

**NEWBURYPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
Monday, March 17, 2014**

**Newburyport High School
Meeting Convened at 7:17 PM**

**Room 118
Cheryl Sweeney Presided**

Present: Bruce Menin, Steve Cole, Cheryl Sweeney, Nick deKanter,
Audrey McCarthy, Michael Luekens

Absent: Mayor Donna Holaday

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Vice-Chairman Cheryl Sweeney called the meeting to order at 7:17 PM. Ms. Sweeney called for a roll call, which found one member absent, Mayor Donna Holaday, whose presence was required at a City Council Meeting. All those present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Motions:

Warrants:

On a motion by Bruce Menin and seconded by Audrey McCarthy it was

VOTED: To approve, receive, and forward to the City Auditor for payment the following warrant:
\$10,996.28

Motion Passed

Mayor Holaday absent for vote

On a motion by Bruce Menin and seconded by Audrey McCarthy it was

VOTED: To approve, receive, and forward to the City Auditor for payment the following warrant.
\$336,377.71

Motion Passed

Mayor Holaday absent for vote

Minutes:

On a motion by Bruce Menin and seconded by Audrey McCarthy it was

VOTED: To approve, receive, and file the School Committee Meeting minutes of Tuesday, February 25, 2014 as amended.

Motion Passed

Mayor Holaday absent for vote

On a motion by Bruce Menin and seconded by Audrey McCarthy it was

VOTED: To approve, receive and file the School Committee Meeting minutes of Monday, March 3, 2014 as amended.

Motion Passed

Mayor Holaday absent for vote

NHS STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE:

NHS Student Representative Julia Bradley reported on the following:

- ⤴ Student Council's March Madness
- ⤴ Spirit Week is all next week. It will be accompanied with a fund raising class competition and a food drive.
- ⤴ The No-Talent Talent Show is returning to NHS on March 27th.
- ⤴ Junior Prom tickets are on sale now, as prom is now less than a month away.

- ⤴ Spring sports are starting up today
- ⤴ NHS State Drama Festival starts on the 27th
- ⤴ Junior track runner Nick Carleo placed 6th at Nationals and earned on All-American status.

NHS OVERNIGHT FIELD TRIP:

NHS teacher Matt LaChapelle updated the Committee on the background of the Model U.N. Some of the students involved have been involved for three or four years. This year they will be attending The Global Classrooms International Model UN conference at the Grand Hyatt Hotel on 104 E 42nd St in New York City on May 15-17. Over 1,000 students will be participating. Fundraising is taking place in the form of a website “GoFundMe.Com”. The site allows interested people to donate to our cause without having to purchase anything, and without any further commitment. The only cost to our club comes from website fees which total 8%. Fundraising will benefit the food costs during the trip. Four teachers will be accompanying the students.

Motion:

On a motion by Nick deKanter and seconded by Steve Cole it was

VOTED: To approve the NHS overnight field trip to New York on May 15-17 for 25 students to attend the Global Classrooms International Model UN conference at the Grand Hyatt Hotel.

Discussion:

Steve Cole stated he appreciated that they were doing funding at GoFundMe.Com

Bruce Menin said this is a terrific program.

Motion Passed

Mayor Holaday absent for vote

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Roseann Necessian, 466 Merrimac St. **CONCERN:** She commented on the Middle School Musical “Guys & Dolls”. 65 participated – it was very successful.

Dr. Ralph Orlando, 4 Wm. Hall DR **CONCERN:** He addressed the following:

- ⤴ We are now in the middle of March and he has still not heard anything about the budget. We are running out of time.
- ⤴ Tonight’s Public Conversation needs to be held longer – needs to be on the agenda (City Budget process).

FY15 BUDGET UPDATE:

Superintendent Viccaro presented early “starting point” 2015 budget figures to the Committee. She stated that there was no money in reserve that can be brought into next year’s budget. She stated “We’ve hit the wall at this point”. She and Executive Assistant Nancy Lysik are approving all expenditures and are working on the budget continuously to keep costs down. The \$26.3 million FY14 budget largest revenue source is the City’s appropriation. But, according to estimates brought forth Monday, the city appropriation for next year has not yet been determined. The proposed budget for next year is \$28.3 million. A more complete budget will be presented in April. The final budget needs to be sent to the Mayor by April 29. Public budget meetings will be forth coming with the next one on March 31, and transportation and fees will be discussed.

Unfunded government mandates, the amount of funding, the potential of gaining back current out-of-district special education students, and the need for more information and transparency about the budget process in general were discussed.

Discussion:

Bruce Menin asked how this budget deals with technology.

Superintendent Viccaro said there is money in both the new buildings budgets for (Bresnahan, Nock/Molin). We have 1.6 tech integrators now – she is recommending one more full time person.

Bruce Menin stated Special Ed is in transition; how is this reflected in this budget?

Supt. Viccaro: Answer there is contingency funds worked into the budget.

Nick deKanter inquired regarding Choice – will we be hearing on how we can capitalize on this opportunity.

Superintendent Viccaro said there is no choice more carry over to bring to this budget – it is all used up.

Bruce Menin inquired regarding NEASC – does the budget reflect funding toward any recommendations?

Superintendent Viccaro explained.

Nick deKanter asked if there was a list of add-ins if we get more money from the Mayor.

Superintendent Viccaro explained, and added that any deficit will reflect on programs and staffing.

Cheryl Sweeney said that since this is Superintendent Viccaro's first time building a budget here, what further information the Committee would like to know about this budget.

Nick deKanter said in a formatting point of view; how can we do a better job of communicating.

Bruce Menin said that presentations by Principals/School Councils are important.

Superintendent Viccaro said she will be going before PTO's – this is very important.

Steve Cole commented on the Budget Forum on the 31st – where new bus fee structure will be discussed.

Supt. Viccaro asked if we needed to schedule additional meetings.

Cheryl Sweeney asked, what is the final date to submit the budget to the mayor?

Supt. Viccaro April 29.

Steve Cole suggested having schools present budget talks.

Cheryl Sweeney asked what would be in the budget presentation that is not here tonight.

Nick deKanter said we need to hear from all departments.

Audrey McCarthy said do we need to hear goals at this point.

Asst. Supt. Angela Bik clarified what we want to hear from Principals.

Michael Luekens said he is more interested in public reaction to budget presentations – it is an opportunity for public input.

Bruce Menin agreed and gave suggestions on how to get public comment.

Cheryl Sweeney asked if there is anything we can do between now and April 7. An additional School Committee meeting will be scheduled for March 31.

Michael Luekens asked how we can maximize that time on the 31st?

Cheryl Sweeney said she will work on that agenda and get it posted.

Audrey McCarthy inquired regarding budget/staff.

Superintendent Viccaro said she will come back to the Committee at the end of this process on how to improve the overall budget process.

Bruce Menin said that during public conversation tonight we discussed where we stand. The current per pupil cost is \$13,427.91. DESE ranked us 156.

Nick deKanter said we have failed to get the message out as to what is happening in our schools. We have not produced trust – have not lobbied – we need to build support in the City.

ENROLLMENT/SCHOOL CHOICE:

Superintendent Viccaro said we are really at the maximum amount of students in class size across the district. She recommended not accepting any new Choice students next year.

Discussion:

Cheryl Sweeney asked how many Choice students are graduating this year.

Supt. Viccaro: 20 seniors who are choice students will be graduating in June.

Steve Cole said kindergarten numbers – is that up or is that a projection.

Supt. Viccaro That is a projection

Michael Luekens asked is the choice amount \$5,000 per student?–

Supt. Viccaro Yes. Special Ed - \$5,000 plus additional costs.

Motion:

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

VOTED: To accept the Superintendent's recommendation to not accept School Choice for the 2014/2015 School Year.

Discussion:

Bruce Menin inquired as to how this would affect siblings. Superintendent Viccaro said it will affect them. We cannot accept any additional students.

Audrey McCarthy stated Choice is a privilege. She said she hoped that the Committee would support the Superintendent's recommendation.

Michael Luekens asked if the Superintendent's recommendation would change if we were faced with a significant shortfall. The Superintendent said her recommendation would not change – there is no room.

Steve Cole said the next item on the agenda is Educatius International – how can we accept this and not Choice. Superintendent Viccaro said Educatius International involves only one or two students.

Steve Cole stated he felt this was not fair to the siblings of Choice students. He stated he cannot support Educatius International.

Audrey McCarthy spoke in favor of supporting the Superintendent's recommendation.

Asst. Supt. Angela Bik spoke about how this program came into being, and stated we need to continue on with this program.

Steve Cole spoke re: Choice problems in the past five years. Looking out for siblings is important.

Cheryl Sweeney asked the Superintendent to speak re: Educatius International.

Superintendent Viccaro said this allows international students the opportunity to come to the US to be part of the educational experience. It is a nice opportunity.

Cheryl Sweeney asked what is the benefit to our students. Ms. Bik spoke about the diversity; there is much to learn from international students. They are usually very motivated students.

Michael Luekens asked how does this affect our decision on Choice. Do we not accept Choice, but accept Educatius International.

Steve Cole spoke re: fairness – putting a limit of Educatius International. Ms. Bik stated these are usually Juniors or Seniors and it is for one year only.

Roll Call Vote:

Steve Cole	Yes
Nick deKanter	Yes
Mayor Holaday	Absent for vote
Michael Luekens	Yes
Audrey McCarthy	Yes
Bruce Menin	Yes
Cheryl Sweeney	Yes

Motion Passed

Michael Luekens asked how we make a decision of Educatius International. Ms. Bik said we are already involved in Educatius International. It is up to the Principal of the High School. He interviews the student, determines their motivation, etc. and he makes the decision as to whether or not to accept the student.

Michael Luekens asked is there a cut-off for this. Ms. Bik explained.

BUSING – START AND END TIMES:

Superintendent Viccaro explained her research into this. Safety is her first concern. She discussed the numbers on the buses. She stated we will need three (3) additional buses. By adding these buses we will be able to keep the same times that we have been adhering to. The cost of the three buses is \$165,000 – start and stop times would remain the times.

Discussion:

Mike Luekens inquired if changing the start times would not have changed the number of buses.

Executive Assistant Nancy Lysik explained.

Susan Viccaro explained that when we have bus registration, and if we can reduce a bus, we will at that time.

Michael Luekens asked what the standard amount of seat room for students is on a bus

Supt. Viccaro It was explained that 13 inches per student is the industry standard.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

Joint Ed:

Cheryl Sweeney said they have not met.

NEF

Cheryl Sweeney spoke about the NEF funding campaign, the NEF has

- ⤴ decided to fund a school website for \$20,000
- ⤴ pledge \$170,000 at the beginning of this year towards the Middle School Auditorium, which was then increased to \$200,000
- ⤴ Ms. Sweeney distributed the NEF brochure that details the campaign

Superintendent Viccaro said they also agreed to fund a consultant for Technology. The following NEF events were highlighted:

- ⤴ Texas Hold 'Em was a huge success– with a “full house”
- ⤴ Next big fundraising event is the summer Golf Tournament

Finance:

Steve Cole said they met and discussed the following:

- ⤴ FY15 budget
- ⤴ 5 year revolving accounts
- ⤴ student activity fees
- ⤴ cafeteria update – it is holding its own – they had difficulty making payroll – options for next year were discussed.
- ⤴ School Choice
- ⤴ Transportation

Policy:

Bruce Menin stated they met tonight and discussed the following:

- ⤴ framework for Policy – some outdated (technology and health and wellness)

Cheryl Sweeney said she discussed with the mayor creating a Curriculum Committee – Michael Luekens will serve as chair.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

Superintendent Viccaro reported on:

- Junior Mark Landergan, *Teachable Robotic Arm*, placed first, receiving \$500 and moving on to the state competition as well as, the international competition in May, a week long all-expense paid trip to Los Angeles to compete with 1,500 kids and 70 countries, sponsored by Intel.
- Junior Lauren Healey, *Green Roofs and Storm Water Mitigation*, placed third, also a cash prize and moving on to the state fair in May.
- Northeast Junior District Band

Freshman Kaylee Hawkes, performed trombone to a packed Lowell High School auditorium.

- New Balance National High School Track Meet
- Junior Nick Carleo ran a 4:14:35 mile (5 seconds out of first) and placed 6th in the country , making him the first All-American Newburyport athlete, a spot on the podium and a big medal.
- Junior Tom Graham ran a personal best 1:59:01 in the 800 meter, finishing 23rd in the country.
- 6th District Congressional High School Exhibit

Senior Zoe Johnson received “Best in School” award, held at the Montserrat College of Art.

➤ Endicott College High School Art Exhibition

Juniors Jacob Fisher and Mairian Emerson were chosen to participate.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion

On a motion by Audrey McCarthy and seconded by Michael Luekens it was

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting at 9:25 PM.

Motion Passed

Mayor Holaday absent for vote