

**Andover School Committee
Regular Meeting
Minutes of January 11, 2018**

Members in Attendance: Chair, Susan McCready, Vice Chair, Shannon Scully, Joel Blumstein, Paul Murphy
Joel Blumstein-absent- he is on vacation

Others in Attendance: Superintendent Berman via skype, Asst. Superintendent Paul Szymanski,
Asst. Superintendent Nancy A. Duclos

I. Regular Meeting

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

Susan McCready called the School Committee to order at 7:05pm in the SC Room located on the 2nd floor of the School Administration Building. Present: Paul Murphy-Y, Ted Teichert-Y, Shannon Scully-Y and Susan McCready-Y. Sanborn Students, John Harrington, Cecelia D'Angelo, Shyla Charles and Avram Dawson all were introduced and said the Pledge of Allegiance.

B. Recognitions/Communications

The Superintendent has been at a number of schools participating in some data meetings. There is also a Bancroft reading pilot meeting which Dr. Duclos is leading. Also, the Superintendent stated that he had sent a letter to our legislators about the circuit breaker gap – asking for a supplemental budget. He is concerned that next year the district may be facing the same situation. Mass Association of School Superintendents Director, Tom Scott, told Shelley that other districts are also sending letters to their legislators on the budget strain. Ms. Scully added that historically the reimbursement has been at 75% but it is coming in at 65% this year. Ms. Scully also stated that we had conservatively budgeted for 72% so this truly has created a problem for our budget. She has sent a letter to MASC as well.

Dr. Duclos reported that she sent out the application form to the teacher for the elementary task force. The first meeting is set for January 24th.

SC Member Ted Teichert requested that Student Services Director Sara Stetson and Asst. Students Services Director, Nancy Koch, attend a future meeting to discuss the report findings of the SC Sped forum in May.

SC Vice Chair Shannon Scully talked about AHS Facility Committee and their work so far. She reminded the Committee of the informal SC forum – Jan. 20 at Memorial Hall Library to be held at 9AM. Also a reminder on the Special Town Meeting which will be held on Jan. 29th at 7pm in Collins Center, last day to register to vote is Jan. 19th.

The Chair stated that the school departmental budget meetings are scheduled for Tues, Jan. 16th. There will also be an executive session to talk about contracts the SC is still bargaining.

C. Public Input:

Carleen Bell Flanagan, resident offer thoughts on the HPE/WHMS accessibility project. The bids came in over budget, some items were added in and lastly when estimates were taken prevailing wages weren't taken into account. She is impressed by the commitment of the town and getting it done. This item is out to bid now, with 2 contractors who are showing interest, but others might be coming.

Kerry Costello, President of AEA (teachers' union) stated she heard concerns with building steps and sidewalks at many of schools. There have been 2 slips and falls that she is aware of. Her understanding is that custodians were not authorized to come in early to deal with some of these problems and heard that there was some equipment that broke down because of ice buildup. She is hoping that next time we are better prepared.

D. Response to Public Input

Response from Paul Szymanski who said he will investigate into the snow/ice problem further with the custodians. The information given tonight was contrary to what he was informed.

E. Education

1. *APS 2018-2019 Calendar:* The Chair and Committee would like to discuss the Early Release Days currently scheduled on the calendar. Susan said there is an additional new Early Release Day on the calendar to accommodate the new report card schedule as she understood it. However, the Committee wanted to know more from Dr. Duclos on why this was done differently for next year.

Dr. Duclos stated that we always needed more time for conferences. In essence we have provided 6hrs for parent conferences, this year we are just doing 4hrs. Some districts do evenings; others have multiple Early Release Days. Since the Committee isn't comfortable with this, she will check out other avenues. Members concurred and said that the original calendar voted on didn't yet have any Early Release Dates (ERD) scheduled.

Shannon said she isn't supportive of adding another ERD, hopeful that the task force will find another way to do things. Paul M also feels there might be a better solution. Susan said the additional parent conference date might not be a bad idea, but wanted to get feedback from parents and teachers on their thoughts.

Dr. Duclos stated that she needed to put something on the calendar knowing that it was coming out, but would get back to the members on feedback. She will do some research and see what the other 10 comparable districts are doing. This time is to provide parent conference time. We know that it's not enough time, but we could take the entire week and allow those to take place before or after school. We could give the teachers back that time in other ways.

2. *APS 2018-2019 Calendar-Make Up Days:* The Committee would like to discuss the make-up days for the school year as we have now used our 5th snow day and so our last day as of today is Wed, June 27th.

The Chair stated they had heard from a number of parents about the voted on calendar. School can't start before Sep 1 unless the teachers vote on a waiver to begin prior to September 1.

Cathy Cote – parent of 3 children. Stated she would hope to start classes Tues, Sep 4th; has had several conversations with SC members and Ms. Costello. It is necessary and critical as we may face the same scenario for next year. Most people want to start on Tuesday after Labor Day if that is a choice. The parents hope the calendar can be amended and request the union to vote sooner.

Kerry Costello – Pres of AEA. She finds that unfortunately the school calendar issues have taken a life of its own. She reported the AEA Board had a robust meeting today and stated that a vote will take place – inclusive of all the union members. She is well aware of the social media implications at this time and that the union is being solely blamed for this. In the past she also stated that a vote hasn't taken place until March. They have voted earlier from time, but there's no provision saying we have to do that.

The AEA Board did vote that they would take a vote on January 18. The vote will only be on whether to waive the Sept 1 start date. The vote will take place during the school day and they will work with the administration to hold an electronic vote.

The Superintendent responded that he would work with IT for their help with the electronic vote specifics.

Ms. Costello also stated that she spoke with the SC Chair about the Q & A document that was circulating among the schools as she had some statements she had an issue about in the document. Ms. McCready responded that she had emailed the document to Ms. Costello (on January 8) originally but that she would look again at her emails. Ms Costello added that she had not heard about this document until a building representative had told her about the Q&A document. However, she also added that she would look at her own emails again.

Ms. Scully thanked the AEA for reconsidering this vote as this has been a very emotional, rough situation. Paul Murphy added that the Committee and AEA do what is best for the children. The Superintendent added that he hoped the first day of classes would not be on Tues, September 4th as that is the primary election day.

On a motion by Shannon Scully and seconded by Paul Murphy, the Andover School Committee voted to put the APS School calendar on the agenda to reconsider the 218-2019 school calendar depending on the outcome of the AEA Membership vote on January 18th. The motion passed on a 4-0 vote.

Furthermore, the SC discussed the makeup days for the rest of the school year as the district just used up their 5th storm day. After some more discussion the motion was made by Ms. Scully.

Shannon Scully moved that the Andover School Committee vote to approve the following plan as make up days for the 2017-2018 school year in the event of more weather related school cancellations. The motion passed on a 4-0 vote.

THE 6TH STORM DAY WILL BE MADE UP ON THURS, JUNE 28TH; THE 7TH STORM DAY WILL BE MADE UP ON FRIDAY, MARCH 30TH (HALF DAY FOR STUDENTS, PROFESSIONAL DAY IN AFTERNOON FOR TEACHERS) and MAY 4TH WILL NOW BECOME A FULL DAY; THE 8TH STORM DAY WILL BE MADE UP ON FRIDAY, JUNE 29TH (FULL DAY FOR TEACHERS); THE 9TH STORM DAY WILL BE MADE UP ON SATURDAY, APRIL 28TH; AND THE 10TH STORM DAY WILL BE MADE UP ON SATURDAY, MAY 12TH.

The Chair requested that the Superintendent send out communication to parents on Tuesday with the potential snow make up days.

F. New Business

1. *Initial Compliance Certification – West Elementary:* Now that the Mass School Building Authority has invited West Elementary to be part of the eligibility period, the Committee needs to approve submission of the Initial Compliance Certification.

Paul Murphy moved that the Andover School Committee vote to approve the submission of the initial compliance certification to the MSBA for the West Elementary Project. The motion was seconded by Ted Teichert and voted 5-0.

2. *Article for Annual Town Meeting – West Elementary:* Paul Szymanski prepared the article in accordance with the FS Vote Language Bulletin Cities Town document provided by MSBA.

On a motion by Ted Teichert and seconded by Paul Murphy, the Andover School Committee voted that the Town appropriate the amount of \$1,200,000 Dollars for the purpose of paying costs of conducting a Feasibility Study: (1) to understand the extent of deficiencies identified in the Statement of Interest submitted to the Massachusetts School Building Authority for the West Elementary School, located at 58-60 Beacon Street, Andover, MA and as shown on Andover Assessor Map 107, lot 16; and (2) to begin to explore the formulation of a solution to the deficiencies which are relevant to the Statement of Interest for West Elementary School including the payment of all costs incidental or related thereto, and for which the Town of Andover may be eligible for a grant from the Massachusetts School Building Authority (“MSBA”), said amount to be expended under the direction of the School Building Committee. To meet this appropriation, the Andover School Committee, with the approval of the Board of Selectmen is authorized to borrow said amount under and pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 44, or pursuant to any other enabling authority. The Town acknowledges that the MSBA’s grant program is a non-entitlement, discretionary program based on need, as determined by the MSBA, and any costs the Town incurs in excess of any grant approved by and received from the MSBA shall be the sole responsibility of the Town, and that the amount of borrowing authorized pursuant to this vote shall be reduced by any grant amount set forth in the

Feasibility Study Agreement that may be executed between the Town and the MSBA. *Motion passed 4-0*

3. *Special Town Meeting – Article 7 Wood Hill/High Plain Accessibility Project:* Joseph Connelly gave a brief update to the committee on how the WH/HPE accessibility project was coming along. He told them that bids had gone out over the summer but had come back over the budget originally proposed. Therefore, they had decided to wait and to change the design as well. He felt confident that the proposed \$200,000 would get them reasonable bids on January 26th when the bidding would open up again. After some questions from the Committee on the financial and design aspects, the Committee decided to vote on the motion.

On a motion made by Paul Murphy and seconded by Ted Teichert, the Andover School Committee voted to recommend approval of Warrant Article 7. The motion was approved 4-0.

4. *First Reading Policy Section G & H:* Ms. McCready told the Committee that they should have all received Chapters G&H as the next policy manual chapters to review. The Committee reviewed the changes and gave Ms. McCready some feedback on GCG, GCE and GBJ. Edits were also made on other sections of these chapters to which Ms. McCready responded that she would make the necessary changes and report back to the Committee at a subsequent meeting. The second reading will take place at the Feb 1st meeting.
5. *Financials* – Will be tabled until the next SC meeting.

G. Old Business

1. *FY19 Budget Update:* Dr. Berman stated that the budget meetings on January 16th will be entirely devoted to this discussion. Therefore, the topic will be taken up at that meeting.
2. *Addition of Tolerance Statement to Policy AB – Second Reading:* At the last SC meeting, the Committee read the addition of the Tolerance Statement to Policy AB. Since there were no other comments or feedback at this time, the Committee voted to adopt the proposed statement to Policy AB tonight.

Paul Murphy moved that the Andover School Committee vote to approve the Tolerance Statement to Policy as presented. The motion was seconded by Shannon Scully and voted 4-0.

3. *Bullying Intervention and Prevention Plan:* Dr. Duclos gave the Committee an update on where the Bullying Plan process stood at this time. There was a public comment period from December 4-19; it was posted on the website and there 5 comments that came in. Those comments and suggestion were integrated and forwarded to the Committee. She asked the Committee if there were any other comments for her to consider. The Superintendent thought the comments made were very thoughtful and very useful. Ms. Scully was incredibly impressed by the comments and Paul Murphy felt that that they had a living document that the public should be able to proud of.
4. *Assistant Superintendent Process Update:* The Superintendent noted that the HR Director told him that there were 44 applicants for the position. The Superintendent stated that we had an extraordinary pool of candidates and a strong screening committee. He felt that the screening committee will make a great determination of who the final candidates will be in the end. The resumes had been sent out to all the screening members and they would be meeting in the following week. The interviews would then be scheduled accordingly.

H. Consent Agenda

1. *Warrants – Expense SW1816 and Payroll 18S028, 27, 26*
2. *Minutes – None*

On a motion made by Paul Murphy and seconded by Ted Teichert, the School Committee voted 4-0 to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Adjournment

At 9:33PM on a motion by Paul Murphy and seconded by Ted Teichert, the School Committee voted 4-0 to adjourn from the meeting of January 11, 2018.

Respectfully submitted,
Alison Phelan
Recorder