

Andover School Committee
Regular Meeting of November 14, 2013
School Administration Building - School Committee Room

Members in Attendance: Chairman Dennis Forgue, Annie Gilbert, Paula Colby-Clements, Barbara L'Italien, and David Birnbach.

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

I. Call to Order

Chairman Forgue called the School Committee meeting to order at 6:30 P.M.

II. Executive Session

At 6:35 P.M. on a motion by Annie Gilbert and seconded by Paula Colby-Clements, the Andover School Committee voted to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing strategy with respect to collective bargaining with the Andover Educators' Association. Roll call: D. Forgue-Y, A. Gilbert-Y, P. Colby-Clements-Y, B. L'Italien-Y. At 6:53 P.M. on a motion duly made and seconded, the School Committee motioned to adjourn from Executive Session and return to Open Session, not to return to Executive Session. Roll call: D. Forgue-Y, A. Gilbert-Y, P. Colby-Clements-Y, B. L'Italien-Y.

III. Regular Meeting

A. Call to Order/Moment of Silence/Salute to the Flag

Chairman Forgue reconvened the meeting of the School Committee to order at 7:02 P.M. followed by a moment of silence and a Salute to the Flag led by Catherine Bravo and Jacob Jordan both Grade 6 students from Wood Hill Middle School. Mrs. Gilbert presented the students with a Certificate of Appreciation on behalf of the School Committee.

B. Public Input – none

C. Recognition

A. Superintendent McGrath welcomed Kerri Ford from the Andover Coalition for Education (ACE) and Steve Sanborn, our K-12 Science Program Advisor who presented information on the Weather Bug Weather Station, made possible through the most recent contribution of \$20,000 from ACE to the Andover Public Schools. ACE has been a tremendous advocate of the Andover Public Schools partnering with the community to provide opportunities that align with Andover's strategic plan and support initiatives outside of our yearly budget. Most recently, they held a Scarecrow fundraiser which was a huge success with forty-one scarecrows created by school staff, students, and community advocates lining Main Street for a week before being auctioned off.

Steve Sanborn explained that the Weather Bug Weather Station is a professional grade weather station with a webcam; it is internet based providing local, national, and international weather reports as well as curriculum weather units, interactive simulations, and lesson plans. The funding from ACE allows us to

purchase the professional grade weather station as well as site licenses for each school at a one-time cost. This is a very exciting program that can be used by all grade levels and is a good resource that every student can benefit from offering math and social studies connections and allows our students to collaborate with students across the country, to share data, pictures etc. The system should be up in running by the first of the year, and professional development opportunities for teachers will be offered.

Motion: Paula Colby-Clements moved that the Andover School Committee vote to accept the \$20,090.00 gift to schools from the Andover Coalition for Education (ACE) for the sole purpose of purchasing the Weatherbug Project equipment and site licenses to be used as part of our K-12 science/engineering curriculum.

Dennis Forgue recognized the Andover High School Girls' Volleyball Team on winning the Division I North Regional on Saturday; unfortunately they lost to Bridgewater State at the State finals last night. Barbara L'Italien recognized the Andover High School Girls' Swim Team on their win at the Sectionals this past weekend moving forward to the State's this weekend.

D. Communications

1. Redistricting Sub-committee Update (A. Gilbert / D. Forgue)

In order to properly populate the new and larger Bancroft School and balance the population of the other elementary schools to provide equity across the district, it is essential that they redistrict the current school lines. It is the expectation that every elementary school will experience some change. Information about redistricting, public meeting dates, documents, and minutes of meetings can be found on the Andover Public School Website. The next Redistricting Meeting will be held on Friday, November 15, 2013 for input and feedback on the most recent assumptions.

2. Calendar Subcommittee Update (D. Birnbach / B. L'Italien/ D. Forgue)

Several meetings have been held with faculty, town-wide PTO's, Principals, School Councils, as well as public sessions to share the changes being considered for the Andover Public School Calendar and to gather opinions of the community and school staff. The next public session is tentatively scheduled for Friday, December 6, at 2:30 P.M. The Calendar Subcommittee plans to send out a survey to gather additional input before presenting the information to the full School Committee. Some of the changes being considered include: starting school prior to September 1st, eliminating the February & April vacation and replacing it with one vacation in March, switching to a Federal Calendar (no religious holidays) and putting out a two-year calendar. There have been many interesting responses and reactions.

3. Bancroft School Update

The Bancroft School is 64% complete and construction is rapidly moving along. Currently, the trade workers are working on the interior classrooms in a very systematic fashion, and soon they will know whether or not students will be able to move into the new building over April vacation. To date, they have spent very little of the contingency funds and anticipate the remaining balance will reduce the

amount the Town has to borrow; however there are still unknowns that could emerge when they tear down the current school. By December or early January the status of the K-2 population at Shawsheen will be determined.

4. Charter School Update

On Thursday, November 21st the Dept of Elementary & Secondary Education (DESE) will hold a public meeting at the Memorial Hall Library from 4:00 P.M. to 6:00 P.M. to hear testimony from the public on the Charter School proposal. Written comments may be submitted to DESE after the public meeting. The School Committee and School Administration will determine their position prior to the November 21st meeting. At the School Committee Workshop on November 8th the Committee shared their individual opinions on the Charter School and took the position to not support the Charter School Application. David Birnbach did not vote. The School Committee also voted to authorize the sub-committee to prepare communications on the Charter School and the Finance Committee deliberated the issue at their meeting last night with no position or motion taken.

Hugh Smith asked who makes the final decision on the Charter School. He was told that the Board of Directors of the Department of Elementary & Secondary Education makes the final decision. Kelly Sutcliffe of One Carter Lane asked why the School Committee voted against the Charter School. Annie Gilbert responded that CS Subcommittee is working on a communication that will be available on-line and sent to DESE explaining their position. Paula Colby-Clements said APS has a \$2.5M technology infrastructure now in place, and with the scaffolding in place we are now seeing the results of this investment. Cindy Cromer, 3 Island Way is still forming an opinion and feels that items in Andover's Strategic Plan are not immediate, but the Charter School is.

Kerry Costello, President of the AEA, said the AEA has taken a position in opposition of the Charter School because of the loss of funding to the Andover Public Schools that will affect all levels, resources that will be diverted, and a possible reduction in force.

E. Old Business

Paul Szymanski reviewed the key points on the Budget Timeline, Guidelines and Assumptions, noting that the level services estimated budget is due on Friday, November 15th. The Business Office has been receiving narratives and salary and expense numbers from the school business managers and it has been challenging for the principals as this is the first year they are entering budget information on the MUNIS System; Munis is a complicated process and not all rights are provided them. He applauds the initiative of the principals and administrators. Individual budget meetings will be held between November 15th - 20th with all principals. On December 9th the CIP will be reviewed at the Triboard meeting and the budget submission date is Friday, January 3, 2014. The School Budget Public Hearing will be held on March 20th and the School Committee will vote on the School Budget on March 27, 2014. Paul Szymanski said the first Budget Sub-committee meeting is scheduled for December 6th and will be the first meeting to start looking at a level services budget.

Motion: Annie Gilbert moved that the Andover School Committee vote to approve the FY15 Budget Development Timeline and Budget Guidelines and Assumptions as presented. The motion was seconded by Barbara L'Italien and voted 4-0-1 to approve. David Birnbach abstained.

David Birnbach asked when the School Committee can weigh in on classes offered at AHS, what is the process, what the vetting process for new courses is, and what happened to the course proposals he recommended. Dr. McGrath informed David that it is not the role of the School Committee to determine what courses are worthwhile. The School Committee is responsible for setting policy.

G. Consent Agenda

School Committee Minutes: Minutes of October 29, 2013 Business Meeting
Sub-Committee Minutes

Warrants: Expense Warrant SW14140
Payroll Warrants 14S018, 14S019, 14S020

Motion: On a motion by Annie Gilbert and seconded by Barbara L'Italien, the Andover School Committee voted 4-0-1 to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. David Birnbach abstained.

H. Other

Barbara L'Italien said although she was not present at the Finance Committee meeting last night (having gone to the Town Offices earlier only to find out it was scheduled at a later hour) she monitored it by watching the entire meeting on local TV and got the entire flavor of the content and questions. She is very concerned about the discussion that took place to change the budget bucket model and that David Birnbach, who was at the meeting, told the Finance Committee the cost of the charter school would come from the School Budget not the Town Budget. Barbara feels that David Birnbach has a conflict of interest with his role on the School Committee and his role with the Charter School and should consider resigning. Paula Colby-Clements agreed that David's comments at the Finance Committee and his actions tonight shows he is not able to be unbiased as he said he could. David said he is advocating for the children of Andover and just trying to understand the process of how to put forward new courses.

I. Adjournment

At 8:37 P.M. on a motion by Annie Gilbert and seconded by Barbara L'Italien, the School Committee voted 4-0-1 to adjourn. David Birnbach abstained.

Respectfully submitted,

Dee DeLorenzo

Recording Secretary

Documents: FY-15 Operating Budget Calendar
FY-15 Budget Development Assumptions and Guidelines
School Warrants and Minutes