

# LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Lexington Town Office Building, Selectmen's Meeting Room  
1625 Massachusetts Avenue

**PRESENT:** Dr. Paul B. Ash, Superintendent; Margaret Coppe, Chair; Bonnie Brodner, Vice-Chair; Alessandro Alessandrini, Jessie Steigerwald and Mary Ann Stewart

**ABSENT:** Sam A. Lehn, Student Representative

Minutes were taken by Jean M. Curran, Recording Secretary.

The meeting convened at 7:30 p.m.

## **I. Call to Order and Welcome:**

The Chair called the Meeting to order and invited public comment.

Luzy Eloj, 4 Trodden Path and 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Teacher at Harrington Elementary School and member of the Lexington Education Association (LEA) Unit A, stated that she stands with Units C and D and Tech Unit.

Lisa Flori, 12 Minola Road, 6<sup>th</sup> Grade English Language Learner Teacher at Diamond Middle School, proud member of the LEA, signed petition recognizing Units C, D and Tech Unit.

Rosemary Loomis, 6 Summit Road and High School Teacher, on behalf of the Union presented a petition to the Committee and urged a fair settlement.

Phyllis Neufeld, LEA President urged the Committee to continue to work on a fair settlement.

The Chair thanked Ms. Neufeld and the LEA members for coming tonight and appreciates their concerns and the Committee will continue to work with the LEA to settle contracts.

## **II. Superintendent's Announcements**

Dr. Ash announced late this afternoon he received call from Mark Phillipino of the Lexington Minuteman newspaper requesting a comment on a press that a former student, Robert Ernst, spoke at a forum held by U.S. Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee. He spoke about his experience on being held in a seclusion room while in elementary school. Dr. Ash stated that Lexington Public Schools (LPS) has a policy in place as of 2002 which prohibit seclusion rooms. Further, state law mandates that if a student needs to be separated from class, a teacher must be able to see the student at all times. Dr. Ash also shared the professional learning and Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) training that LPS teachers participate in. Teachers are specifically trained in de-

escalating matters but some students may need to be restrained. Dr. Ash stated LPS takes this seriously and if a restraint is used, it must be reported to the state.

### **III. School Committee Member Announcements**

Margaret Coppe (i) requested a moment of silence for three student who committed suicide since October from the Newton community and the 8 year old boy in Gardner who lost his life recently at school; (ii) as follow-up, reported on the Ad hoc Committee that she and Alessandro Alessandrini are liaisons to; (iii) asked Dr. Ash to check TVs on stands and bookcases to make sure that they are secure; (iv) Sandy Trach, Principal, Estabrook Elementary School is opening the old school doors on Monday, February 24 from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. for people to walk through the old school to say goodbye; (v) tomorrow there will be a tour of the new Estabrook Elementary School for parents and on Monday the Committee and senior team will be on hand when the new school is opened; (vi) candidates night will be held on Thursday, February 13 at the Jonas Clarke Middle School at 7:30 p.m. with a snow date of February 27; (vii) request from Zahin and Noha Ahmed to sign a Proclamation recognizing International Mother Language Day in Lexington and wants to follow up and suggested they make an appointment with Dr. Ash; (viii) on February 26 from 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. at the new Estabrook Elementary School there will be a Roundtable Discussion about PTA/PTOs and Site Councils for Members of Lexington Chinese American Community, Sponsored by the Chinese American Association of Lexington (CAAL) and the PTA/PTO Presidents' Council (PPC).

Alessandro Alessandrini announced that he and Ms. Brodner attended Special Education Advisory Committee (SEPAC) Meeting on Thursday, February 8 and heard Linda Chase, Director of Student Services, Ellen Sugita, Director of Special Education and Dr. Ash speak to parents and answer their questions.

Jessie Steigerwald reminded everyone (i) Wednesday, February 12 is the Youth Service Council meeting, (ii) contacted by Narian Bhatia requesting an agenda item to discuss other cultural holidays; Ms. Steigerwald explained how the Committee votes on the calendar and suggested discussion in March (iii) update on the community center; (iv) the 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Mock Town Meeting will be held on Saturday, March 8.

Mary Ann Stewart shared there will be a Suburban Coalition meeting on Wednesday, February 26 in Newton at the Marriott Hotel; Representative Jay Kaufman, Senator Michael Barrett and Noah Berger, President of the Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center will be speaking.

### **IV. Agenda:**

#### **1. Discussion and Vote to Approve the FY 15 Operating Budget**

The Committee reviewed the budget discussion from the last meeting and then engaged in discussion regarding (i) funding of benefits, workers' compensation and Medicare for new positions; (ii) Avalon Bay Fund; (iii) increased athletics fee; (iv) \$30,000 now available from the Communication Specialist position that was removed from the budget; and (v) stipends.

**Motion to Transfer \$346,314 to Unclassified, for the purposes of health insurance, Medicare and unemployment for new positions (Brodner, Stewart)  
The Motion was Approved (5-0)**

The Committee engaged in further discussion.

**Motion to Request Town Meeting pursuant to Chapter 44, Section 53E1/2 to re-authorize the use of the Transportation Revolving Fund, and to authorize to expend amounts from such revolving fund accounts, and to determine whether the maximum amounts that may be expended from such revolving fund accounts in FY2015 shall be the \$830,000 (Stewart, Brodner) The Motion was Approved (5-0)**

**Motion to Support Transfer the remaining balance of the Avalon Bay Mitigation Fund estimated to be about \$49,088, for use in the FY15 budget (Steigerwald, Alessandrini)**

The Committee engaged in discussion regarding the transfer of Avalon Bay Mitigation Fund motion.

**The Motion was Approved (5-0)**

The Committee continued discussion of the FY 2015 Operating Budget, including (i) school supply budgets; (ii) funding landscaping at LHS; (iii) data assessment capability in schools; and (iv) increase of Athletic Fee.

Mary Ellen Dunn, Assistant Superintendent of Business and Finance spoke to the paper towel and Kleenex issues at the schools and what the PTAs are paying for out of their budgets. Ms. Dunn stated it would be helpful to understand what types of requests PTAs are receiving.

Ms. Dunn also shared the reason for the increase to the family fee for second sport fee.

Carol Pilarski, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development spoke to the internal data to be analyzed and the need for a data analyst. Ms. Pilarski also spoke to the new DESE student learning goals and professional practice goals and district goals and how there will be pieces of important data that will need a response.

Thomas Plati, Director of Education Technology and Assessment spoke about the role of the proposed data analyst and the need to hire one to manage all the information that Lexington collects at each level,

Linda Chase, Director of Student Services shared how having a data analyst would help her department achieves their goals, stating that they do not know how to analyze the data.

**Motion to Approve the LPS Operating Budget FY15 \$86,623,929 (Brodner, Stewart) The Motion was Approved (5-0)**

Dawn McKenna, 9 Hancock Street inquired of the dollar amount for supplies.

2. Discussion and Vote to Approve the FY 15 Capital Budget  
The Committee discussed the interior painting program.

Mary Ellen Dunn explained to the Committee why there is no number placed in the budget at this time.

**Motion to Approve the FY 15 DPF Capital Projects Budget that is School Related (Steigerwald, Stewart) The Motion was Approved (5-0)**

Dawn McKenna, 9 Hancock Street shared that she had never seen a school committee vote a budget with numbers missing.

A new motion was made:

**Motion in place of earlier vote, for the FY15 DPF Capital Projects as shown on page 3 dated February 14, 2014**

The Committee engaged in further discussion.

Mary Ellen Dunn stated that if anyone of the items change after this vote, the Committee can usually take another vote before Town Meeting.

**Motion to approve the capital budget FY 15 in the amount of \$1,432,094 and for information technology \$400,000 and that this should replace the earlier vote (Steigerwald, Alessandrini) The Motion was Approved (5-0)**

3. Vote to Approve the Transfer of Two Items from the Old Estabrook School to the Lexington Historical Society  
The Chair shared that the Lexington Historical Society has come forward with another request from the Estabrook School for a desk and chair for their collection.

**Motion to approve the transfer of two items from the Old Estabrook School to the Lexington Historical Society (Stewart, Steigerwald) The Motion was Approved (5-0)**

## V. Consent Agenda

1. Standards for Acceptable Use of Technology Policy – Third Reading  
The Chair explained the need for this policy and the need to have it in place.

Dawn McKenna, questioned page 6, line 4 and requested it be deleted.

The Committee engaged in a discussion of this policy.

Thomas Plati, Director of Education Technology and Assessment shared he was not comfortable removing Section 9.5 without having Marianne McKenna, Director of IT/MIS/Technology here this evening to speak to this policy and reasoning for the language.

The Chair will speak with counsel to see if removal of Section 9.5 is a violation of federal law.

**Motion to Approve the Standards for Acceptable Use of Technology Policy – Third Reading having removed Section 9.5 (Brodner, Stewart) The Motion was Approved (5-0)**

**VI. Adjourn**

**Motion to Adjourn (Steigerwald, Brodner) The Motion was Approved (5-0)**

**The Meeting Adjourned at 10:20 p.m.**

The next meeting of the School Committee is scheduled for Tuesday, February 25, 2014, at 7:30 p.m. in the Town Office Building, Selectmen's Meeting Room, 1625 Massachusetts Avenue.

*Meeting Materials:* Agenda; Memorandum dated February 7, 2014 to Mary Ellen Dunn from Paul Ash re FY2015 SC Operating and Capital Budget Requests for 2014 Annual Town Meeting; Letter dated February 4, 2014 to Margaret Coppe, Chair of School Committee from Susan Bennett, Executive Director Lexington Historical Society's request for vintage desk and chair from Estabrook School; LPS Standards for Acceptable Use of Technology Policy – Third Reading

Voted by the School Committee April 16, 2014