

LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, April 24, 2006

Cary Hall, Estabrook Hall

1605 Massachusetts Avenue

Present: Superintendent Paul Ash, School Committee Chair Helen Cohen, Tom Diaz, Tom Griffiths, Olga Gutttag, Ravi Sakhuja and student representative Toni Maeck.

Minutes taken by Leora Tec

The meeting was convened at 6:36 p.m.

I. Call to Order and Welcome (Helen Cohen)

II. Superintendent's Report:

- A. Paul Ash received a fax from the engineer regarding the three roofing projects; they are predicted to be \$129K higher than the Articles before Town Meeting, maybe when we have bids they will come down 10-20%.
- B. The reading of the book "King and King" in the classroom. Helen Cohen will read a joint School Committee statement regarding this on Wednesday.

III. Action Items:

- A. Article 33 – To request Town Meeting vote indefinite postponement on the White House building.

Motion to indefinitely postpone Article 33 (Griffiths, Gutttag). The motion passed 5-0.

The discussion included the motion PBC made at their meeting supporting the project but expressing concern over cost. The estimated cost for the White House project has increased from 3.5 million dollars to 4.9 million dollars. This increase included escalation cost for construction next spring.

- B. Elementary school facilities study and master plan

Motion to request town meeting transfer \$60,000 allocated for extraordinary White House repairs to hire an architect to study the facility needs at the elementary level and the central administration (Diaz, Griffiths). The motion passed 5-0.

- C. FY 07 budget

- a. Additional Fees: Superintendent Paul Ash suggests approving the following additional fees if so-called Question 1 fails, totaling \$177,000: the K-12 lunch fee from \$2.75 to \$3.00 (raises \$80,000); the high school parking lot fee for Lexington High School students from \$30 per year to \$215 per year (raises \$12,000, not including 15 spaces for Minuteman students); athletic fees as follows: MS Varsity from \$90 to \$100, HS Varsity and JV from \$270 to \$300 the family maximum from \$540 to \$600 per year (raises \$85,000). Olga Gutttag asked

to have this vote taken in the context of the discussion on the proposed amendment to the budget, but majority felt that following the agenda was more efficient.

Motion to accept fee increases proposed by Dr. Ash contingent on the failure of Question 1 (Diaz, Griffiths). The motion passed 3-2 (Guttag, Sakhuja opposed).

- b. **Motion to reduce the override Question 1 from \$2,631,709 to \$2,614,509 (2.0 unallocated K-5 positions are not new positions and no new benefits are required)** (Griffiths, Diaz). The motion passed 5-0.
- D. Dawn McKenna presented a motion, part A of which is to make the cuts that the Committee had just voted but not make them contingent on the passage of the override. Part B is a recommendation to the School Committee to prioritize after school activities rather than in-school programs for cutting. She asks if Town Meeting passed this would the SC follow the Town Meeting's recommendation since the SC has autonomy over its budget?

In response to a question from the Superintendent, Ms. McKenna indicated that her motion differs from that of Fred Rosenberg in that she is not requesting cuts but rather swaps.

The Superintendent indicated that his recommendation is to oppose this. It is a proposal with many complex implications that is being proposed at the 11th hour with no public process. We don't know the impact on families. We would have no infrastructure for implementing an extensive scholarship program.

Motion to support part B of the amendment as presented (Guttag, Sakhuja)
The motion was defeated 3-2 (Guttag, Sakhuja in favor).

Motion to advance \$65,430,478 to Town Meeting as the School Committee budget (Guttag & seconded). The motion passed 5-0.

Motion to suspend the meeting, to adjourn at the chair's discretion (made & seconded). The motion passed 5-0.

The next meeting of the School Committee is scheduled for Wednesday, April 26, 2006, at 6:30 p.m. at the School Administration Building Conference Room, 1557 Massachusetts Avenue.