

TRANSCRIPT OF RECORDED MINUTES

OF

THE METHUEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE

BUSINESS SESSION

FEBRUARY 12, 2018

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 RECORDED MINUTES
METHUEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
BUSINESS SESSION
FEBRUARY 12, 2018

This Business Session of the Methuen School Committee was held at Methuen High School, Media Center, and was posted for 6:30 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ATTENDANCE:

Mayor James P. Jajuga called the Business Meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. with a quorum of members in attendance, and listed below.

ROLL CALL

Mr. Robert F. Vogler (P)
Ms. Susan M. Nicholson (P)
Mr. Nicholas DiZoglio (NP)
Ms. Jana DiNatale (P)
Mr. Dennis D.J. Deeb (P)
Ms. Jana Zanni Pesce (P)
Mayor James P. Jajuga, Chairperson (P)

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr. Robert F. Vogler
Ms. Susan M. Nicholson
Mr. Nicholas DiZoglio (Arrived at 6:33 p.m.)
Ms. Jana DiNatale
Mr. Dennis D.J. Deeb
Ms. Jana Zanni Pesce
Mayor James P. Jajuga, Chairperson

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Mrs. Judith Scannell, Superintendent of Schools
Ms. Brandi Kwong, Assistant Superintendent of C.I.A. and Grants
Mr. Ian Gosselin, Business Administrator
Ms. Haley Hamilton, Student Representative
Ms. Deidre Runge, Public Recorder

a. FLAG SALUTE

Gian Gomez, a fourth grade student at the Timony Grammar School, led the Committee in Opening Exercises of this meeting.

MOTION: Mr. Vogler motioned to Amend and add a 6c to the Agenda
"Government Donation – Approval"
Ms. DiNatale seconded the Motion

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: 7-0-0 APPROVED

2. PARTICIPATION BY OTHERS:

a. SOAR Award

Katherine Swallow was the recipient of the S.O.A.R. Award at this meeting. The CTE Business Department chose Katherine for this Award.

Julia Carter was the recipient of the S.O.A.R. Award at this meeting. The Music Department chose Julia for this Award.

Cassandra Palacios was the recipient of the S.O.A.R. Award at this meeting. The Visual Arts Department chose Cassandra for this Award.

b. Julia McCoy (Eagle Tribune – Moynihan Scholar Athlete Award Winner)

Julia was recognized by the Committee for her Award.

c. STUDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Katy Swallow, Senior spoke about the Poetry Out Loud Competition

Jennicha Pierre, Junior talked about “Next Generation”

Mildred Reyes, Senior talked about the Science Fair.

d. PUBLIC

Donna Gogas, MEA President go up and spoke to the Committee regarding:

- Reminder that all Units are entering negotiations
- School budget hasn't been fully funded
- Our take home with insurance increases no different
- Professional Development money needed to bring in people
- Superintendent did a great job with the minimal budget given to her

3. APPROVAL OF TRANSCRIPT OF RECORDED MINUTES OF JANUARY 8, 2018

MOTION: Mr. Vogler moved to adopt the Transcript of Recorded Minutes of January 8, 2018 Organizational Meeting as presented and waived the reading;

Mr. DiZoglio seconded the motion to approve as presented.

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: 7-0-0 APPROVED

MOTION: Mr. Vogler moved to adopt the Transcript of Recorded Minutes of January 8, 2018 Business Meeting as presented and waived the reading;

Mr. DiZoglio seconded the motion to approve as presented.

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: 7-0-0 APPROVED

4. STAFF REPORTS:

a. Superintendent's Monthly Report

Superintendent – I had included in your packet many FYI's I want to just address each of them:

- Budget Update & Timeline – this is just the beginning of our budget planning. Please look this over carefully
 - All units are open this spring for negotiations

- Letters are coming in weekly for out of district placements with 3-4% increases
- Bus/Transportation is a large sum of money for kids we do not have to transport.
- Administrator needs for positions are a work in process – next step is costing them out with backup to why we need them.
- Budget timeline – 3/12/18 Preliminary budget rolled out – 3/14/18 Budget Workshop – 3/21/18 Districtwide parent informational meeting – 3/26/18 It is our goal to have School Committee take a vote and move it to the Mayor
- Food for thought – these are non user fees that you can clearly see how this can affect the budget. This is a School Committee decision to be made
- Tutorial for City Council Memo – Jennifer Kannan, City Council Chairperson asked Council to look at 2/26 at 7:30 or March 5th @ City Hall @ 6. We are going to go with majority so please let Dodie know
- I chose March 28, 2018 for the Education Law Informational Workshop with Attorney Michael Maccaro because this was a snow date you should have had on hold
- This memo shows all the Units open this spring for negotiations
- The Credit for Life Fair in conjunction with the Merrimack Valley Credit Union will be a big event hoping you can all participate in.
- Medicaid Agreement Update
- Chargeback Update – the business manager will be contacting the Chargeback Subcommittee
- Clubs & Activities
- Marsh Supervising Principal Hire Timeline
- Curriculum, Instruction and Technology Budget Update – If you read they combined this request due to the increase in technology in the curriculum
- Food for thought – you can see from the attached there is a lot of money collected in surrounding districts this is a budget buster
- Cutting back on Circuit Break money will be a serious budget buster.

Ms. Nicholson – What are the topics that will be covered at the Education Law Workshop?
Superintendent – It is going to be on roles and responsibilities of the School Committee. As we get closer to the date an agenda will be prepared.

Mr. Vogler – these memos were very informative. I would like an Executive Session at the next workshop to discuss upcoming negotiations. My personal thought on the “food for thought memo” is user fee is a form of taxation. Also I would like to maybe add a full or part time position to the drug and alcohol resource program.

Ms. DiNatale – two things, #1 I think we decided to have joint goals in upcoming negotiations and #2 add to the list my priority which is to have before and after school help for students, whether it be teachers, National Honor Students...

Mayor - We have been meeting with the Superintendent, regarding chargebacks and having some good discussions

Mr. Deeb – I commend you for your list of priorities. If only it was an ideal world. Thank you Mayor for opening up discussions on chargebacks with the Superintendent and Business Manager. I voted against chargebacks this and last year. Regarding the Curriculum memo, what is the K-6 Reading program mentioned?

Ms. Kwong – We already have a 7/8 grade program to be more aligned with the 7-12 initiative. So we need a K-6 and there are not a lot around so we will be meeting with publishers this spring to find a program to align with the Methuen Public Schools.

Ms. Nicholson – Will this be a pilot in the spring?

Ms. Kwong – No we are looking at piloting this fall and implementing in 2020.

Mr. DiZoglio – the Chargeback Sub Committee was three but one member is gone so it is Mr. Vogler and myself is anyone interested?

Mr. Deeb said he would be interested. He stated that Lowell has a 136 million dollar budget and only pays 20 million in chargebacks.

Mayor – I can understand your long standing frustration. I will share with you we have had discussions and understand the balance needed that wasn't in the past. We understand a strong community needs a strong education and we are working towards that. I have talked to all the Representatives and they know how wonderful our schools are. We are going to continue meaningful dialogue.

b. Instructional Technology Monthly Report

None

c. Facilities and Grounds Monthly Update

Mr. Vogler asked if Ameresco can come and update the Committee at one of the March meetings.

Ms. DiNatale wanted to take a minute to thank Mr. Stella and staff for the work they did at the Timony Grammar School Auditorium. They did it all in house and really did a beautiful job.

d. Physical Education, Health, F.C.S. & Wellness Monthly Update

None

e. Residency Monthly Update

None

f. School Resource Officers Monthly Update

None

g. Student Services Updates

1. Homeless Update

None

2. PreK Numbers

None

3. Out of District Update

None

4. Medicaid Update

Mr. Vogler asked for an update and Ms. Bozek said she would request one from Mr. Thomas Kelley the City Auditor.

5. OLD BUSINESS AND OTHER PENDING MATTERS

None

6. NEW BUSINESS

a. S.C. Policy KHA – Methuen Public Schools Crowdfunding Policy - First Reading

MOTION:

Mr. Vogler motioned to approve the First Reading

- Mr. Deeb seconded the Motion
- DISCUSSION:** Mr. Vogler asked for some changes in the 2nd paragraph “member of the Leadership Team to Approval of the Superintendent” and last sentence to also say Superintendent
- MOTION:** Mr. Vogler motioned to amend
- Ms. DiNatale seconded the Motion
- MOTION:** Ms. DiNatale motioned to also amend – “I don’t think School Committee has to approve, I think the Superintendent should be there too. And delete the last Paragraph it is repetitious.”
- Mr. Vogler seconded the Motion
- DISCUSSION:** Mr. Deeb - I believe we do have to approve. I would like to have a legal opinion about whether or not School Committee has to approve this.

Mr. Vogler and Ms. DiNatale withdrew their motions awaiting legal opinion.

b. Course Additions and Deletions FY’19 – Approval

Ms. Kwong handed out a corrected copy of the memo to the Committee.

Mr. Barden told the Committee he wanted to bring these Additions/Deletions to the Committee so they could put them into the new program of Studies that he will be presenting on February 26, 2018 at the workshop. We are making changes to the Program of Studies to have consistent language which is easier for parents and students to read. It also will be easy to see the flow of courses.

Mr. Deeb - didn’t we already have Robotics?

Mr. Barden – This course would bring it in during the school day so we can compete.

Ms. Nicholson – these courses look excellent. What is the impact on staff?

Mr. Barden – A lot of what you see here staff can provide.

Ms. Kwong – Our CTE deletes are very outdated and no one uses these anymore. The more students that are in Chapter 74 classes the more money we get and enrollment is already high.

Mr. Deeb had concerns that he does not think open enrollment in A.P. courses are the best policy.

Superintendent – we have had this ongoing discussion. We do have requirements in place.

Mr. Barden – One of the biggest requirements is teacher recommendation. We have had meetings to make sure we are all going through the process. We have reviewed and are sure our teachers know their students best.

Ms. DiNatale shared her concerns with the large number of students not receiving passing grades in A.P.

Mr. Vogler shared his concern regarding exit interviews with the students receiving c, d

Ms. Kwong – Everything you guys say have been discussed. We also hear what you say and we know there are ways for us to grow and get better. We are not taking your concerns lightly but we do agree with open enrollment.

Superintendent – Mr. Harb and I also have been researching other school districts.

Mr. DiZoglio – Great job, love to see the Theater Department growing.

MOTION: Mr. DiZoglio motioned to approve the additions and deletions submitted

- Mr. Vogler seconded the Motion
- DISCUSSION:** None
- VOTE:** 7-0-0 APPROVED
- c. Government Donation – Approval**
- MOTION:** Mr. Vogler motioned to accept the donation and send a thank you.
Mr. Deeb seconded the Motion
- DISCUSSION:** None
- VOTE:** 7-0-0 APPROVED

7. FINANCE AND OPERATIONS:

- a. Expenditure Report - Monthly**
Ms. DiNatale – This says we are in the deficit
Mr. Gosselin – We are still waiting for Circuit Breaker to come in
- b. Revolving Funds Report – Monthly**
None
- 1. Methuen High School Auditorium - Update**
- c. Grants Report - Monthly**
None
- d. Student Activity Accounts - Monthly**
None
- e. Food Services – Monthly**
None
- f. Bid Awards**
- 1. MPS-AccessP-FY'18 – Approval**
- MOTION:** Mr. Vogler moved to approve the bid for \$162,736.90
Ms. DiNatale seconded the motion to approve
- DISCUSSION:** Mr. Lussier – There is still Erate Federal Funding available and if approved we will only have to pay 40%.
- VOTE:** 7-0-0 APPROVED
- g. Contract Approval**
None
- h. Budget Transfers**
None

8. NOTIFICATION OF APPOINTMENTS AND OTHER PERSONNEL MATTERS:

- a. Personnel Transactions**
None
- b. Professional Staff**
None
- c. Support Staff**
None
- d. Personnel Matters Requiring Committee Action.**
None
- e. Notification of Vacancy Postings**
None

9. BUSINESS FROM THE COMMITTEE

***ADJOURNMENT:**

With no further business to discuss at this Business Session, Mayor Jajuga entertained a motion to conclude the Business Session for the evening at 7:58 pm.

MOTION: Mr. Vogler moved to adjourn the Business Session at 8:54 pm.
Mr. DiZoglio seconded the motion

VOTE: 7-0-0 UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

Respectfully submitted,
Deidre Runge, Public Recorder
Methuen Public Schools