

TRANSCRIPT OF PUBLIC RECORD

OF

THE METHUEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE

WORKSHOP SESSION

OF

April 25, 2016

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:

MARTHA SIROIS, PUBLIC RECORDER

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METHUEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
WORKSHOP SESSION
April 25, 2016

This Workshop of the Methuen School Committee was held at the Central Administration Building, Superintendent's Office and was posted for 6:30 PM.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Mayor Stephen Zanni, Chairperson
Ms. Lynne Hajjar Kumm, Vice Chairperson
Mr. Robert F. Vogler, Secretary
Mr. Dennis D.J. Deeb
Ms. Jana DiNatale
Ms. Joyce C. Campagnone
Mr. Nicholas DiZoglio

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Mrs. Judith Scannell, Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Brandi Kwong, Assistant Superintendent
Mr. Ian Gosselin, Business Administrator
Mr. Richard Barden, Supervising Principal, Methuen High School
Ms. Martha Sirois, Public Recorder

CALL TO ORDER AND ATTENDANCE:

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

• **Richard Barden, Supervising Principal, Methuen High School
Final Exam Schedule (Draft)**

Superintendent-Mr. Barden is here tonight to present to the Committee his Final Exam draft and an overview of the Final Exam Schedule.

Principal Barden gave his overview of the Final Exam Schedule.

Superintendent-We have never had such a tight schedule. It is nice to have and be able to follow a schedule. She is very impressed with this change at the high school. Principal Barden will be posting the final schedule on the website.

Mayor-Monday, June 20th is the last for makeup testing. Do you usually have many students taking makeup tests on that day?

Mr. Barden-We try to keep track of the student absents and have them take the tests before the last day.

Mayor-Do students come in on the last day of school?

Mr. Barden-Yes.

Ms. Hajjar Kumm-She asked Principal Barden if it is a regular day of school on June 20th?

Mr. Barden-If the students do not have a makeup test they are welcome to come into school on the last day and many student do come to school.

Mr. DiZoglio-Are students allowed to leave after they take their final exam?

Mr. Barden-Yes. We are going to strongly suggest that students use the extra help sessions. We will also contact parents of the students that miss their exams.

Mr. DiZoglio-If students have a paper due as their final exam are they required to go to their class on final exam day?

Mr. Barden-Yes, they still need to go to their exam class.

Ms. DiNatale-Is it common for students to leave after their exam?

Superintendent-Yes. Most high schools let students leave after they take their final exams.

- **Preliminary FY'16 Budget**

Superintendent-Mr. Gosselin will be presenting a power point of the Preliminary Budget.

Mr. Gosselin gave his presentation.

Superintendent-The supply and materials increase is for the purchase of Eureka Math Workbooks for the K-8 students. She has also been working with Gina Bozek and John Crocker and has pulled out of the Budget her recommendation for the 4 additional guidance counselors, 1 in each k-8 building. She still has a need for the 1 new guidance counselors position at Methuen High School (MHS). We have extremely large Kindergarten classes. We are very generous and do not charge a fee for Kindergarten. Gina Bozek and her team have made more cuts since Friday. She would also like to reiterate to the Committee that Mass General Law requires that we provide all of our students an education. Every District is having issues with their budgets for outside placement students. We are in a great place with our K-8 schools. She asked that they keep all of the Methuen High School recommendations.

Mr. DiZoglio-What is the tenure for our teachers?

Superintendent-1st, 2nd, and 3rd year teachers would go first with dissolved positions.

Mr. Vogler-The Budget is going up about the same as it did last year. Do you have the class size numbers for the Social Studies classes at MHS? Is it possible for teachers to pick up extra classes for a stipend? He has just started to review the charge backs. He will be sending a letter to the City. He would like from the City a detailed list of the charge backs. Why is the School Department paying clothing allowances for City employees? We are paying for Police Officers and Firefighters to take their exams. It is a small percentage being charged back to us but we should not be charged at all.

Ms. Hajjar Kumm-She stated a few years ago the School Committee, with the blessing of the then Business Administrator Glenn Frato, Superintendent and the Mayor that this was a fair charge back list.

Mayor-When he came into office the charge backs were done differently. He changed the process. The School Department and the City signed a new Charge Back Agreement.

Mr. DiZoglio-He commented that they can use Budget money to pay these types of charge backs but could not use money towards the football field.

Ms. Hajjar Kumm-Yes that is correct.

Mr. DiZoglio-He asked if this charge back total is correct. 12 Million Dollars?

Mr. Vogler-Yes but most of them are legitimate charges.

Mayor-You have to read the State Mandates on charge backs. This will answer some of your questions.

Mr. Vogler-The Mayor has given us a budget amount of 69 Million Dollars. We would have to cut our Preliminary Budget by 1.8 Million Dollars. We can't take this from the Special Education Budget so the cuts would have to come from Regular Education.

Ms. Hajjar Kumm-She knows that there are State Mandates for Special Education but she needs someone to help her understand the level of services and how they are agreed upon.

Mayor-How do we compare to other districts? Our Special Education Budget keeps going up and up.

Ms. Bozek-It is based on what the child needs for services. We started the year in September with 102 Out of District Students that we are fiscally responsible for. As of April 22, we are fiscally responsible for 123 Out of District Students.

Ms. Hajjar Kumm-Where is the Theater position in the Budget?

Superintendent-We had to take it out of the Budget.

Ms. Hajjar Kumm-We want to invest in MHS. She would like to see that position put back into the Budget. It is a position that would benefit all academic levels.

Superintendent-This Budget is still a work in progress. We have another 8 weeks of possible retirements and teacher resignations. She will pencil the Theater position back into the Budget.

Ms. DiNatale-She agrees with adding back the Theater position. She feels the regular students are getting lost in the shuffle. She would also like to see Foreign Language expand in the upper school. She wants every student to have opportunities.

Mr. Deeb-He also agrees with adding back the Theater position.

Superintendent-Adding an additional guidance counselor to MHS is a key piece for the Horizons Program.

Mr. Deeb-How many guidance counselors are at MHS?

Dr. Kwong-There is currently 7 counselors at MHS. We are anticipating an increase of students at MHS next year, which is why we are asking for an additional guidance counselor. Each student is assigned a guidance counselor which is why we are asking for the increase in the guidance staff.

Mr. Vogler-We should have another Budget Workshop before our next School Committee Workshop. We need to know what the City affordability is before we can finalize our numbers.

Mayor-He will have a figure by the middle of May.

Mr. Deeb-He feels allowing all students the opportunity to take AP Courses is a waste in the Budget. He would like to see the cost breakdown.

Dr. Kwong-The cost would be the same. If the students do not take an AP Course they still would have to take a course in each subject.

Mr. DiZoglio-He does not want to see any job cuts. He also wants the Theater position put back into the Budget. How is it that AP Courses are available to every student?

Dr. Kwong-There is a teacher, parent, and guidance recommendation for a student to take an AP Course. Some students may not get the best grades but have high test scores. They should be in an AP Course so open enrollment will allow that to happen.

Mr. DiZoglio-How many MHS students are in the dual enrollment classes?

Dr. Kwong-Approximately 45 students.

Superintendent-The AP Course amount in the Budget is \$5,400.00. She has taken notes of the recommendations from this evenings Workshop and will take them back to her Administration Team.

***ADJOURNMENT:**

With no further business to discuss at this Workshop Session, Mayor Zanni entertained a motion to conclude the Workshop Session for the evening at 8:08PM.

MOTION: Mr. DiZoglio moved to adjourn the Workshop at 8:08PM.
Ms. DiNatale seconded.

VOTE: 7-0-0 UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

Respectfully submitted,
Martha Sirois, Public Recorder
Methuen Public Schools