

**TRANSCRIPT OF PUBLIC RECORD**

**OF**

**THE METHUEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

**BUSINESS SESSION**

**OF**

**NOVEMBER 10, 2014**

**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**  
**November 10, 2014**

This business meeting of the Methuen School Committee was held in the Great Hall of Searles Building, City Hall, and was posted for 6:30 PM.

**MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Ms. Lynne Hajjar Kumm, Vice Chairperson  
Ms. Mary Jean Fawcett, Secretary  
Mr. Dennis D.J. Deeb  
Ms. Jana DiNatale  
Mr. Robert Vogler

**ABSENCENT FROM THE MEETING**

Mr. Bryan P. Sweet  
Mayor Stephen N. Zanni, Chairperson

**OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

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

**1. Call to Order**

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

**MOTION:** Mr. Vogler moved to accept agenda as presented  
Ms. Fawcett seconded the motion to accept the agenda

**DISCUSSION:** None

**VOTE:** 5-0-0 APPROVED

**a. Flag Salute**

Gabriella Silk a 4<sup>th</sup> grade student from the Tenney Grammar School led the Committee in Opening Exercises of this meeting.

**2. Participation by Others**

**a. SOAR Award**

The Mathematics Department chose Cameron Bolduc for this Award.

**b. Student Advisory**

- Shae Carter a MHS Senior spoke about the Fine Arts Department and the Ranger Band and how they practice Monday, Wednesday and Saturdays. They won silvers this season with 5 out of 5 “Five Stars” in the MICCA Finals in Lowell.

- Nick Abourizk a MHS Senior told the Committee about their N.Y. Senior Trip. They saw the Play Wicked. He said it was an awesome trip.
- Mike Hajjar a MHS Sophomore talked about the Exchange Students visit to Methuen.
- Ms. Kumm introduced Sara Ospina the new Student Representative for Methuen High School.

**c. Staff**

No Action

**d. Public**

No Action

**3. Approval of Minutes:**

**Transcript of October 14, 2014 Business Meeting**

**MOTION:** Mr. Vogler moved to adopt the Recorded Transcript of October 14, 2014 as presented and waived the reading;  
Ms. Fawcett seconded the motion to approve as presented.

**DISCUSSION:** None

**VOTE:** 5-0-0 APPROVED

**4. Staff Reports**

**a. Superintendent's Monthly Report**

- Superintendent – I have had many requests for information from the Committee so I decided to start reviewing them:

*#1 Mayor asked about the Pleasant Valley School:*

The Superintendent told the Committee that they make the decision as a whole whether to keep or turn over. At this time there is no storage space in any of the schools so all storage is at the Pleasant Valley.

Mr. Vogler – is there any space at the Central for the Historical Society?

Superintendent – We will not have the room at the Central but we did clean a spot at the Pleasant Valley, which is full, for the Historical Society.

*#2 School Calendar requested by Ms. Fawcett:*

Superintendent – Ms. Fawcett suggested a survey regarding a change to the calendar. We are working on it now for your discussion as a Committee. Our plan is to have it for you by the end of January. There is a collective bargaining piece to this. Change would not happen until the 2016/2017 year if any was to be made.

*#3 Explanation of Filming Done at Timony Grammar School:*

Superintendent - This is just an informative piece about a wonderful experience.

*#4 Special Education Inclusion Teachers at MHS requested by Mr. Vogler:*

Superintendent - There are 6 inclusion Special Education Teachers at the high school.

*#5 MCAS – Alt portfolios:*

Superintendent – I asked Ms. Bozek to put this together for you and explain MCAS-Alt.

Ms. Bozek, Director of Student Services – We just wanted to clarify since Mr. Vogler and Mr. Deeb asked some questions at the workshop. There is a breakdown of special disabilities and how reports are reported. There are also samples of the MCAS-Alt Rubrics showing how they are scored.

Mr. Deeb – thanked Ms. Bozek for the information. He said it helped him understand the process better.

#6 Title 1 Parent Workshops requested by Mr. Vogler:

Superintendent – attached is information on parent attendance at Title 1 parent workshops.

Ms. Kumm – I see that when they started at 4:30 p.m. attendance wasn't as good as 5:15 p.m.

Superintendent – Ms. Piccolomini, Title 1 Supervisor, had a survey go home and this is what the parents asked for.

Mr. Vogler – I understand it's difficult to get parents out to these meetings. Maybe they can try a 5:30 start. These parents are working parents.

#7 Just an FYI for Committee Members regarding the Santa Parade and December workshop:

#8 Accountability Level – Total Enrollment – Per Pupil Expenditure – Special Education – Low Income – NSS and % Above Foundation of surrounding areas:

The Superintendent – there is a report in your packet for you to review of surrounding and comparable cities.

#9 AP State / Methuen Comparison for 2013-2014:

Dr. Kwong – There are more students taking AP classes. We know we are below State average but we are moving up.

Ms. Fawcett – but more students are taking AP classes

Dr. Kwong – yes we far exceed other districts. We offer open enrollment to anyone that wants to take an AP Class.

Mr. Vogler – I would like to see how many schools in the State have open enrollment? I am glad we are increasing but the numbers are deceiving. I would like to see a comparable schools scores and requirements.

Mr. Deeb – I think we should consider re-examining open enrollment. What happens with those that score in the 1 and 2 category? Do they get any credit?

Dr. Kwong – No, what is accepted is up to the individual colleges. Some accept a score of 3 for credit but most use a score of 4 and 5. We have more students scoring 1 and 2 but we want the 3-5 scores to increase more. We have increased a little so we are moving in the right direction. The intent of receiving the AP Grant is to make kids more college / career ready. They might not get the college course credit but they are so ready for college.

Ms. Ospina, Student Rep – it is really good to offer this to all kids that want to try.

Mr. Deeb – I am not suggesting we don't I am just suggesting we explore. If you can get through AP Courses you are doing well. You can not deviate these are rigorous courses. It is teaching to a test but yes there are advantages.

Mr. Giuca, MHS Principal – open enrollment gives them confidence going through the experience

Ms. Kumm – they obviously have to commit to these rigorous classes. It's not affecting the performance of a student scoring 4 and 5. But a student on the edge is stretching themselves by taking the class and completing the course.

Superintendents Report:

Superintendent – as you can see there are lots of activities going on in the schools. You are all invited to them. MHS football team won the 2014 MIAA Sportsmanship Award and they are going to Gillette Stadium on November 21st to receive their award.

Ms. Kumm – can you talk about the high school open house.

Superintendent – It was an outstanding event. They had a great turnout even in the pouring rain. Many teachers were in the classrooms teaching classes for those that came to visit.

Mr. Giuca – Our intent is to open the high school to let the Community see our first class building and explain our program of studies. We have 37 activities and clubs with no charge

to the students. I think it is important for parents and students to see our schools overall success.

Ms. DiNatale – The teachers were wonderful they explained everything they were doing.

**b. Instructional Technology Monthly Report**

Ms Kumm – Bravo on the website. It is a work in process but coming along.

Superintendent – Our next workshop is at the high school and Mr. Lussier, Director of Instructional Technology and his team will walk you through the website.

**c. Facilities and Grounds Opening of Schools Update**

Mr. Vogler – Great Report. I know they are repairing a lot at the ice rink and working on a plan for the roof.

**d. FY'14 Youth Risk Behavior Survey - Update**

Mr. Vogler- Great report, some answers are disturbing though. I assume they are done anonymously.

Mr. Jeffrey Osgood, Supervisor of Physical Education, Health, Family Consumer Science and Wellness – Yes. The old way we use to get the results a year later so I put it as a Google doc and I get the answers at real time. We are going to do it this way from now on. We also get to send surveys right out for grant applications to help secure funds.

Mr. Vogler – you also have the Psychological Center that you can tap into their councilors if need be.

Mr. Osgood – We do have that partnership. Mr. Crocker the Director of Guidance uses them and other sites.

Ms. DiNatale – I see the questions on smoking but I would like to see questions on vaping.

Mr. Osgood – The bonus of having it as a Google doc is I can add to the document. I added texting and driving and removed others.

Ms. DiNatale – I am curious what we offer to students for counseling.

Mr. Osgood – Mr. Brouder works with students. We refer to our guidance staff and if need be our guidance staff refers them out. One other benefit is I can do all high school students in 35 minutes during homeroom.

Ms. Fawcett – Thank you. I like this because the data is so current. This supports programs we have in place. Teachers are first line of defense.

Mr. Vogler – Mr. Brouder is excellent but limited in time as one person. Maybe at budget time we can look at adding someone to help him out.

Mr. Deeb – I think we need to focus on academics. These are our goals and we are diving into other areas. Let's not lose sight of the basics.

Ms. Kumm - This was a newly created position for this reason. We needed this position to make data collecting efficient. We now can be proactive.

**e. Physical Education, Health, Family Consumer Science and Wellness – Update**

Mr. Osgood updated the Committee on on-going events and the enthusiasm in the schools.

He also talked about the high schools students working with a simulator which compares them when they are driving alone then texting and driving.

**5. Old Business and Other Pending Matters**

**a. Newly Adopted S.C. Policy IHBG – Home Schooling Policy – Second Reading**

**MOTION:** Mr. Vogler moved to approve the second read

Mr. Deeb seconded the motion

**DISCUSSION:**

**VOTE:** 5-0-0 APPROVED

**b. Revised and Readopted S.C. Policy ACAB – Harassment Policy – Second Reading**

**MOTION:** Mr. Vogler moved to approve the second read  
Mr. Deeb seconded the motion

**DISCUSSION:**

**VOTE:** 5-0-0 APPROVED

**6. NEW BUSINESS**

**a. Wellness Policy 2014 - Approval**

**MOTION:** Mr. Vogler moved to Approve the Updated Wellness Policy  
Ms. Fawcett seconded the motion

**DISCUSSION:**

Mr. Osgood told the Committee about the Wellness Committee. He told them that Student Representative Ospina was also on the Committee. He told the Committee he added Appendix C so parent groups would not think we are taking away their options but rather adding to them.

Mr. Deeb – I have one concern under the nutrition and physical education piece, are these DESE or National regulations.

Mr. Osgood – Physical Education’s curriculum follows DESE, State and National standards. USDA regulates these by giving their recommendations to the state for food services. Our teacher’s curriculum in FCS follows DESE, National and Voke Ed standards.

Mr. Deeb – My concern is because of the Federal Government Mandates students have to take foods they don’t want to follow the nutrition guidelines then just throw it in the garbage. It is wasteful. The Federal Government should stay out of it. This will be my reason for voting against the policy.

Ms. Kumm – I thought we need to abide by the guidelines to receive our funding.

Mr. Osgood – We take on some of the language. Mr. Vespa knows the food services piece so he needs to sit on the Committee so he can ensure we use some language that is needed.

Ms. Kumm – Our policy basically follows the State guidelines. I wouldn’t support anything that went beyond that.

**VOTE:** 4-1-0 APPROVED (Mr. Deeb Voted No)

**b. Revised & Readopted S.C. Policy JICFB–Bullying Prevention & Intervention Plan–First Reading**

**MOTION:** Mr. Vogler moved to approve the first read  
Mr. Deeb seconded the motion

**DISCUSSION:**

**VOTE:** 5-0-0 APPROVED

**c. Revised and Readopted S.C. Policy ADF – School District Wellness Program – First Reading**

**MOTION:** Ms. Fawcett moved to approve the first read  
Mr. Vogler seconded the motion

**DISCUSSION:** Ms. Kumm asked if there could be a physical education teacher added to the section “Wellness Committee consists of” in this policy. Mr. Osgood said yes we will add a Physical Ed and Health teacher

**VOTE:** 4-1-0 APPROVED (Mr. Deeb Voted No)

**d. Naming of the Methuen High School TV Studio - Approval**

**MOTION:** Mr. Vogler moved to approve naming of MHS TV Studio

**DISCUSSION:** Ms. Fawcett seconded the motion  
The Superintendent told the Committee that David Shaheen, TV production teacher approached her and asked if we can consider naming the TV Studio after Tyler Weymouth. He was one of his star students. He was hired at 23 for a TV station and a Museum in Washington. This is unheard of. We will have a ceremony that you will be invited to.  
Ms. Fawcett – Were Tyler’s parents informed and okay with this Superintendent – Yes.

**VOTE:** 5-0-0 APPROVED

**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

**c. Grants Report – Monthly**

The Grants Department submitted the Monthly Grants Report to the Committee.

**DISCUSSION:**

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**

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

**DISCUSSION:**

No Action

**f. Bid Awards**

**(1) 2014-2015 MPS Pizza Bid - Approval**

**MOTION:** Mr. Vogler moved to award the bid to Gill’s Pizza for \$175,000.  
Ms. Fawcett seconded the motion

**DISCUSSION:**

**VOTE:** 5-0-0 APPROVED

**g. Contract Approval**

**(1) Snowplowing/Removal Services for FY’15 - Approval**

**MOTION:** Mr. Vogler moved to approve the contract for Frank Delucia and Sons, Inc.

Mr. Deeb seconded the motion

**DISCUSSION:** Ms. Kumm – are rates established by the City

Superintendent – Yes

Mr. Deeb – Could we go out to bid

Mr. Gosselin – We don't need to but I imagine we could

Mr. Vogler – The City goes out to bid. Once the bids come in the City hires a great deal of drivers.

Superintendent – Rocco at Frank Delucia and Sons truly understands are property. He has done an exemplar job, knows how to do it. He has large equipment to cut down banks and does not need to leave equipment of school property.

**VOTE:** 5-0-0 APPROVED

**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. Residency Monthly Update**

Ms. Kumm – How is the Hot Line advertised.

Superintendent – I will check and see if it is on the new website

**b. School Resource Officers Monthly Update**

No Action

**10. Business from the Committee**

**a. Building Committee Update – S.C. and Bldg Committee Member - Bryan Sweet**

Mr. Vogler updated the Committee that we are at 99.9% completion. We are waiting for the punch list to be looked at and completed.

**b. Consolidation Committee Update – S.C. Member –Bryan Sweet**

Ms. Kumm - there was some discussion at the last meeting regarding technology. I would like to see success in the City side before we choose to look at privatizing the Tech department. To date there are some changes but nothing is documented. We are only an advisory Committee we cannot move forward without School Committee and City Council vote.

Mr. Deeb – If you look at our technology reports our technology team is doing a fantastic job.



Ms. Kumm – Let’s see how it works for the City. To clarify right now we are not looking at this as consolidation.

**c. Ameresco Project Update by Mayor Zanni**

Mr. Gosselin – There are several items we cannot pay for. We have to listen to DESE on what we can spend money we have on. Mr. Stella and I are looking at lowering the ceiling at a price we don’t need DESE approval for. We have people coming in to maybe put solar panels in.

Ms. Kumm –This has gone a few rounds. I wanted the information in front of me. I think we are all in agreement that we want to see where we are at. Ian, I am glad to see you are being proactive.

**d. Net School Spending Update by Mr. Gosselin**

Mr. Gosselin –I added to the summary. I met with our legal counsel and came up with a proposal. It should be a partnership not sole “City” who has say.

Ms. Kumm – when did the mayor receive this?

Mr. Gosselin – we delivered by email and hard copy on November 6

Ms. DiNatale – Curious to who decided to add this language in #2

Mr. Gosselin – The language is right out of the State Legislation. I simply mirrored with a six year plan.

Ms. Kumm – Suggested Ms. DiNatale meet with Mr. Gosselin like others in the Committee did.

Mr. Deeb – I want to thank Mr. Vogler for the attached memo he requested with the questions you asked regarding NSS and the answers. These answered most of my own questions.

Ms. Fawcett – I think this is something that should be shared.

Ms. Kumm – I would like to read into the record:

“After receiving many calls from City Officials and others about the November 3, 2014 City Council Meeting and the responses of the Mayor to the Committee's questions, School Committeeman Vogler called and said he was confused and requested answers and clarification to the following questions:

1. Did the agreement payment plan you sent to the Mayor have the word DRAFT printed on it.  
Answer - Yes
2. Did we as a Committee consent to any plan to be forwarded to D.E.S.E.  
Answer - No
3. Did we approve any plan  
Answer - No
4. Did we approve a plan be sent to City Council and discussed  
Answer - No
5. Did we request that the draft plan discussed at the City Council be sent to the School Committee Lawyer for review before anything was made public?  
Answer - Yes
6. Did we discuss that School Committee approve all documents pertaining to the payment plan before it would go to City Council for any discussion.  
Answer - Yes
7. Has anyone seen the copy that was sent by the Mayor to D.E.S.E.  
Answer - No
8. Can you call D.E.S.E. to see which one they received?

Answer - Yes I called Jay Sullivan and he has not received any payment plan from the Mayor as of yet and will call me when he receives it. Mr. Sullivan did share he received a call from the Department of Revenue (DOR) that they were told he received an approved payment plan. Mr. Sullivan was confused by the phone call.

I also want to reiterate that at School Committee request I did send the payment plan to the School Committee Legal Counsel for review.

I also want to reiterate that School Committee does approve the document before it goes to D.E.S.E. and Jay Sullivan will not look at any plan that was not approved by School Committee.”

Ms. Fawcett – I met the Jay Sullivan and he was explicit that “school Committee” would develop a plan. It needs school committee approval.

e. **FY’14 End of Year Report Update by Mr. Gosselin**

Mr. Gosselin – The FY’14 report was completed and submitted

f. **Chargebacks by S.C. Member Fawcett**

Ms. Fawcett – I am waiting to hear back from Jay Sullivan at DESE.

Other Business of the Committee:

Mr. Vogler thanked the Police Chief for putting signs up on Stillwater/Pleasant Street.

Ms. Kumm – SEPAC is having a Craft Fair on November 15 from 10-2 at Nevins Library in the Great Hall.

Superintendent – the next meeting is a workshop and will be held in the Media Center at MHS.

Superintendent – Mr. Gosselin would like to set up a Sub-Committee to meet with some energy saving vendors. Ms. Fawcett, Ms. DiNatale and Mr. Vogler volunteered.

## **11. Executive Session**

### **a. Negotiations**

### **b. Litigation**

## **12. Adjournment**

With no further business to discuss at this Business Session, Ms. Kumm entertained a motion to conclude the Business Session for the evening at 8:20p.m.

**MOTION:** Mr. Vogler motioned to adjourn this Business Session 8:20 p.m.

Mr. Deeb seconded the motion.

**VOTE:** 5-0-0 UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

Respectfully submitted,  
Deidre Runge, Public Recorder  
Methuen Public Schools