

Andover School Committee
Regular Meeting of January 26, 2012
School Administration Building - School Committee Room

Members in Attendance: Chairwoman Annie Gilbert, Vice- Chair Paula Colby-Clements, Secretary, Dennis Forgue, David Birnbach, and Richard Collins

Others in Attendance: Dr. Marinel McGrath, Superintendent, Paul Szymanski, Assistant Superintendent, Finance & Administration, Assistant Superintendent Nancy Duclos

I. Executive Session

At 6:05 P.M. the School Committee entered into Executive Session on a motion on motion duly made and seconded for the purpose of discussing matters relative to collective bargaining strategy and to return to Open Session. Roll call vote: A. Gilbert-Y, D. Forgue-Y, P. Colby-Clements-Y, and R. Collins-Y. At 6:55 P.M. on a motion by Dennis Forgue and a second by Dick Collins, it was voted 5-0 to adjourn from Executive Session and to move to Open Session. Roll call vote: A. Gilbert-Y, D. Forgue-Y, P. Colby-Clements-Y, Richard Collins-Y, and David Birnbach-Y.

II. Regular Meeting

A. Call to Order

The Regular Meeting of the School Committee was opened at 7:03 P.M. by Chairwoman Gilbert.

B. Opening Ceremonies

Mr. Collins asked for a moment of silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Haley Traub and Matthew Lem, who are both Grade 5 students from Sanborn School. On behalf of the School Committee Mr. Collins presented the students with a certificate of appreciation.

C. Recognition

Superintendent McGrath recognized Wood Hill Middle School student Jack Lu who was selected to be Andover's ambassador to Project 351. Project 351, started by Governor Duval Patrick and is designed to select and gather 8th grade students across the Commonwealth to serve as community service ambassadors on Martin Luther King weekend in Boston. The students participated in various community service capacities across the city, and shared information on community service projects in which they participate in their own communities. All three hundred and fifty communities across the state participated in the event.

Superintendent McGrath welcomed and introduced Minda Reidy, AHS Engineering Teacher and member of our Intel Team. Ms. Reidy talked about her AHS Engineering Class and how the Andover Robotic Club and Brobotics Team were formed by the students in her class. Recently, the two teams participated in a technical competition in which students designed, built, and programmed robots to compete in an alliance format against other teams. Their first competition "Bowled Over" was a qualifying tournament with twenty teams participating from across the State of Massachusetts. The competition required a very innovative engineering challenge, and the Andover High School Brobotics Team came in 4th in the qualifying round. The "Think Award" was won by the Robotics Group who will now proceed to the State Championship being held in March at Andover High School. A video clip of the competition was shown at the meeting.

D. Communications

Annie Gilbert suggested the School Committee hold monthly community chats at the Memorial Hall

Library with two School Committee members participating each month. The Committee will publicize the schedule once it is developed. She also reported the three chairs (Board of Selectmen, School Committee, and Finance Committee) met and discussed forming subcommittees to study Exempt Debt, Health Insurance, and options for possible consolidations of Plant and Facilities and DPW functions.

Mrs. Gilbert reported on the status of the teacher contract negotiations stating that the AEA has agreed to move forward with a High School Schedule Task Force. The School Committee will not be part of the Task Force nor will they have the final say in the decision. The High School Schedule Task Force is separate from contract negotiations. The Committee is waiting to hear from the mediator on the next steps for negotiations. Dennis Forgue said after the new schedule is implemented, the goal will be to reduce class sizes.

E. Citizen Input

Tom Deso, 81 High Street praised the people who continue to do good work in the school system and they need to be positive in moving forward.

Bob Willard, 76 Tewksbury Street, thanked the AEA and School Committee for exposing some of the major issues of the negotiations. He stated that the actual funding of the Andover Public Schools is 60% of the budget, not 47% which is only the operating budget; eight-three percent of the revenue comes from property tax and increased revenue is limited to funding APS. He supports the right of the AEA and School Committee to ask for items in negotiations, and feels it is reasonable to ask for a 3 x 3 work schedule at AHS, as he considers the current 2 x 3 schedule to be featherbedding.

Michael Day, 84 Sunset Rock Road, congratulated both the AEA and School Committee for gaining control of the issues. The teachers are the best asset the school system has. On behalf of all parents, he recognizes teachers' jobs as the number one item that impacts the success of students. He is asking the School Committee to publicly vote and put on record that any of the cost savings from negotiations will go back to the schools. Work-to-Rule impacts students and teachers; he therefore asks the AEA leadership to suspend their decision to Work-to-Rule.

David Birnbach said the School Committee has asked for help from the AEA in prior years to help reduce class size. The School Committee is working diligently to optimize dollars and to reduce class size.

Peter Otis, AEA Vice President said the will take any and all parent suggestions under advisement. This is a contract crisis and will cease Work-to-Rule when they see a viable commitment from the School Committee.

F. Old Business

1. Solar Panel Project & Warrant Article Update

Paul Materazzo, Director of Planning provided an update on the parcel of land identified behind Sanborn School as a potential site for three solar pad facilities. They are asking the School Committee to collaborate with the AGAB to support the Warrant Article being submitted, to work with the developer, and to consider moving forward with the solar facility. Revenue for the Town/School would be derived from fees charged for the 20 year lease of the land for each Solar Pad. The Warrant Article does not commit the School Committee to the project but allows AGAB to continue to pursue this opportunity. The project offers an enormous educational opportunity for students as well as revenue for the Town and School. As part of the process, the parcels of land will be surveyed, and the School Committee, Board of Selectmen, and residents will be invited to walk the area to see how it will look.

Motion: Paula Colby-Clements motioned that the Andover School Committee vote to approve the language for the Warrant Article relative to the "Lease of Land at 100 Lovejoy Road for Solar Facilities" which reads as follows: "To see if the town will vote to authorize the change of use of a parcel of land containing approximately 35.4 acres at 100 Lovejoy Road, which is under the care, custody and control of the School Committee, being a portion of the land shown on Town of Andover Assessors' Map 153, Lot 3 and which parcel of land is also shown on the map entitled "Lovejoy Road Site Plan, Town of Andover Solar Feasibility Study" dated November 2011, as prepared by Tighe & Bond, which is on file with the Town of Andover Office of Community Development and Planning, for the purpose of leasing said land for a solar energy facility and to authorize the School Committee and Board of Selectmen to enter into a lease of said land on terms and conditions the School Committee and Board of Selectmen deem to be in the best interest of the Town or for a term not to exceed 20 years, and to enter into a contract for the purchase of power or net metering credits from said Solar Energy facility for a term not to exceed 20 years on terms/conditions the School Committee and Board of Selectmen deem to be in the best interest of the Town, or to take any other action related thereto". The motion was seconded by Dennis Forge and voted 4-0-1 to approve. Mr. Collins abstained from voting.

2. Ballardvale Firehouse Forum Discussion

The January 18th Ballardvale Firehouse Forum generated many questions and input from residents about the two sites under consideration for the new firehouse; South School (corner of Woburn and Andover St) and a private site at 270 Andover Street. Many of the questions asked were beyond the prevue of what the School Committee has to deliberate and focus on. It was suggested an additional public forum with the Board of Selectmen and School Committee be scheduled. Before doing that, there should be clarification from the Ballardvale Firehouse Building Task Force if they are going forward with the two sites, and what impact of the development of Lowell Junction/I-93 interchange will have. Questions should be provided to the Task Force Building Committee in advance of a second public forum. It would be helpful to know the process for a land swap, the plus and minuses of building a fire station so close to an elementary school, and if other sites should be revisited.

Board of Selectman Chair, Brian Major agreed with the idea of scheduling a mutual forum with both the Board of Selectmen and School Committee present.

John McDonald suggested the best place for a new station would be in the area where the Ballardvale Playground is located. However, the focus seems to be on the South School site, excluding consideration of other options. He feels there are many questions about the Manitou Report submitted.

3. Bancroft School Project Update

Annie Gilbert said the SBC has been meeting regularly while awaiting decisions on the litigation filed by abutters of the site for the new Bancroft School. The court's ruling was a strong decision in support of the town; however the abutters are now appealing the decision. In light of this, the SBC is looking to follow a different path to move forward with building the new school by doing everything except what would affect the wetlands, and feel the appeals will exhaust themselves in time. The longer the delay in constructions the more cost the town and the longer the delay in addressing the structural problems of the current building. Any additional costs will come out of the project budget; they are building the same project just in a different order than planned.

4. Financials

Assistant Superintendent Paul Szymanski provided an update on the General Fund Financial Summary

including the Fee Based Revolving Funds, and Circuit Breaker funds. He said we are slightly above budget for the quarter ending December 31st.

G. New Business

1. Gift to Andover High School

Dr. McGrath announced that Pfizer, Inc. has donated \$5,000 to Andover High School in recognition of a video AHS students made for Pfizer on safety for their employees. The Committee must approve to accept any gift \$5,000 or more. The Superintendent and School Committee thanks Pfizer, Inc. for their generous donation.

Motion: Paula Colby-Clements motioned for the School Committee to accept the gift of \$5,000 from Pfizer, Inc. to be used for the purpose of programming and classroom materials for Andover High School. The motion was seconded by Richard Collins, and voted 5-0 to approve.

2. Disposal of Surplus School Materials

There are additional surplus items of school materials – 50 chairs from DMS, to be added to the itemized list approved by the School Committee on January 12th. The Committee is required to approve to dispose any school surplus property, which then goes to the Board of Selectmen for their approval. The inventory list of items is included in the School Committee packet.

Motion: Paula Colby-Clements motioned that the Andover School Committee vote to approve the disposal of the school surplus property as presented. The motion was seconded by Richard Collins and voted 5-0 to approve.

I. Consent Agenda

- Minutes:** School Committee Minutes of January 4, 2012, and January 12, 2012 (Rev.)
- Warrants:** Paul Szymanski said the Warrants are in order and provided the information for Warrants presented.

Motion: On a motion by Dennis Forgue which was seconded by Richard Collins, the School Committee unanimously voted to approve the Consent Agenda Items with a revision to School Committee Minutes of January 12, 2012.

J. Adjournment

On a motion by Paula Colby-Clements and seconded by Richard Collins, the School Committee unanimously voted to adjourn the Regular Meeting at 8:52 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Dee DeLorenzo, Recorder

Documents: Financial Summary
School Textbook/Supply Disposal Inventory Form
School Warrants
Minutes of January 4, 2012 and January 12, 2012