

**Andover School Committee
Workshop
Minutes of May 13, 2016**

Members in Attendance: Chair, Joel Blumstein, Vice-Chair, Susan McCready, Ted Teichert, Shannon Scully, and Paul Murphy.

Others in Attendance: Superintendent Dr. Sheldon Berman, Director of Human Resources, Candace Hall, and Anthony J. Bent, Facilitator

1. **Workshop**

A. **Call to Order – Opening Ceremonies**

Chair Joel Blumstein called the meeting to order at 4:00 P.M. in the School Committee Room in the School Administration Building. The meeting began with a moment of silence followed by a salute to the flag.

B. **Public Input** None

C. **Response to Public Input** None

D. **Workshop**

Dr. Berman introduced Anthony Bent, prior Superintendent of Shrewsbury and currently a School Committee member in Wellesley and facilitator of today's workshop.

An overview of the agenda, Leadership Protocols and Best Practices for Effective School Committee documents from MASC, were distributed to the members. Also included in the packet of materials were documents relevant to Andover School Committee Policies, Roles of the School Committee, and operating procedures used in other communities.

Mr. Bent distributed a handout on the "Humanistic View of Leadership, Building Capacity, Working through Others, Managing Environments", for the School Committee to look over and to consider which items are most important to them. The School Committee members shared which items they chose and why. There is high value in having the School Committee work well with each other resulting in more meaningful and productive meetings. Tony also led a discussion on the importance of educating residents on the role of the School Committee, responding to expectations of the community, and channeling questions in the appropriate direction.

The next document, "Protocols and Best Practices for Effective School Committee" from the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) 2012-2013, was reviewed and discussed.

- o **Meeting in Public, not a public meeting – Yes, the School Committee is in agreement**
- o Create forums for dialogue with citizens
- o Public participation - 3 minute rule / structure, clarification question, quick response
- o Business meetings - issues that are School Committee business, some questions that require easy quick answer, others not a school committee issue.

Mr. Bent talked about the use of leadership and wisdom, to know when to let people talk and when to contain the time; people want to be heard and the School Committee should know how to respond using a skillset to manage a conversation dialogue on the same item.

Input from the School Committee showed a consensus within the group that the meetings should be more controlled. On the School Committee Agenda there is a line item for citizen input which is limited to 3

minutes, without direct interaction (just listen and take notes) requests for clarification or better understanding can be made in response to public input and follow-ups can be done after the meeting with the Superintendent.

Extended discussion on public conversation: How does the School Committee get input?

It is valid to have a School Committee Meeting run in a professional manner, and to gather ideas on how to create methods of input from the community. Forums or addition to an agenda of a future School Committee for items that need more community input or discussion should be scheduled separately.

The Superintendent has established a Communications Task Force to gather ideas for improving two-way communication within the District. The School Committee discussed ideas on creating opportunities for informal discussions (breakfast/coffee/PTO meetings), and other possible vehicles for communication.

Andover School Committee Policy BEDH on Public Participation at School Committee provides guidelines on handling dialogue between School Committee and residents, especially when interruptions and improper conduct and remarks occur. Mr. Bent suggested the Policy BEDH be posted on the School website.

- **Wrap-up**
Utilize and publicize the SC Policy BEDH and to be more proactive with ideas for gathering and responding to Public Input.
- Still need to determine what it means to be a School Committee liaison to a school, what the dos and don'ts are and to realize there are vulnerabilities with that role.
- Schedule another meeting to cover items 4, 5, and 6.

H. Adjournment

At 6:05 P.M. on a motion by Susan McCready and seconded by Paul Murphy, the School Committee voted 5-0 to adjourn the Work Session of May 13, 2016. Roll call: P. Murphy-Y, S. Scully-Y, T. Teichert-Y, S. McCready-Y, and J. Blumstein-Y.

Respectfully submitted,

Dee DeLorenzo
Recorder

Documents: ~A Humanistic View of Leadership, Building Capacity Working Through Others, Managing
~Protocols and Best Practices for Effective School Committee Meetings (MASC)
~Board and Superintendent Working Agreements
~Lexington and Wellesley Policies on Operating Procedures and Public Participation