

2006-11-28 School Committee Meeting

Discussion of Exchange program

Superintendent's Report

Traffic Supervisor Update

The recognition clause for the Traffic Supervisor has been posted. It's a 20-day posting. We are nearing the end of that. As soon as the time expires, assuming that no other bodies come forward to offer a counter proposal, we will commence our discussions with the negotiating committee.

Traffic Supervisor update at middle school. Have had discussions with the supervisors and the advisory committee, trying to get the coverage right for the Ottoson. The supervisors did feel that Appleton and Mass Ave was best location. We asked them also to suggest which position should be moved. They were unable to select a location to remove a supervisor from, advised that one should be added to employee count.

Info on attendance during religious holidays. Committee had asked for counts of attendance, prodded by an earlier piece of correspondence. Roughly 4% of students and 7% of faculty were absent. As far as no test days, that policy seemed to work fairly well, based on that fact that there were zero complaints to Nate. That has not been true in past years. As far as whether we should close the schools on these holidays, my opinion is that since more than 90% of the students are there and getting an educational experience, and since we can't take off a day without lengthening the school year, and since there is more learning getting done in the fall than in late June, we should keep the status quo.

Marty: On crossing guards, my wife noted, how can you evaluate whether a post is needed for safety since there is an existing guard there?

On religious holidays, asked for clarification on 2nd day of Rosh Hashana in 2005. (Nate: it was a weekend.) What about kids who ended up in the cafeteria in a study hall because there weren't enough subs? They're not getting a day of learning.

Nate: Understood that we're not operating at 100% capacity, but would still prefer 90% in fall rather than 100% of faculty in June.

Sue Sheffler: Asked that we defer this discussion until another night.

Chair's report

Retreat scheduled for Friday

Reviewed 2 other dates for retreats for rest of year, April 6 and June 15th

Summit of Finance Committee, Capital Planning, etc. has been deferred to Jan 11. The town faces some significant financial challenges in coming years. The summit meeting is the beginning of an effort to get a common set of facts about town needs and finances. Creation of subcommittee for Supt Contract review. Sue Sheffler, Susan Lovelace and Paul will be on that subcommittee.

Motion to create this committee

Marty: Given that the committee may likely change membership after election in April. I would suggest that only people who are going to continue on the committee after April should be on the committee. I don't think any contract renewal decision should be made until after the election.

Paul: the term of office of school committee members is 3 years. We serve until the last meeting of our term. There is no precedent for the committee members to defer their work as they approach the end of their term. I think that would be defaulting on their commitment. Every member of the full committee will be able to vote on the suggestions of this committee.

Approved 6-1, Marty voting no

Sub committee reports

Merit Pay -- Jeff

Met yesterday, did not finish our work yesterday – waiting for some more info from district on student academic progress, and also ran out of time. We will be getting more info on Friday at retreat.

I move that the Merit Pay Subcommittee be renamed Supt Accountability Subcomm

Passed 7-0

We are beginning to assemble the grid of merit criteria.

I welcome comments.

Marty: Last year when we created this, I went along with some items that I wish I hadn't. Some examples are a lack of a timeline, the item on reasonable and professional conduct (ed note: think I got that one right). I think sometimes the items got bunched up at the end of the year, which may not have been effective mgmt. I think some of the thresholds were set too low. A lot of money is based on these criteria.

The other problem I have is that I would like to see the evaluation have a larger % on some of the district goals – I would like to see lower points for goal 5. I think we also

have to set the bar high enough that it's really hard to achieve them. These shouldn't be cream puff goals. It should not be simply just a slam dunk raise.

Susan L. We are working on meaningful indicators. We would appreciate input for alternatives.

Next meeting is Dec 6th at 4:30.

Marty: I will not attend a meeting for a subcommittee which I was excluded based on an understanding that I was blackballed by the Supt.

Sue Sheffler – that's out of order

Paul: Addition of item 6, using an evaluation measurement of student achievement, is really a whole other ball of wax. Not that it's bad, but it does require different discussion. I would propose that we add as a customer satisfaction number the % of children eligible for schools who attend public school.

Budget Subcommittee: Susan Lovelace

Also meeting on Dec 6. Looking at alternative revenues – cell tower rental, fees, minuteman, school transportation, foreign exchange students

To maintain our current services, we need to spend 1.8 million for next year. That's a 7% increase. We only expect 4% tops – so there's at least an \$800K gap.

I expect to have a public hearing on this to discuss how we may raise fees or reduce services.

Policy and Procedures – Sean G

Discussion of School/parent communications. First reading of new policy.

Policy DI, Fiscal reporting. Changed to monthly.

School Safety – move that the Pol & Procedures subcommittee registers its concern about recent events at Arlington High and wants have a sub comm discuss this

Paul: Concerned that pol & proc subcommittee is turning into a back door way to get things on the agenda. We have an executive session coming up, as well as several votes, I move to table the rest of these issues until another meeting.

Jeff: There's good intent here. Sean's doing a good job. Let's give him some leeway.

Paul: This is the main meeting here. This is where the cameras are. To have the subcommittee wandering off into lots of issues of concern is not the way this should be done.

Jeff: I need clarification. Have we finished the 1st readings?

Sean: yes

Jeff: any 2nd readings

Sean: no

Jeff: so the only issue is the moving this issue about concern

Curriculum and Instruction: Kathy

Community Relations: Paul:

Will be discussing the change in league change (from GBL) Dec 18th, 7:30. Welcome any community input

Also discussed a discussion that we had with

Secretary's Report

Thank you from chair to Bill Carey. Thank you regarding reimbursement for invoices for school build projects. They are now complete.

Received Stratton Scene

Interviewed a candidate for Executive Secretary. The officers of the committee has interviewed her, and looked at current pay scale. I would like to move that we hire Karen Fitzgerald and place her class 3 step 5, effective December 29th. She is currently a class 2 step 5.

Sue: Ms. Fitzgerald is an AHS graduate. She has been working on the 6th floor for 6 years, and is enthusiastic about taking this job.

Marty: We should probably advise her that this is her last chance to run the other way!

Voted 7-0

Jeff: under new business, I would encourage the committee to look at our policies on how this should work.

Move to enter Executive Session

Kathy – moved to go to Exec session to discuss negotiations, personnel vote (teacher contract)

Some discussion, but went to exec session.

Nate: negotiations went well – was good process. Is there a role for this approach in grievances too – where else might it be applicable?

I move that we approve the teacher contract that was approved by the teachers union a couple of weeks ago.

I am pleased with the outcome, I think it will help move the district forward.

Sue: We did take a roll call vote in exec session, and this was unanimously approved.

Motion to adjourn – adjourned.