

Draft
Arlington School Committee
School Committee Regular Meeting
Thursday, February 11, 2016
6:30 PM
Arlington High School
School Committee Room
869 Mass Avenue, 6th Floor
Arlington, MA 02476

Present: Paul Schlichtman, Chair, Jennifer Susse, Vice Chair, Jeff Thielman, Secretary, Cindy Starks, Kirsi Allison-Ampe, MD, Jud Pierce, and Bill Hayner

Kathleen Bodie, Superintendent of the Schools, Laura Chesson, Assistant Superintendent's Diane Johnson, Chief Financial Officer, Rob Spiegel, Human Resource Director, Alison Elmer, Special Education Director, Ms. Siobhan Foley, AEA President and Karen Fitzgerald, Administrative Assistant

Ms. Johnson arrived at 7:33 PM:

Open Meeting

Executive Session

Mr. Hayner moved to enter into Executive Session at 6:30 PM to Negotiations, non-union personnel, Superintendent Bodie to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with union and/or nonunion personnel or contract negotiations with union and /or nonunion in which if held in an a open meeting may have a detrimental effect, and to conduct strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation, in which if held in an open meeting may have a detrimental effect, Collective bargaining may also be conducted, and to return to open session, seconded by Ms. Susse.

Roll Call: Unanimous

Voted: 7-0

Mr. Thielman moved to exit out of Executive Session and return to open session at 6:48 PM, seconded by Ms. Starks.

Roll Call: Unanimous

Voted: 7-0

Open meeting

Mr. Schlichtman presented the Ottoson Middle School artwork displayed in the School Committee Room.

Public Participation

Mr. Greg Christiana, Bishop parent and part of the Enrollment parent group, and is new to Arlington said he is struggling to find out the what the School Committee's point of view is on the enrollment issues and asked what can the parents group do beyond what is happening.

Ms. Moriah Tyrrell, attended a School Committee meeting one year ago regarding Thompson 4th graders class sizes, and now speaking tonight regarding the Ottoson Middle School class sizes, and would the committee to push hard with the Facilities Subcommittee to do a feasibility study for all of the schools in town to see what will work to help with enrollment issues.

Vote to approve the following contracts:

Mr. Thielman moved to authorize the chair to sign the Superintendent's Contract was approved by the full committee, seconded by Ms. Stark.

Vote: 7-0

Mr. Thielman moved to approve Superintendent Kathleen Bodie Contract, July, 2016 – June, 2019, seconded by Mr. Pierce.

Voted: 6-1, Mr. Hayner voted no

Mr. Pierce was pleased to take the vote to approve the contract and said our district is well served with the leadership of Kathleen Bodie as Superintendent of Schools.

Dr. Bodie accepts and thanked the committee for their support.

Mr. Pierce moved to approve the addendum of Chief Financial Officer, Ms. Diane Johnson, seconded by Ms. Starks.

Voted: 6-1 Mr. Hayner voted no

Mr. Hayner moved to authorize the expenditures as presented for the principal's addendums for specific jobs, as described in our school committee policies, seconded by Ms. Starks.

Voted: 7-0

Arlington Public Schools New Website Presentation

Dr. Bodie thanked Ms. Julie Dunn, Ms. Claudia Bertoli and Ms. Karen Tassone for working on the Arlington Public Schools website. The charge was to revamp our existing site, update the look and create a site for ease of use. Our IT department will take the website live next Thursday and Friday.

The committee members provided suggestive comments to include cross reference to some of our drop down links to our School Committee Bullying policy, and to include school improvement plans, and quick links to safe school access, budget pages, school registrations, and handbooks. The Elementary School site was also created which links to each of the individual schools websites, which is still run by volunteers but monitored by Arlington Public Schools.

Dr. Bodie said the dashboard is still a working document and could be completed by June.

Minuteman School Update

Mr. Schlichtman noted that the Minuteman School update on the MSBA will be postponed, due to Ms. Sheffler being ill.

PARCC on paper versus on computer, where Arlington Public Schools will be held harmless Discussion

The committee agreed to discuss PARCC since Ms. Johnson was still at the Capital Planning meeting at Town Hall. Dr. Chesson said the state is looking at the data from last year in regards to schools taking PARCC on paper versus using the computers and said the data is uneven from state to state and from school to school. They say social economic climate may come into play therefore; too many variables are being reviewed so it's hard to determine which is best for students to partake in PARCC. Since we plan to prepare our students to take the test either way we will be held harmless, so if we are a level 2 school we cannot go below this level but we can go higher. We will watch this and we have no concerns at this point.

The committee members would like the administration to run a test before the actual PARCC test is administered to our students. Additional information will be provided to the community and parents at the parent presentation on PARCC and Common Core, on Wednesday, February 24, 2016 from 7 to 9 PM at the Thompson Elementary School.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Bodie spoke about snow days, and spoke on the difficulty predicting the snow totals to determine a no school day by 5:00 AM for students and for staff, but reminded parents to make their own call if they feel it is too difficult for their families or students to arrive safely to school.

Ms. Elmer spoke about the course we are offering to our staff, Helping Traumatized Children Learn, as we partner with Lesley University. We agreed to have 25 participate taking the course which include Teachers, Teaching Assistants, and Guidance counselors. The feedback is very positive. Lesley University is offering a grant for our teachers therefore they can take the course for \$500.00 plus obtain three graduate credits.

Dr. Bodie said the Arlington Education Foundation is noticing more grant requests for yoga in the classrooms and health behavioral classes. Dr. Bodie said our Robotics Club attended a competition last week and ranked # 3, led by Ted Fuist and Jayce G and the AHS Mock trial team attended their fourth regional competition led by Joe Sancinito.

The Superintendent Proposed Budget for FY 17

Dr. Bodie would like to thank Ms. Diane Johnson and Ms. Julie Dunn on all their work they have done on the proposed budget books for FY 17. The Proposed Budget Priorities are for Retaining and compensation of faculty and staff, Enrollment growth and class size mitigation and for Support for high needs students. The budget discussion included curriculum materials needed as well as the mandated costs for special education students and it was noted all the money is going back into the classrooms. The budget proposal can be found on our website.

Dr. Allison-Ampe suggests that the members of the committee adopt the following resolution: Motion to adopt the resolution and notify the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee was made by Mr. Thielman, seconded Mr. Pierce.

Voted: 7-0

Therefore Be It resolved that the Arlington School Committee calls on the Massachusetts Legislature and the Governor of Massachusetts to fully fund and adopt the recommendations of the Foundation Budget Review Commission in the immediate future.

Rationale:

The Foundation Budget Review Commission (FRBC) was established by the Legislature in the FY16 budget and was charged with examining the Foundation Budget (Chapter 70) formula. The formula was first established as part of the Education Reform legislation in 1993 and has not been thoroughly reviewed or updated since that time. The FBRC found that the current formula understates costs significantly in two areas: Employee Health Insurance and Special Education. If the recommendations of the FBRC had been implemented in the FY16 budget, state funding for education would have been about \$500 million more than it was. However, if Chapter 70 reflected the true cost of education, the number would be closer to \$2 billion. Spending by school districts over the required Net School Spending amounts has increased, as a whole, for more than a decade, indicating that communities are using local property taxes and diverting funding from other portions of municipal budgets to fund their schools. In FY14, the total spending above Foundation in the state was \$1.7 billion. At the same time, the state's commitment to municipal aid has declined. Since 2001, unrestricted local aid has been cut by 43%. The net effect is a combination of cuts to local and school services and an increasing reliance on the regressive property tax. The evidence overwhelmingly establishes the correlation between a well-educated workforce and higher income individuals. States that invest more in education have a higher paid workforce; also, states that increase the level of education of their population see greater productivity and higher wages over time. The link can then easily be made between higher paid individuals and less reliance on various forms of government assistance, as well as lower rates of crime. A state's high school and college attainment rates are important factors in the state's overall economic strength. Additionally, investments in education can have significant long-term impacts on state and local economies, as well-educated individuals tend to stay relatively local and contribute tax dollars to the state and municipality in which they reside. In general, the taxes paid over time by these individuals are substantially higher than the cost of their public education.

Consent Agenda

Mr. Pierce moved to approve the Consent Agenda All items listed with an asterisk are considered to be routine and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a member of the committee so requests, in which event the item will be considered in its normal sequence: Warrant for Approval: Warrant Number 16111, Dated 1/28/2016, Total Warrant Amount, \$540,360.00, Minutes for Approval: Regular Draft Minutes for Approval, 1/28/2016, seconded by Dr. Allison-Ampe.

Voted: 7-0

Enrollment Task Force Discussions

Mr. Hayner pointed out he wants to have a professional and independent analysis done on the Gibbs, Ottoson and High school on the physical and administrative readiness for the Enrollment Task Force meeting, Tuesday, February 23.

Subcommittee/Liaison Reports/Announcements

Policies & Procedures Jud Pierce (Chair) met on February 1, and said he supports no action on Recommendation on School Committee Meeting Date/Time change and that the high school and middle school principals will accommodate the School Committee meetings when scheduling

events. Principal's policies are being reviewed and he is looking to consolidate into one policy, and will meet again Feb 22, 8:15 AM., but waiting hear back from town council on a policy on electronic signatures for the warrant.

Budget Kirsi Allison-Ampe (Chair) said Mr. Hayner was going out to PTO meetings and speaking on the budget, and the noted FY 17 Budget Public Hearing, February 25, 2016 at 6:30 PM

Facilities Cindy Starks (Chair) presented the Enrollment Challenges Timeline. The subcommittee members spoke about options and estimates, and incremental costs for staff. Dr. Bodie will provide the education ability of the choices for the facilities subcommittee and present her thinking to the School Enrollment Task Force. It was also noted that we need to go to the voters for a debt exclusion vote and we need to ask for this in the next several months.

District Accountability, Curriculum/Instruction & Assessment Jeff Thielman (Chair) Presented the Second Reading on Superintendent's Evaluation Process/Procedures and Ms. Susse sent comments. Jeff will take the edits and then provide an updated document to the administrative assistant.

Community Relations Jennifer Susse (Chair) presented the Calendar Survey for Parents and Teachers as a first read at the subcommittee meeting today which they met for 10 minutes before today's meeting. The committee members discussed this survey, the wording about religious observances and previous surveys. Ms. Foley spoke about the the issue for parents taking students out of the classroom for vacations other than during school vacation weeks, and noted it is a huge issue for the educators. ,

Executive Session Minute Review Subcommittee Voted 5/28/2015
Mr. Hayner will bring forth the minutes for vote at the end of March.

Warrant Committee - Voted 4/9/2015 Bill Hayner (Chair)
School Enrollment Task Force
Announcements

Mr. Hayner did the polar plunge and Ms. Susse, announce she would like to apply to be the chair next year. She suggests the members send her what committees they would like to be on.

Adjournment

**Mr. Thielman moved to adjourn at 9:12 PM seconded Mr. Pierce.
Voted: 7-0**

Respectfully submitted by
Karen Fitzgerald
Administrative Assistant/jt