

TRANSCRIPT OF PUBLIC RECORD

OF

THE METHUEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE

BUSINESS SESSION

OF

SEPTEMBER 12, 2011

SUBMITTED FOR THE APPROVAL OF:

THE METHUEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE

AND

THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

“AN OPEN MEETING ADVANTAGE FOR THE COMMUNITY OF METHUEN”

**RECORDED BY:
DEIDRE RUNGE, PUBLIC RECORDER**

TRANSCRIPT OF PUBLIC RECORD
METHUEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
BUSINESS SESSION
SEPTEMBER 12, 2011

This meeting of the Methuen School Committee was held in the Great Hall of Searles Building, City Hall, and was posted for 7:00 p.m.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Mayor William Manzi, Chairperson (arrived 7:08 p.m.)
Mr. Robert Vogler, Vice Chairperson
Mr. Gary Marcoux
Ms. Barbara Grondine
Mr. Kenneth Willette

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Mrs. Judith Scannell, Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Jennifer Smith, Assistant Superintendent
Mr. Glenn Fratto, Business Administrator
Ms. Michelle Turco, Public Recorder

1. *CALL TO ORDER AND ATTENDANCE:

Robert Vogler called this meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. with a quorum of members in attendance, and listed above.

a. Flag Salute

Zoe Lombardi, fourth grade student from the Marsh Grammar School, led the Committee in Opening Exercises of this meeting.

2. PARTICIPATION BY OTHERS:

a. SOAR Awards – (moved to the 9/26/11 meeting)

b. Student

No Action

c. Public Participation

No Action

d. Staff

No Action

3. APPROVAL OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING TRANSCRIPT OF 8/22/11

MOTION: Mr. Marcoux moved to adopt the Recorded Transcripts as presented and waived the reading. Mr. Willette seconded the motion to approve as presented.

VOTE: 4-0-1 Ms. Grondine voted "Present" she was not at the 8/22/11 meeting

4. STAFF REPORTS:

b. Superintendents Monthly Report – moved before 4a

The Superintendent spoke of all the 9/11 activities and how beautiful the schools were decorated. Mr. Willette asked to send a letter of appreciation to the band student who performed at the Senior Center 9/11 activities. The Superintendent also commended Karen McLaughlin for the outstanding dedication at the “Waldie Scoreboard” where his grandchildren did the flag salute and placed a wreath under the scoreboard.

Mr. Willette also wanted to commend the Bruce Stella and the custodial staff for the outstanding job they did painting the stadium. Mr. Marcoux requested to send a letter to all custodians who participated in the project.

a. School Initiatives FY’12

The principals came to present to the Committee their school initiatives for this fiscal year.

CGS – Dr. Kwong spoke about:

- Intervention block which is offered in grades 1-8, the last two years were upper school only.
- Lexia Grant – The grant has made available mini laptops for grades 1-2 and hopes to include kindergarten this year. This helps to make the computer lab available to the higher grades.
- Continental Math – is offered up to grade 7 now. Teachers come before and after school to work with the students.
- Curriculum talks between lower and upper schools to help students move up from lower to upper smoothly.
- K-8 Professional Learning Team – Teachers actually visit each other’s classrooms to bridge teaching and learning

Mr. Marcoux loved seeing the big banner on the “CGS 5K Run”. He also told Dr. Kwong her initiatives are great.

Mr. Vogler commended Dr. Kwong’s initiatives presentation.

Marsh – Mr. Beshara spoke about:

- Another PDD class in the lower school to get numbers down
- Grades 5 and 6 – two person teams and true team situation
- Common planning time for 4th to 5th grade to bridge the move up. They also will use the same Guidance person.
- Balanced Literacy – focusing on writers workshop

Mr. Vogler was glad to hear the teaming. He also asked for a brief explanation on the gym schedule. The Superintendent said explained to the Committee this was not uniformed across the district. We had to accommodate the specialists. Some schools are using a 7 week on and 7 week off with certain specialists. Mr. Beshara explained they lost a specialist, engineering. We have 7 weeks to complete units so this way e.g. they have art projects they can start and see a finished project. The Superintendent told the Committee this was discussed all summer and a plan was finally put in place the 2nd week

of August. Mr. Vogler said the only reason I asked was because Marsh and CGS parents asked me.

Tenney – Mr. Gosselin spoke about the new position and getting up to speed with:

- Safety was the first thing he wanted to address so he did a walk through with Mr. Stella and his senior custodian Bill Burns. Custodial staff very responsive to concerns.
- Getting down lock down procedures – He will be meeting with Mr. Miller and Sgt Walsh to answer his concerns. Also walked with the fire department and addressed all issues.
- Communication is huge for me. It is easy with 1500 students and 150 or so staff to get lost. I plan to keep all staff informed with each other.
- Connect-Ed's sent out in both English and Spanish to keep parents/guardians informed also.
- My staff has been wonderful to me stepping in.
- Trying to increase our scores using the Fast Forward as a tool.
- Planning time is being used for bullying reporting.
- Doing walk-throughs so staff can get comfortable with us doing them.

Mr. Vogler commended the visibility of the School Resource Officer. Whenever he drives by the Tenney he is out there.

Mr. Marcoux was impressed with Mr. Gosselin jumping on board. He commented on the summer walk through he did with the Superintendent and how impressed with what he saw. He likes to see the coaches being utilized and has complete confidence in Mr. Gosselin. He is a great addition.

Timony – Mr. Miller spoke about:

- Being at one school this year and getting closer to staff.
- Checked out strengths of the Leadership Team and made lots of moves. I placed them where they can do a great job
- Coaches being utilized
- Common Planning being used for Behavior/Discipline reporting, team teaching..
- Bridging the gap from lower to upper school in curriculum and instruction
- Classroom visitations for one staff member to visit another class and we cover their classes.
- Title 1 literacy program
- Special Education – IEP restructure
- Certified reading specialists offering afternoon help
- Math specialist to assess grades 1-4 then starting a readiness class (size no larger than 18) for each grade
- Rocket math is already in grades 1-4. The coaches are training teachers in grades 5-8 so by the end of month all 1-8 will be involved in this program
- Raytheon employees tutoring math on Wednesday mornings for grades 6-8.
- Fulcrum Grant provides instruction to staff and will be holding a 4th grade science fair

- Tina Quick, guidance has the “Whole Reading Program” implemented where she reads with classes on grade appropriate issues guidance deals with.
- Lastly he is happy to inform the Committee that job coaches are in full force.

Mr. Vogler wants to see consistency in grade teaming across the district.

Mr. Marcoux told Mr. Vogler redistricting will settle that. Mr. Marcoux also wants to reiterate that he is a strong supporter of coaches training teachers and wants them to do less testing and more teaching. Mr. Marcoux asked that the coach’s role move forward helping new teachers. Mr. Miller the coaches spend a majority of the day, 95%, in team meetings or in a classroom demonstrating and helping teachers.

High School – Mr. Giuca spoke about:

- He was happy to hear the direction the Tenney was taking with the Fulcom Grant and holding a 4th grade science fair
- Mike Downs and his crew are doing a great job at the 9th Grade Campus and will continue by looking into transitioning in coming 9th grade students for next year (what worked and what didn’t).
- Whatever models work in grad 9 will follow them up to the main campus
- NESDEC is coming in the next couple of years so we will be getting ready for that
- Building on parent communications at the high school level and trying to build with the Hispanic families
- Advance Placement – we are trying to get student to jump in to the more difficult classes which gives them a great start in their college careers
- NECC and senior advisor Jim Peirce are working together to prevent drop outs. They have a target and students that need certain credits to graduate can take these classes with NECC. The credits are received in 3-4 weeks of instruction instead of the 8 weeks a course usually takes. North Andover and Billerica have shown interest and want to come and visit.

Mr. Willette asked once the high school renovations are complete are we thinking of partnering with colleges? Mr. Giuca said we partner now with NECC and Merrimack College. Our teachers work with colleges so we can test out. Mr. Willette asked if these classes are off or on site. Mr. Giuca answered “both, we are developing even on-line classes. Mr. Vogler wants the high school to look into using the Nova Net program. Mr. Giuca informed him we already use it.

Mr. Marcoux stated he is a supporter of AP programs. He does have a concern students taking the NECC courses might not be able to use the classes towards college credits because NECC courses are sometimes remedial classes.

Mrs. Grondine commented on the smooth transition to 9th grade. Also happy that Linda Soucy will be around she is a valuable resource.

5. OLD BUSINESS AND OTHER PENDING MATTERS

No Action

6. NEW BUSINESS

a. Methuen Unit C Program Assistant Contract - Ratification

MOTION: Mr. Vogler moved to adopt the Methuen Unit C Contract Ratification.
Mr. Marcoux seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Vogler asked if there was any pay increase. The Superintendent said no

VOTE: 5-0-0 APPROVED

b. Newly Proposed – Policy JJF – Student Activity – First Reading

MOTION: Mr. Vogler moved to adopt the Newly Adopted – Policy JJF - Reading.
Mr. Marcoux seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Vogler asked if we should be putting in a maximum balance. The Committee agreed to establish a balance.

VOTE: 5-0-0 UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

7. FINANCE AND OPERATIONS:

a. Expenditure Report - Monthly

Business Administrator Glenn Fratto submitted the Monthly Expenditure Report to the Committee for the period ending August 2011.

No Action

b. Revolving Funds Report – Monthly

Business Administrator Glenn Fratto submitted the Monthly Revolving Report to the Committee.

No Action

c. Grants Report – Monthly

Grant Writer Lyn Griffin provided the Monthly Grant Status Report.

No Action

d. Student Activity Accounts - Monthly

1. Three Year Summary

Mr. Vogler expressed concerns with monies being carried over year to year. He stated “kids are raising the money and those monies should be spent on them” He would like another report on accounts over \$1200-\$1500 explaining why so much money are left in these accounts at the end of the year. Mr. Marcoux asked who is in charge of the disbursement of the funds. Who is the overseer of these accounts? The Superintendent said the Principals. She asked the Principals if they wanted to explain any accounts. Mr. Beshara spoke of the Drama Club and how it raises money at the end of the year at its performance and carries over to be spent next year. He stated field trip money for k-8 should be zeroed out at the end of each year. Mr. Vogler said he sees that there are monies still left in 5th and 8th grade. These are the questions Mr. Vogler wants to see answered in the next report.

No Action

e. Supervisor of Food Services – Monthly

No Action

f. Supervisor of Custodians and Maintenance – Monthly

No Action

g. Bid Awards

**1. City of Somerville Cooperative Bid for Fruits & Vegetables
Notification Purposes Only**

No Action

h. Contract Approval

1. School Physician/Consultant FY'12 – Approval

Motion: Mr. Marcoux motion to approve the school physician/consultant for FY'12
Mrs. Grondine seconded the motion

Vote: 5-0-0 Unanimous

i. Budget Transfers

No Action

8. NOTIFICATION OF APPOINTMENTS AND OTHER PERSONNEL MATTERS:

a. Personnel Transactions

No Action

b. Professional Staff

No Action

c. Support Staff

No Action

d. Personnel Matters Requiring Committee Action

No Action

e. Notification of Vacancy Postings

No Action Needed

**9. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORTS, including Communications and Recommendations
on Financial Matters, Old and New Business**

a. Transportation Monthly Update

Mr. Fowler submitted a report to the Committee.

b. Residency Monthly Update

Mrs. Turonis submitted a report to the Committee.

c. School Resource Officers Monthly Update

None

d. Dean of Students Monthly Report

None

e. Opening of Schools – Discussion

No Action

f. Preliminary Enrollments

No Action

10. BUSINESS FROM THE COMMITTEE

a. Superintendent Evaluation - Approval

The Committee has given all evaluations to Committee Member Mr. Marcoux to accumulate an average on each area. He will present to the Committee at the September 26th workshop.

Mr. Marcoux had requested the curriculum for the PEP Grant to be included in the packet. The Superintendent stated that she believed it was given to him. He stated when he asks for something it is not for him but all Committee members. He stated what he got was no the curriculum but just an outline that could be done by anyone. Dr. Smith assured Mr. Marcoux that was not the K-8 curriculum he had. The Superintendent said she would have it delivered to all Committee members in the morning.

11. EXECUTIVE SESSIONS OF THE COMMITTEE:

a. Negotiations

b. Litigation

With no further business to discuss in this Business Session, Mayor Manzi entertained a motion to assemble into an Executive Session of the Committee at 8:37 PM, thus concluding this Business Session for the evening.

12. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Mr. Vogler moved to adjourn this Business Session at 8:37 PM, Mr. Marcoux seconded.

VOTE: 5-0-0 UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

ENTERED BACK INTO BUSINESS SESSION

The Committee entered back into open session at 8:45 p.m. to discuss two items missed.

FINANCE AND OPERATIONS:

g. Bid Awards – PEP GRANT

The Director of Grants spoke to the Committee of the urgency of a bid approval before the end of the month. She asked that the Committee consider letting the Superintendent approve the bid award for them. The opening of the bid was scheduled for tomorrow and the grant needs to be closed by September 30th.

MOTION: Mr. Marcoux motioned to grant signatory authority of this bid to the Superintendent. Mr. Vogler seconded.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Grondine asked why this was so late. Ms. Griffin explained they couldn't order until the curriculum was complete. The Curriculum Committee met all summer and just put it in place. Mr. Willette told the superintendent she needs to go with the lowest qualified bidder and best quality

VOTE: 5-0-0 Unanimous

NOTIFICATION OF APPOINTMENTS AND OTHER PERSONNEL MATTERS:

d. Personnel Matters Requiring Committee Action

The Superintendent asked the Committee to consider approving a new unaffiliated position for the Director of Facilities. The position would be a Maintenance Foreman for the custodial department. She told the Committee Mr. Stella has been working 24/7 between equipment breaking down, the high school project manager calling him all the time, going to all the high school renovation meetings and of course everything at the high school is old and breaking. Mr. Vogler's only concern is that the position is advertised appropriately and is this a union or non-union position. The Superintendent told him it was non-union. He asked the salary and the Superintendent said she was not sure at this time. He also would like to see a master plumber for this position. Ms. Grondine is uncomfortable not knowing a salary. The Mayor said we can authorize to move forward and have it come back for a final approval by the Committee.

MOTION: Mr. Vogler moved to move forward with the position and to bring back for final approval. Mr. Marcoux seconded.

VOTE: 5-0-0 UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

Mr. Marcoux wanted to commend the Superintendent on the handling of the TB issue and getting the information out.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Mr. Marcoux moved to adjourn this Business Session at 8:57 PM, Mr. Vogler seconded.

VOTE: 5-0-0 UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

Respectfully submitted,
Deidre Runge, Public Recorder
Methuen Public Schools