

LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, March 20, 2013

Cary Memorial Building, Estabrook Room

1605 Massachusetts Avenue

PRESENT: Dr. Paul Ash, Superintendent; Margaret Coppe, Chair; Members: Bonnie Brodner and Mary Ann Stewart; and Sam Alpert, Student Representative

ABSENT: Alessandro Alessandrini, Vice Chair and Jessie Steigerwald, Member

The Minutes were taken by Jean Curran, Recording Secretary

The Meeting Convened at 6:40 p.m.

I. Call to Order and Welcome

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

Rebecca Moore, 39 Cary Ave., Bridge PTA Co-President, shared with the Committee that the Bridge PTA community applauds actions taken by the members of the School Committee regarding school parking, encouragement of walking, monthly transportation activities and the encouragement to the community to reduce driving by parents by reducing the bus fee. Ms. Moore also shared that she supports the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program, and approves signage at the school. Ms. Moore then shared a description of a traffic situation which occurred this afternoon at the Bridge Elementary School that included parent road rage and rage directed towards staff at the school. This situation also created a risk for emergency vehicles and busses. Ms. Moore then shared the PTA's identified issues of concern.

Margaret Coppe responded that at the meeting on February 26, 2013 the Committee voted to put signs on our property on the entrance to Bridge School. The Board of Selectmen voted a week ago to place more no parking signs on Middleby Road.

Mary Ellen Dunn, Assistant Superintendent for Business and Finance, shared that at the last School Committee meeting, the Committee agreed to meet with a consultant on Friday who works with the Department of Public Works and Safe Routes to School (SRTS) to scope out the work; both short and long term plans. Bridge Elementary School will be the first school to have reviews done regarding parking and traffic plans.

Bonnie Brodner questioned whether Bridge Elementary School is the only one having an acute situation and she wanted to know if the principals were involved.

Ms. Dunn shared that she is coordinating with principals as active participants whatever the solutions that will enable the community to arrive and depart safely on our property.

Ann Stokes, 64 Baskin Road, SRTS at Bridge shared her observations on what took place and described the gridlock of cars and the witnessing of road rage. Ms. Stokes also shared the dangerous situations and the need for involvement by the police.

II. Members' Reports / Members' Concerns

None

III. Agenda:

1. Bus Registration and Marketing Update

Judy Crocker, Safe Routes to School Coordinator and member of the School Transportation Safety Committee shared a PowerPoint presentation to the Committee regarding public safety, recommendations and shared responsibility, start and stop times, and cultural changes needed. Ms. Crocker shared SRTS recommendations which included (a) uniform standard drop off and pickup at each school, (b) establishing penalties for violations on school property, (c) evaluation of arrival/dismissal procedures, and (d) communication of rules and enforcement. There were questions and comments from the Committee.

Mary Ellen Dunn, Assistant Superintendent of Business and Finance spoke to traffic updates and her goal to be a liaison to SRTS and liaison to emergency response and the need to educate parents on basic rules of the road. Ms. Dunn also shared that she will be meeting with a consultant regarding school zone signage.

Dr. Ash stated that he will speak with the principals.

Mary Ellen Dunn shared with the Committee the posters for schools promoting the school bus fee which point out the registration deadline of May 11. Her department is still working on online forms and payment methods.

2. Update on Legal Counsel

This Agenda Item was postponed until the next meeting.

3. Discussion of Town Meeting Articles

Article 29 – Amend General Bylaws – Contracts and Deeds (Solar Energy Purchasing).

Ms. Coppe shared that the purpose of this article is to amend the town bidding laws so the town can go into contracts for longer than 3 years (limit set by State law.). There were questions and comments from the Committee.

Mary Ellen Dunn recommended to the Committee to ask clarifying questions at Town Meeting regarding (i) what is the approval process for installation of solar panels on schools, and (ii) could our roofs handle solar panels and would it add to wear and tear and replacement.

The Chair moved to recess and reconvene on the floor of Town Meeting at 7:25 p.m.

Documents: Meeting Agenda; 2013 Town Meeting Warrant

Voted by the School Committee _____ May 14, 2013 _____