

Andover School Committee
Regular Meeting of September 16, 2010
School Administration Building - School Committee Room

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

Others in Attendance: Dr. Marinel McGrath, Superintendent, Dr. Susan M. Nicholson, Assistant Superintendent

I. Executive Session

Chairman Forgue called the meeting to order at 5:02 P.M. A motion was made by Paula Colby-Clements with a second by Annie Gilbert to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing matters relative to potential litigation and collective bargaining strategy relative to teacher contract negotiations. Roll call vote: Chairman Forgue-Y, Annie Gilbert-Y, Richard Collins-Y, David Birnbach-Y, and Paula Colby Clements-Y. At 7:00 P.M. the School Committee moved to Open Session. Mr. Collins did not attend the Open Session.

II. Regular Meeting

A. Call to Order

Chair Dennis Forgue reconvened the meeting from Executive Session to Open Session at 7:10 P.M.

B. Opening Ceremonies

Annie Gilbert asked for a moment of silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Sarah Carmichael (Grade 5), and Cooper Bulens (Grade 5) from West Elementary School. Mrs. Gilbert presented the students with Certificates of Appreciation on behalf of the School Committee.

Chairman Forgue reported on his meeting with Paul Materazzo, Director of Planning, to investigate an opportunity to install solar panels to generate new revenue for the schools. Information will be provided to the School Committee and discussed at a future meeting. He also reported that the School Committee will hold a workshop session at 6:00 P.M. on September 30th to discuss the Strategic Plan and other issues.

Superintendent McGrath talked about her discussion with Interim Plant & Facilities Director Joe Piantedosi relative to the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). Mr. Piantedosi will review the CIP with the School Committee on Thursday, September 23, 2010 at 9:00 A.M. in the School Committee Room, and explain the request for a vote on the Statement of Interest for repair projects at WMS to submit to MSBA for consideration of reimbursement under the green initiative guidelines.

C. Citizen Input None

D. Recognition

1. Sanborn School: Blue Ribbon Award

Principal Patricia Barrett is pleased to announce that Sanborn School has been nominated as a Blue Ribbon School. Sanborn School is one of 304 schools across the nation; including seven other Massachusetts schools, to be selected. Principal Barrett recognized her staff who were instrumental in assisting with completing the application designed to showcase school leadership and best practices. Nominations were based on student data, and Sanborn was nominated as a high performing school. Information on the Blue Ribbon nomination is available on the school website.

Principal Barrett and Grade 5 teacher Christine Baldwin will travel to Washington, D.C. to participate in a ceremony on November 15th and November 16th to celebrate the Blue Ribbon Schools. Sanborn is arranging a community celebration to be held after their return from Washington. The School Committee congratulated Principal Barrett and the staff at Sanborn on this outstanding achievement.

Chairman Forgue recognized the Andover Football Team and Coach Perry on their win against North Andover last week.

E. Education

1. 2010 MCAS Results

Dr. Nicholson said the results of the spring 2010 MCAS tests were received on Tuesday, September 14th and over the next few weeks the District will intensely review the results. Dr. Nicholson gave a preliminary preview of the data received for students in Grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 10 and highlighted the areas of achievement at all grade levels. She explained that the District results included the scores of all students, including out-of-district students; while the School data does not. It is important to note this difference because it can appear that a school did not make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) by looking at the District scores. The results in ELA and Math reveal that Andover continues to make AYP at all grade spans in the aggregate. Schools can be very high performing but not make AYP. For example, South School has been identified for improvement for Year 1 for AYP accountability; although they were designated as very high performing on both ELA and Math. AYP is based on four factors: participation, performance, improvement and an additional indicator. i.e. graduation, attendance, etc. Dr. Nicholson said the scores for students who take the MCAS Alternative Assessment were “progressing” which is the highest level of performance on the MCAS Alternative Assessment. The four performance levels for the Alternative Assessment are progressing, emerging, awareness, and incomplete. Andover had one student who was in the “incomplete” category while all of the others were in the “progressing” category.

2. Bancroft School Building Project Update

Annie Gilbert reported the schematic design for the Bancroft School has been submitted to MSBA, the project is on schedule, and they expect to hear from the cost estimators next week. She talked about the contingency funding agreement for design, construction, and the project manager which is all part of the MSBA funding agreement to be negotiated. Several options for the site circulation (busses, cars, foot traffic) are being discussed, and input from the Public Safety Officer will be an important factor. Neighbors and abutters are requesting clarity on the access sites being considered. The SBC may make a decision on the site circulation that will include an option for revision at some point in the future. Chairman Forgue is working with the Chairs of the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee to schedule a Tri-board meeting to present the Bancroft School Project with the architects and School Building Committee members in attendance. The Bancroft School Principal, Francine Goldstein and the PTO are discussing ideas on how to unveil the project to the Bancroft Community. They are considering an evening meeting at Bancroft with the architects, and organizing grade level coffees during the day.

F. Old Business

1. School Sponsored Field Trips Policy Review Process

Chairman Forgue talked about the need to revisit the policies and protocol issues currently in place for school sponsored field trips. The three types of field trips commonly requested are academic, athletic competitions, and extra-curricular (out of state, out of country). Mr. Forgue suggested establishing a sub-committee to review the policies and suggested changes. Paula Colby-Clements and David Birnbach volunteered to be on the sub-committee and will work with the Superintendent and School Counsel on revising the policies and procedures.

2. Approval of revised school-sponsored trip permission slip forms

Dr. McGrath explained that all of the field trip information was sent to School Counsel for review last spring including the Permission Slip and Indemnity & Waiver Agreement. Recommended changes to the Permission Slip for item #20, and item #21 are highlighted in the handout provided to the School Committee. After discussion on the recommended changes, Paula Colby-Clements suggested an addition to sub-paragraph 12, to include the sentence that chaperones will contact the student’s parents and then arrange for transportation back to Boston.

On a motion by Paula Colby-Clements with a second by Annie Gilbert it was voted 4-0 to approve the Permission Slip for Students as presented and to include the additional language in sub-paragraph 12, chaperones will contact the student’s parents and then arrange for transportation back to Boston, as noted.

3. Trip Request

Dr. McGrath said a request for a school sponsored trip to Washington, D.C. from October 30 to November 2, for DMS students in grade 7 and 8 was submitted by DMS Social Studies Teacher, John Givens. This trip has been an annual event at Doherty. Dr. McGrath is requesting the Committee give consideration to this trip this evening.

On a motion by Annie Gilbert with a second by Paula Colby-Clements it was voted 4-0 to approve the DMS Field trip request to Washington, D.C. from October 30 to November 2, 2010 for Grades 7 and 8.

G. New Business

1. Ballardvale Firehouse

Fire Chief Mansfield explained that the Fire Department is looking at various sites to relocate the Ballardvale Fire Station and several options in the Woburn/Andover Street area are under consideration. Chief Mansfield is requesting permission from the School Committee to conduct procedural geo-technical survey tests on the school baseball field adjacent to South School at the corner of Woburn and Andover Street, one of the sites under consideration. The procedure will entail drilling 12-15 holes through the ground surface and upon completion, the area will be restored to its original condition with holes refilled and turf replaced. A communication will be placed on the South School website to inform parents of the tests being conducted.

On a motion by Annie Gilbert with a second by David Birnbach, it was voted 4-0 to permit ground testing at South School for the purposes of informing the Ballardvale Firehouse Study. This vote is with the understanding that there is no commitment on the part of the Andover School Committee to the project beyond the preliminary testing.

H. Consent Agenda

1. Warrant Dr. McGrath reported that the warrants are in order and updated the Committee on the financials provided.
2. Minutes SC Minutes of Regular Meeting of September 2, 2010

On a motion by Annie Gilbert with a second by Paula Colby-Clements it was voted 4-0 to approve the warrants as presented and the School Committee Minutes of the Regular Meeting of September 2, 2010 with revisions.

I. Adjournment

At 8:50 P.M. On a motion by Paula-Colby Clements with a second by Annie Gilbert it was voted 4-0 to adjourn the Regular Session.

Respectfully submitted,

Dee DeLorenzo, Recorder