

LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Tuesday, December 18, 2007
Lexington Town Office Building, Selectmen's Meeting Room
1625 Massachusetts Avenue

Present: Superintendent Paul Ash, School Committee Chair Tom Diaz, School Committee Members Helen Cohen, Margaret Coppe, Tom Griffiths and Ravi Sahuja. The minutes were taken by Leora Tec.

I. Call to Order

II. Executive Session

III. Return to Public Session and Welcome:

IV. Public Comment

Dawn McKenna: There are many requests for studies. Years ago there was a committee to examine these issues. I would be willing to chair such a committee.

V. Members' Reports / Members' Concerns

Helen Cohen: Nominees are being considered for the diversity award. Thank you to everyone on the Central Office staff. Budget season is very demanding. Thank you to Mary Ellen Dunn, Dr. Ash and Linda Chase especially.

Ravi Sahuja: Diversity is very important in regards to the teaching staff.

We are occupying more space in the old Harrington. This will mean a larger utility bill. Maybe a senior center could go in there and could help pay for AC.

Tom Diaz: There is 38 K of usable square feet in the New Harrington.

Tom Griffiths: Tom Diaz and I went to the Appropriation Committee meeting. They are considering "the Burlington plan." There is a general consensus that we will continue to include out of district SPED costs in the school budget but perhaps as separate line item.

Tom Diaz: The Selectmen accepted the report of the ad hoc budget committee that I was chairing. They also voted to convene Town Meeting early. Town elections will be held on March 3rd. Town Meeting will convene on March 19th. The operating budget for the Town will be taken up on March 24th (the second meeting of Town Meeting). This would allow an override election as early as May 5th if it were necessary. We want to give people notice as early as possible about at-risk jobs. We want to try to diversify the workforce. Some people are planning a public forum on youth for February 2nd.

Margaret Coppe: The Lexington Human Rights Committee Charter will be sent to the Board Of Selectmen on January 14th.

Tom Diaz: The School Committee will approve some budget on Feb 11th.

VI. Discussion Items

1. Presentation of the Superintendent's FY09 Recommended Budget

Paul Ash introduced his level service and supplemental budgets based on the budget guidelines of the School Committee. The recommended FY 09 budget is \$72,019,174. This represents an increase of 5.66% but many districts have 6% or 7% increases. We have good news in SPED and utilities. Totally salary and wages increase is \$3,857,931. Total out of district SPED tuitions: \$226,979. The programs we put into place will significantly moderate the increase for FY 09 as well as having reduced this year's budget.

The recommended supplemental budget increase is \$1,427,958 (2.02%) with offsets of \$51,608 (The supplemental budget includes two budgets in SPED that will keep kids in district and save this amount of money.) So the total requested FY 09 budget is \$73,395,424. The total budget increase would be 7.68%.

A list of supplemental staff will be up on the website.

There were comments and questions from Committee members.

VII. Action Items

1. Vote to Approve School Committee Meeting Dates for January and February

The following School Committee Meeting Dates were approved of, for January: the 14th at 5:00 or 7:30, the 15th (public hearing, time TBD), a meeting about long-term goals on Saturday Jan 12th at 10:00 a.m., budget deliberation on Jan 28th, 29th or 31st and January 23rd for a budget deliberation; for February: the 9th at 10:00 a.m. and the 11th.

Dates for Cheryl Prescott-Walden: Jan. 28th 29th or 31st.

2. Vote to Approve School Committee Minutes of October 16, 2007

**VIII. Motion to Approve School Committee Minutes of October 16, 2007 (Cohen, Griffiths).
Passed 5-0.**

IX. Motion to adjourn (Griffiths, Coppe). The motion passed 5-0.