

**NEWBURYPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
Monday, December 2, 2013**

**Newburyport High School
Meeting Convened at 7:07 PM**

**Room 118
Mayor Donna Holaday/Cheryl Sweeney Presided**

**Present: Bruce Menin, Steve Cole, Cheryl Sweeney, Mayor Donna Holaday,
Nick deKanter, Audrey McCarthy, Dan Koen**

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Chairman Mayor Donna Holaday called the meeting to order at 7:07 PM. Mayor Holaday called for a roll call, which found all members present. All those present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

READING OF MISSION STATEMENT:

Mayor Holaday read the Newburyport School District Mission Statement.

At this point Vice-Chairman Cheryl Sweeney assumed chairmanship of the meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Motions

Warrants:

On a motion by Dan Koen and seconded by Audrey McCarthy it was

VOTED: To approve, receive and forward to the City Auditor for payment the following warrant
\$268,425.97

Motion Passed Unanimously

On a motion by Dan Koen and seconded by Audrey McCarthy it was

VOTED: To approve, receive and forward to the City Auditor for payment the following warrant:
\$63,057.80

Motion Passed Unanimously

Minutes

A vote to approve the minutes was postponed until the next regular School Committee meeting.

SUPERINTENDENT'S AWARD RECOGNITION:

Superintendent of Schools Susan Viccaro introduced NHS Principal Mike Parent, NHS Senior Kelly Conway and her parents. Supt. Viccaro presented Ms. Conway as her choice to receive the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendent's Award for Academic Excellence at Newburyport High School. Principal Parent stated that Ms. Conway is a fantastic student, who represents NHS at the highest level. She has accepted an early decision at Stanford University. A standing ovation was given to Ms. Conway.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Dr. Ralph Orlando, 4 Wm. Hall DR.

CONCERN: He stated the citizens of Newburyport are entitled to know how we got to this deficit, where did the money come from, etc. Everyone should know about what is going on with the new building, what is being purchased, i.e. designer tile, replacement screens, moving amphitheater (unsafe - \$45,000 to move). He has issues with sciences, school councils and place based education.

NHS STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT:

NHS Student Representative Julia Bradley reported on the following:

- Bassfest was canceled, as not enough people bought tickets. It is planned to try to reschedule this for some time in March.
- Planning is underway for a Toys for Tots drive for the upcoming Christmas season.
- Seniors won Color Day. Freshman came in second.
- Winter sports started today – basketball, hockey, and track.
- Poetry Soup will be held December 4th.
- Early release on December 5th
- December 20th – NHS Winter Concert
- December 13th – NHS Open Mike Night

NHS OVERNIGHT TRIP APRIL 4-6, 2014, NHS ART DEPT.:

NHS teacher Aileen Maconi presented the Committee with information regarding a proposal for an overnight trip, in conjunction with the already approved NHS band trip to New York City, for the approval of NHS Varsity Chorus and the NAHS portion of the trip.

Nick deKanter asked if this includes Varsity Chorus. Yes

Motion:

On a motion by Mayor Holaday and seconded by Nick deKanter it was

VOTED: To approve the overnight trip on April 4,5 & 6 in conjunction with the already approved NHS band trip to NYC, for the approval of the NHS Varsity Chorus and the NAHS portion of the trip.

Motion Passed Unanimously

BUDGET DISCUSSION:

Superintendent Viccaro and Executive Assistant to the Supt. for Finance & Human Resources Nancy Lysik presented to the Committee updates on the FY14 budget. Questions regarding the budget were directed by **Cheryl Sweeney, Nick deKanter** and **Bruce Menin** who asked for an explanation of Circuit Breaker.

Steve Cole stated that he understands there is a new outside special education placement for - \$30,000. He asked for projections regarding Chartwells. Ms. Lysik said she will forward these tomorrow.

Bruce Menin asked for an explanation of budget freeze – why different this year. Superintendent Viccaro explained that last year we had a half million at this time, but this year people ordered their materials early and we do not have that this year. She said stopgap measures will be put in place next year.

Mayor Holaday explained regarding Chapter 70 funds. She has requested that funds be transferred to the Schools as a supplementary budget on Monday evening at the City Council meeting in the amount of \$161,070, to help ease the deficit that the schools are facing.

Motion:

On a motion by Mayor Holaday and seconded by Dan Koen it was

VOTED: To accept and support the requested Supplemental Budget from the City.

Motion Passed Unanimously

Bruce Menin asked if there was any way we can project out our energy expenses on the new school. Superintendent Vicarro said the new school will be a green school, they should be lower.

Dan Koen said that there will be better air circulation at the new school; it will be more comfortable, healthier, but this comes with cost. He thinks maintenance costs will be lower.

Superintendent Vicarro explained that we really need two years of data to project savings.

Bruce Menin asked when we would hear about Circuit Breaker. Ms. Lysik said the first of the year.

Nick deKanter expressed his concern as to how we are going to mitigate the shortfall. Superintendent Vicarro said they are looking at everything we can. She said the School Committee will need to talk to the City Council. She stated that this was a “perfect storm situation” – our backs are against the wall. Moving forward we will need to build a contingency budget.

Superintendent Vicarro spoke of ranking government center snapshots. Mayor Holaday said the city carries the health budget for the schools, and that is possibly not included in these figures. Superintendent Vicarro said she is looking at how other schools carry their health budgets.

Ms. Lysik said that after the first of the year, when we receive Circuit Breaker figures, we will run figure projections again.

Cheryl Sweeney asked Assistant Superintendent Bik for a status on grants. Ms. Bik said they have been very conservative on how we are using the grants. There is a 20% decrease in Title 1 and some minimum decrease in others. None have increased.

Cheryl Sweeney asked when “D Day” was. Ms. Lysik said February 1st.

BUILDING PROJECTS:

Director of Facilities Steve Bergholm updated the Committee on the Nock/Molin renovation project and the Bresnahan School projects. He reported that this is a 17 to 18 month duration for both projects. They are nine months in and are at the 50% mark on projects – they are right on schedule.

Nock/Molin

Phase 2 is done – they are working on phase 3 – because they are a little early they are splitting phase 3 into 3A and 3B – making use of classrooms – this is making it easier on the school.

Mayor Holaday questioned the test on the roof – entire roof or partial. Mr. Bergholm explained.

Cheryl Sweeney inquired if work was being done during the school day or at night. Mr. Bergholm explained. Ms. Sweeney inquired regarding the roof repair. Mr. Bergholm said this will be done in late Spring/summer.

Dan Koen said the roof is the biggest unknown of the job.

Mayor Holaday spoke regarding change orders.

Bruce Menin inquired regarding “owner taking responsibility” – he asked for an explanation. Mayor Holaday explained.

Steve Bergholm spoke regarding technology – this will have to be determined by the Technology/Building committee.

Bruce Menin inquired regarding consultant. Mayor Holaday spoke regarding how technology has been researched. Ms. Bik explained that we had a good representative at the Mass A conference.

Mayor Holaday said we need to make decision on the Superintendent’s suite soon.

Bruce Menin inquired regarding the cost of same. Mayor Holaday spoke regarding this.

Steve Cole said they need to vote to close the Brown. He asked if anything that happens there up to the School Committee. Mayor Holaday explained.

Cheryl Sweeney asked what the involvement of the Kelley School is. Mayor Holaday said money from the Kelley School will be used for the Brown School.

Bresnahan School

Mr. Bergholm reported that contractors are working to close the building and get some heat in there. Work is continuing – windows are in – walls are framed – mechanical, electric, plumbing roughed in. Sheet rock is done on the third floor; base coat paving is done down on Murphy Ave., curbing being done; steel for entrance canopies on site.

Mayor Holaday said we do not have to do the grease track which should save us money. Mayor Holaday said we have lost the kiln as it was too expensive.

Steve Cole asked if there was any plan to centralize the water exhibits, etc. Mayor Holaday said they are looking at 17 sites.

Mayor Holaday said they are meeting on a monthly basis with abutters.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

Negotiations:

Cheryl Sweeney said they discussed stipends and the January deadline.

Superintendent Goals:

Mayor Holaday said they have had two meetings with the Superintendent. They are working on six focus areas – they have added a seventh, finance/budget. An entry plan ready in January.

NEF Auction:

No final figure yet - \$50,000 - \$60,000 for schools – lights, sound, curtains for Nock.

Joint Ed:

Audrey McCarthy said they have discussed upcoming budget issues – educating the City Council re: budget, deficit, Chartwells and have laid the foundation as to how they will go forward. Superintendent Vicarro suggested that they do a Special Education funding explanation for the City Council.

Policy:

Bruce Menin said they meet quarterly. Their main task is redrafting the school mission statement. They are working on a proposal responding to e-mails – looking at this again. Nick deKanter said the element that they have fallen short on is educating people as to how they work. Their goals for the year are finding a clearer role re: agenda.

Communications:

Nick deKanter reported their accomplishments:

- they have improved public conversation sessions
- they have begun looking at ways to improve discussing topics
- websites – improve them – set structure
- websites for School Building Committee
- Public Forum

Finance:

Steve Cole reported that the Committee:

- Determined where they stood – they hired Jim Picone
- Followed budget deficit
- Attempted to hire a business manager – they hired Ms. Lysik
- Structured our budget process

- Discussed food service

Their goals are to focus on long-term plans driven by budget priorities.

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT:

Superintendent Viccaro updated the Committee on the Budget Calendar which she has developed and distributed. She asked the Committee to forward any comments to her.

Mayor Holaday spoke regarding the process and said they need a public hearing.

Nick deKanter, Mayor Holaday and Steve Cole spoke re: Chapter 70.

Bruce Menin spoke re: budget sessions at the various schools.

Cheryl Sweeney said the Committee needs to know if anything is needed for the Common Core.

Superintendent Vicarro said she will put together an Advisory Committee.

Ms. Bik updated the Committee re: District Determined Measures/Assessments.

Superintendent Vicarro distributed:

- Last year’s budget cost center reviews
- Mass School & District Profiles
- School Council information

Superintendent Vicarro set a retreat date, the purpose of which is for this year/next year budget – Thursday the 9th – 6-9PM

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion:

On a motion by Audrey McCarthy and seconded by Steve Cole it was

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting at 9:29 PM.

Motion Passed Unanimously