

**NEWBURYPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE
BUSINESS MEETING
Monday, May 18, 2015**

**Newburyport High School
Meeting Convened at 6:30 PM**

**Room 118
Cheryl Sweeney Presided**

**Present: Nick deKanter, Steve Cole (arrived immediately after roll call,
Cheryl Sweeney, Mayor Donna Holaday, Jay Iannini, Audrey McCarthy,
Bruce Menin**

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Chairman Mayor Donna Holaday called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM. A roll call was taken and found one member absent, Steve Cole, who arrived immediately after roll call.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBER:

Mayor Donna Holaday, on behalf of the Committee, welcomed new member Jay Iannini. Mr. Iannini was recently elected by the City Council to serve as an interim member of the School Committee to replace resignee Michael Luekens.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Mayor Holaday asked those present to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Dr. Ralph Orlando, 4 Wm. Hall Drive **CONCERN: He voiced his displeasure concerning the budget situation.**

CONSENT AGENDA:

Warrants:

Motion

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.

\$293,492.16

Motion Passed Unanimously

On a motion by Bruce Menin and seconded by Nick deKanter it was

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

\$13,970.50

Motion Passed Unanimously

Minutes:

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

VOTED: To approve, receive and file the School Committee, Business Meeting minutes of Monday, May 4, 2015.

Motion Passed

Mr. Iannini voted Present

NHS REPRESENTATIVE REPORT:

NHS Student Council Representative Julia Bradley stated that this would be her last meeting, as she will be graduating soon. She thanked the Committee. Julia reported on the following:

- This is the last week for seniors, Next week is finals and then Senior Week.
- The No Talent/Talent Show had to be cancelled as not enough participants signed up.
- Sports are very busy.
- Senior Week Activities:
 - ❖ May 28 - Scholarship Night
 - ❖ May 31 - Vespers
 - ❖ June 1 - Senior Banquet
 - ❖ June 3 - Ivy Day
 - ❖ June 4 - Prom
 - ❖ June 5 - Senior Sing-Out
 - ❖ June 7 - Graduation
- Student Council Representative - no newly elected member as yet

BROWN SCHOOL EDUCATIONAL RE-USE TASK FORCE REPORT:

Bruce Menin introduced the members of the Brown School Educational Re-Use Task Force who were in attendance. He then reported the findings of this ad-hoc task force.

Summary of the Options

1. The property could be sold with the determination that no future educational use can be determined at this time for this space.
2. The property could be re-adapted, upgraded and maintained and developers sought as no short-term use of the space can be determined, but it is anticipated that within the next 20-99 years, the building may be determined appropriate to serve educational needs in Newburyport, and when such needs are determined, the space will be re-adapted again for educational use. Since adaptation will be performed twice, once to adapt from educational use and again to readapt for educational use, the cost of such adaptations should be carefully considered.
3. The property could continue to be used to meet identified school system educational, supportive and administrative needs and to develop and pilot new educational enrichment programs, some of which may be revenue producing, to maintain Newburyport's ranking and educational leadership among comparative school systems.
4. The property could remain as an asset for meeting *current and potential* educational needs, with all or a portion of the space be rented to entities - some furthering the educational uses of the building - as limited by Massachusetts statute and approved by the School Committee and the Commissioner of Education, in the knowledge that educational uses of the space can be projected within 10 years.

This ten-year period for determining projected use may be extended/renewed for an additional ten years in accordance with statutory provisions regarding “surplus” school property under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40, section 3, paragraphs 2 and 3.

Choices 1 or 2 would require a decision to decommission the school.
Choices 3 and 4 would not require a vote decommissioning the school.

Choice 4

The Ad Hoc Committee on Brown School Reuse unanimously recommends that the Newburyport School Committee implement Choice 4, which would not require a vote by the School Committee to decommission the Brown School. The balance of this report explores a myriad of potential educational uses for the site based on interviews with administrative staff, conversations with interested parties across the city, and research regarding student demographics and projections as well as potential uses for the site that align with the goal of ongoing educational utility to the district. We believe there are sufficient existing and potential educational programs to fully occupy the building within ten years; and that until that time, there are adjunctive uses for the building that will enhance and support the mission of the Newburyport Public Schools.

We believe Option 1 does not reflect what our research and data indicate to us.
We believe Option 2, while closer to the mark, would not provide a potential developer with the security they would want for making a significant investment.
We believe that Option 3 would be difficult to implement because there are not immediately ready the kinds of educational programs envisioned by the district to fill the school at this time.

Based on interviews with school administrators, discussions with community interests, our own ongoing dialogue, and a cursory data analysis, we have determined that the Brown School can be used to address immediate needs as well as potential needs of the district, and we encourage the School Committee not to vote to decommission it. These uses range from those that are based on current need with real revenue possibilities, to uses that reach beyond traditional ideas and envision an aspirational educational experience for the Newburyport community. We believe it would be short-sighted and more expensive in the long run to release the Brown School when we currently have space and programmatic needs that can be met within this building.

Potential Options

**Newburyport Youth Services
SPED Post-Grad Program
Relocation of the District Administrative Offices
Conference Room/School Committee Meeting Room
Storage for performing arts programs at the High School and Nock Molin
Adult Ed**

Relocation of the Elementary After-School program to the Brown School
After School Learning
Summer Remedial and Enrichment School
Visual Arts Academy
Bresnahan “Hom Room”
Brown School Park

He concluded by saying the Brown School Educational Re-use Committee strongly recommends that the Superintendent put together a working group that includes members of the greater community, to map out a strategy of ensuring that the Brown School continues to provide educational value to our students and community.

Discussion:

Jay Iannini inquired regarding the following:

- How much is it costing to keep it open right now - Mayor Holaday explained
- How long self-funded - answer - unknown
- How long are we able to review to see if self-sustaining - answer - at any time

Mayor Holaday thanked the Ad-Hoc committee. She explained regarding maintenance, structural, windows, heating, bathrooms, asbestos. The status of the building is of great concern. There is a need for an influx of funding. The elevator is failing as is the boiler. We have a grant writer available, but we need some fundraising,

Nick deKanter stated we need to look deeper, we need costs. We need to look at generating educational funds.

Task force member stated lets not act quick and lose it.

Bruce Menin stated it is their recommendation that the new group that follows the task force follow up and look into these issues.

Task force member stated they were impressed with the level of creativity expressed by people they interviewed.

Cheryl Sweeney asked Nancy Earls to share her thoughts with the Committee.

Nancy Earls commented on STEM, access to walking educational opportunities, college campus opportunities, space for Post-Graduate classes, kitchen space.

Audrey McCarthy agreed with Post Graduate opportunities. She asked if we knew of other communities who were agreeable. Answer - yes

Audrey McCarthy asked re: Youth Services - do we have a strategic plan for maintenance.

Steve Cole commented on public/private interests in developing. He commented on the development of the Tannery from what it was to what it is today.

Mayor Holaday stated they have met with developers. They do not want the building to crumble down while issues are addressed.

Steve Cole commented on

- Portsmouth/community campus - artists studios - why not rent them now. Mayor Holaday responded. Superintendent Viccaro commented on the handicapped accessibility issue.
- Asked re: 10 year issue - Bruce Menin responded

- Change of use - where does Newburyport Youth Services fit in. Mayor Holaday stated - we are in limbo - the city is taking care of building

Ralph Orlando stated he has been involved with the school district for ten years. Put up some money for this renovation - the school will benefit. The city received fifty million dollars. Do not decommission this school - there are ways to do this.

Cheryl Sweeney thanked the Ad-hoc committee.

KINDERGARTEN SCHOOL CHOICE SEAT DISCUSSION:

Superintendent Viccaro stated that through budget discussions this issue is a potential source of revenue.

Principal Amy Sullivan stated we have done a good job advertising. This year with lower enrollment there are some seats available. Every year we have been full - 126 spots - right now we have 113 registered for full day Kindergarten. There are 13 spots available, but she recommended holding back 2 for SPED. She quoted birth data in the area. She stated she would feel comfortable opening up Choice for Kindergarten for 5 seats.

Nick deKanter asked for the reimbursement rate for full day Kindergarten. Reimburse - \$2,500 for half day - \$3,500 full day tuition paid by family.

Superintendent Viccaro reminded the Committee that Choice is blind.

Nick deKanter said the cohort will continue to be low.

Superintendent Viccaro said we lost 11 students to other communities from Choice who decided not to come to Newburyport.

Steve Cole asked Principal Sullivan what was her enrollment. Answer - high teens

Mayor Holaday spoke of the new building - not a lot of empty space.

Audrey McCarthy inquired if people Choice in for Kindergarten and do not plan on staying on in the system. Answer - do not have data on that.

Audrey McCarthy inquired if half day was 2 hours. Answer - 2 hours 45 minutes

Bruce Menin asked the Superintendent for her recommendation. Superintendent Viccaro said she recommended opening 5 seats now and then look at this in the summer to see if we can offer more.

Motion:

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

VOTED: To approve opening 5 Choice seats in Kindergarten, and to review this in the summer.

Roll Call Vote

Bruce Menin	- Yes
Audrey McCarthy	- Yes
Jay Iannini	- Yes
Mayor Holaday	- Yes
Cheryl Sweeney	- Yes
Steve Cole	- Yes
Nick deKanter	- Yes

Motion Passed Unanimously

STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE:

Superintendent Viccaro stated that Dr. Cook was here. She is advertising to get participants. The new dates in September are the 23rd, 24th from 8 AM to 7 PM; the 25th from 8 AM to 1 PM. She is looking for a venue and looking for a broad group of representatives. Action teams - 3 to 4 months. They will then get back together and look at the recommendations of the Action Teams.

CREST COLLABORATIVE - APPROVAL OF AMENDED ARTICLES OF AGREEMENT:

Steve Cole reported that on May 8th the Collaborative voted to admit Dracut and Triton. There are two amendments that require a vote.

Mayor Holaday asked if this changed our assessment. Answer - no

Steve Cole stated he could have the Director come to speak to the Committee.

Question - how long is the waiting period. Answer - 180 days (6 months)

Motion:

On a motion by Mayor Holaday and seconded by Bruce Menin it was

VOTED: To approve the Amended Articles of Agreement of the Collaborative for the

Regional Educational Services and Training known as CREST.

Motion passed Unanimously

POLICIES:

Nick deKanter reported that the following three policies need a vote.

Motions:

On a motion by Mayor Holaday and seconded by Audrey McCarthy it was

VOTED: To approve the word changes to the Fields/Gymnasium Contract on Use of Fields policy.

Motion Passed Unanimously

On a motion by Mayor Holaday and seconded by Audrey McCarthy it was

VOTED: To approve the Charging of School Lunch and/or Milk policy.

Motion Passed Unanimously

On a motion by Mayor Holaday and seconded by Audrey McCarthy it was

VOTED: To approve the Animals in School policy.

Motion Passed Unanimously

FY16 BUDGET UPDATE:

Mayor Holaday together with **Nancy Lysik** explained the budget process and explained that they have looked at revenue sources again.

Steve Cole stated the Finance sub-committee discussed this.

Mayor Holaday asked for an explanation on the following:

- Why second tier - Library books at Bresnahan. Nancy Lysik said not approved by Leadership Team.
- Lunch \$10,000 - Nancy Lysik explained
- Supplies - Nancy Lysik explained

Cheryl Sweeney stated this is the budget passed by the School Committee.

Mayor Holaday said 4% presented to the City Council with memo. Ms. Sweeney explained.

Jay Iannini inquired when the Leadership Team would be meeting to approve. Superintendent Viccaro said this week - then to the Mayor.

Mayor Holaday said she would like to have the budget in the future by March. She will work with the City Council to work through issues.

Cheryl Sweeney said that at the next Fin/Com meeting the topic will be budget - Thursday, June 11. She asked Ms. Lysik to look at Munis.

Jay Iannini inquired re: task force. Mayor Holaday said she will prepare a report for the School Committee.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

Superintendent Viccaro reported on the following:

- Dog Doo - She contacted the Board of Health - they will have an officer there in the AM and PM. The Principals have sent out a letter to parents. They are looking into having bags available on site.
- On-line bus registration
- NEF is having their Annual Meeting - hope you will attend
- Port Project - Mayor Holaday gave date of the Gallery Exposition - Friday, May 22
- Whittier Regional Voc. Tech - appoint Ad Hoc Committee - Jay Iannini volunteered

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

Joint Ed

Has not met - next meeting - Monday, June 1 at 5:30 PM

Policy

Nick deKanter said they met this PM - discussed how to make policy manual more consistent with what is going on in the rest of the country.

Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment & Accountability

The meeting was cancelled due to change in Committee.

Superintendent's Evaluation

Cheryl Sweeney said template and rubrics have been updated. The Superintendent has been given more time to get her evidence to us.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion:

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

VOTED: To adjourn the Business Meeting at 8:50 PM.

Motion Passed Unanimously