giving the survey the Wednesday morning before Thanksgiving to give the opportunity to have all students take it.

Ms. DiNatale – When we saw last year’s results we had some discussion on what topics we hoped to see added. Did Mr. Osgood have a chance to enter them?

Superintendent – Yes he did.

Mayor – I want to thank Mr. Osgood and his staff for helping our schools be the first to receive the grant for a physical fitness outside activity.

e. Residency Monthly Update

Ms. Carmen Aguilar Cruz, Records/Residency Secretary provided the Committee with the Residency Monthly Update Report.

Mr. Vogler – Methuen Life has our emergency hot line number in the paper to report residency concern. Didn’t see it in the Eagle Tribune? Do we have it anywhere?

Superintendent – Yes it is also on our website.

Mr. Deeb – I appreciate the monthly update. Is it possible to get a summary of how many kids have been sent out since the policy came in to effect?

Mr. Vogler – It goes back about 5 or 6 years when we put this in place and checked all 7,000 students.

Superintendent – I believe it was the 2008-2009 school year. Yes we can get those numbers for you.

f. School Resource Officers Monthly Update

A monthly report from Sgt. Joseph Aiello was given on each of the schools.

Superintendent – I wanted to let you know that we have had all schools perform lock down drills and all the schools did well. Best part they went around to all the kids and met with them. Students were all comfortable about it.

Ms. DiNatale – I am looking at the reports and many items are falling into the “other” category. I thought the intention is not to use that category so much and would like to see them move them into the other categories that describe them better. Also seems like there was a lot reported on the high school report can you speak to that?

Superintendent – These can be the student had walked out of the building, a daily suspension or a variety of different reasons. High school is a different animal from K-8 buildings.

Ms. Kumm – What is the population of the high school?

Mayor - 1904

5. Old Business and Other Pending Matters

a. Revise & Readopt S. C. Policy #IHE-Promotion & Attendance 1st-8th –Second Reading

MOTION: Mr. Vogler moved to adopt the second reading

Ms. Kumm seconded the motion

DISCUSSION:

Ms. DiNatale – I would like to include additional means of communication or give parents the option to add text messages, emails...

Superintendent – I discussed with the principals. The procedure is if a parent doesn't call in the absence Prek-12 they call their home or work phone number till they speak with them.

Ms. DiNatale – Personally I have had instances that had not happened. I forgot to call and I received a voicemail they did not continuously attempt to talk to me. Just want to make sure this is happening.

Superintendent – I will speak to that building principal to make sure this is happening.

VOTE: 7-0-0 UNANIMOUS

b. Revise & Readopt S. C. Policy #IHF- Attendance, Promotion & Graduation MHS –Second Reading

MOTION: Mr. Vogler moved to adopt the second reading

Ms. Fawcett seconded the motion

DISCUSSION: Mr. Vogler – Can I get a number of how many students a year reach 22 or above. That is a lot. I hope if they are absent they cannot play that day or if out on Friday play on a weekend game.

VOTE: 7-0-0 UNANIMOUS

6. New Business

a. Review & Discussion of S.C. Policy #BBAA-School Committee Member Authority

Mayor – we are a policy making board. I was away at a wedding when I returned I saw in the newspaper we were questioning the ethics PSATs. If you wanted to pursue we should have done it as a Committee. We also asked for a report from lawyers which cost us money.

Mr. Deeb – With no disrespect to you buy you were not at the last couple of meetings when we discussed this matter. I am aware we are a body but that does not disallow one to send as an individual as I did to the State Ethics Committee. I felt I had an obligation to the taxpayers. I did sign as an individual but I did invite anyone to sign on if they wanted to as an individual also. In regards to the legal opinion everyone as a group agreed they wanted a legal opinion. I do have a problem with private organizations statewide and federal. I do realize when setting policy I would come to the Committee.

Mayor – The Mayor read the 1st paragraph of the Murphy, Hesse, Toomey and Lahane Attorney’s response to School Committee Members request for a legal opinion *“You have asked for an opinion regarding whether it violates the State Ethics Law for teachers to proctor the PSAT. The facts as I understand them are that sophomore teachers proctor the PSAT, an exam from a private, non-profit entity, the College Board. The teachers do not receive any pay for proctoring the exam and they conduct the proctoring during the normal school day. Methuen Public Schools (“Methuen”) does not receive any payment from the College Board, but instead receives a discount for signing the sophomore class early. Additionally, by administering the test and paying for Methuen students, Methuen is able to look at aggregate results for the tenth grade class to prepare all students for college admissions tests and make recommendations for AP courses.”*

7. Finance and Operations

a. Expenditure Report - Monthly

Business Administrator Ian Gosselin submitted the Monthly Expenditure Report to the Committee.

DISCUSSION:

No Action

b. Revolving Funds Report – Monthly

Business Administrator Ian Gosselin submitted the Monthly Revolving Report to the Committee.

DISCUSSION:

No Action

1. Methuen High School Auditorium Update

Mr. Gosselin was asked by the Mayor for a breakdown of the revenue we take in.

c. Grants Report – Monthly

No Action

d. Student Activity Accounts - Monthly

Business Administrator Ian Gosselin submitted the Monthly Student Activity Report to the Committee.

DISCUSSION:

No Action

e. Supervisor of Food Services – Monthly

Direction of School Nutrition Services, Wayne Vespa submitted the Monthly Food Service Report to the Committee

DISCUSSION:

No Action

- f. Bid Awards**
No Action
- g. Contract Approval**
No Action
- h. Budget Transfers**
No Action

8. Notification of Appointments and Other Personnel Matters

- a. Personnel Transactions**
No Action
- b. Professional Staff**
No Action
- c. Support Staff**
No Action
- d. Personnel Matters Requiring Committee Action**
No Action
- e. Notification of Vacancy Postings**
No Action

9. Superintendent's Reports, including Communications & Recommendations on Financial Matters, Old & New Business

a. October 1st Enrollment

Superintendent – The October 1st numbers are what was the tail for our Chapter 70 monies.

Mayor – How many students do we have?

Superintendent – 7023 which is 200 over last year numbers

Ms. Fawcett – I am glad to see the numbers in Kindergarten classrooms. They are great.

10. Business from the Committee

a. Building Committee Update by S.C. and Bldg. Committee Member Sweet

Mr. Sweet – The committee met last Tuesday to get an update of where we stand. We discussed doing the floor and linoleum over during winter vacation. When complete we might still be under budget.

b. Consolidation Committee Update by S.C. Member Sweet

No Action

c. Chargebacks' Sub-Committee Update by S.C. Member Fawcett.

No Action

d. S.C. Policy Review Sub-Committee Update by S.C. Member Deeb

Mr. Deeb – We are still reviewing and updating policies. This is an ongoing process. We have also been cleaning up old policies and placing them on the website. We have many policies now in Spanish on the website also.

Mayor – I am pleased to announce that PARCC and MCAS will be on the agenda at the MASC/MASS conference on November 4th where they are going to discuss the direction we should go. I believe we are in agreement we want to stay with MCAS. Five years ago Common Core was introduced and Massachusetts was number 1. Most of the 26 states using PARCC many have dropped out and it is now down to 7 States. If PARCC is tanked

in Massachusetts it might disappear. I would like PARCC/MCAS placed on the next agenda. The issue is not 10th grade that is on hold until 2019. The big issue is grades 3-8 for now. Also many questions like; Who is going to pay for the testing; The actual questions are not Common Core related on the PARCC. There is a petition out there by a S.C. Worcester woman and she is getting 65,000 signatures in our state. She was holding a meeting and hoping for 30 people to attend and 200 showed up. We have MCAS in place and our students are doing well with it. I feel this is going to be dictated down to us. Mr. Deeb – I would like to see MCAS maintained. I do believe this is going to be an ongoing fight. On November 17th the Commissioner is making his recommendation. Mayor - He is in favor of PARCC.

a. Executive Session for the purpose to review the Superintendents Contract Extension and Negotiations

Mayor Zanni entertained a motion to enter into Executive Session at 7:42 pm and will enter back into the business meeting to vote and to conclude the meeting.

MOTION: Ms. Fawcett moved to enter into executive session at 7:42 p.m.

Mr. Vogler seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL:

Mr. Dennis D.J. Deeb	Yes
Mr. Robert Vogler	Yes
Ms. Lynne Hajjar Kumm	Yes
Ms. Mary Jean Fawcett	Yes
Mr. Bryan P. Sweet	Yes
Ms. Jana DiNatale	Yes
Mayor Stephen N. Zanni	Yes

VOTE: 7-0-0 UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

The Committee entered back into the business session at 8:33

a. Unit B – Methuen Administrators Association Contract Ratification - Approval

MOTION: Mr. Sweet motioned to approve the Unit B Contract

Mr. Vogler seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Deeb – I want to state I am very happy with our administrators They are hard working. We are very lucky to have them. Because of some of the language I have to vote against this contract. No reflection on our Administrators There is a lot of language I do not agree with and would like to clean up.

Ms. Kumm – They are taking a 0% increase correct?

Mayor – yes 0% this year and 2% for 2016 and 2% for 2017.

ROLL CALL:

Mr. Dennis D.J. Deeb	No
Mr. Robert Vogler	Yes
Ms. Lynne Hajjar Kumm	Yes
Ms. Mary Jean Fawcett	Yes
Mr. Bryan P. Sweet	Yes
Ms. Jana DiNatale	Yes
Mayor Stephen N. Zanni	Yes

VOTE: 6-1-0 APPROVED

b. Superintendent Contract Extension - Approval

MOTION: Mr. Vogler motioned to approve the Superintendents Extension one year to expire approximately August 2017

Mr. Sweet seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Deeb – I am glad to have the Superintendent on board. This is a real bargain for the taxpayers for all she does during and after school since she is not taking an increase for the extension. Taxpayers are lucky to have her.

Mr. Vogler – I echo that. She has come up through the system as a teacher, administrator now the Superintendent.

Ms. Kumm – As a parent I am happy to support this extension. She knows the pulse of Methuen.

ROLL CALL:

Mr. Dennis D.J. Deeb	Yes
Mr. Robert Vogler	Yes
Ms. Lynne Hajjar Kumm	Yes
Ms. Mary Jean Fawcett	Yes
Mr. Bryan P. Sweet	Yes
Ms. Jana DiNatale	Yes
Mayor Stephen N. Zanni	Yes

VOTE: 7-0-0 UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

11. Executive Session

a. Negotiation

b. Litigation

12. Adjournment

With no further business to discuss at this Business Session, Mayor Zanni entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting and enter into Executive Session for the purpose of litigation at 8:38 pm, thus concluding this Business Session for the evening.

MOTION: Mr. Sweet moved to adjourn this Business Session at 8:38 p.m. and enter into Executive Session

Mr. Vogler seconded the motion.

VOTE: 7-0-0 UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

Respectfully submitted,
Deidre Runge, Public Recorder
Methuen Public Schools