

LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, January 25, 2011

Cary Hall Auditorium

1605 Massachusetts Avenue

Present: Superintendent Paul Ash, School Committee Chair Rod Cole, School Committee Members Sandro Alessandrini, Margaret Coppe, Jessie Steigerwald, Mary Ann Stewart and student representative Noah Coolidge. Minutes were taken by Leora Tec.

The meeting was convened at 7:03 p.m.

I. Call to Order and Welcome (Rod Cole)

II. Superintendent's Announcements

1. I would like to thank three employees who are retiring and though they work on the municipal side they have provided significant service to us and deserve recognition. They are: Wayne Brooks, Superintendent of Highways and Manager of Operations; Dennis Meehan, Superintendent of Water and Sewer and Connie Rawson, Director of Cary Memorial Library. I'd like to offer my thanks and appreciation to these loyal employees for their years of service.

III. Members' Reports / Members' Concerns

Margaret Coppe: I attended a film on MLK day "Traces from the Trade: A Story from the Deep North." It is an excellent film, which will be shown numerous times. There will also be panel discussions and an evening with Jay Kaufman to discuss the issues that are raised in the film.

IV. Discussion Items

1. FY 12 Budget

a. Public Hearing on the Superintendent's Recommended FY 12 Budget

Dr. Ash first thanked the many people who helped put the budget together. He realizes that there are real people behind the numbers. Dr. Ash will repeat some reductions that he announced last Wednesday evening before the last budget summit. Over the last four years we have been able to turn back about six million dollars to the town through efficiencies in: transportation, SPED, energy and other areas. These dollars are actually funding a portion of FY12. Other towns are looking at multi-million dollar deficits.

The overall gap is \$926K, made up of two parts: the money to maintain what we are already doing (\$509K) and the additional items that Dr. Ash is recommending adding. Some of these new items are urgent. He recommends the following six reductions: two

resource room teachers; one speech teacher; wage and salary corrections; a small adjustment in the IA line; the combining of several part-time benefits-eligible positions and a reduction of the Department of Public Facilities budget by \$100K. These items together add up to \$521K in reductions.

At the Summit meeting the School Committee voted to request that the Board of Selectmen agree to increase the appropriation allocation to the School Department. The Selectmen voted unanimously to support increasing the allocation by \$308K. So, that is \$308K in reductions that we do not have to make. That still leaves \$262,000 that needs to be cut.

Dr. Ash enumerated some other places where money could be saved: One of our students with a one-to one IA will not be in the LPS next year; Professional Development (PD) money for principals to work with teachers to further the goals of the school; \$5K for the Joint Council; a .5 position at Diamond that was budgeted incorrectly and one FTE teaching position at LHS. The enrollment at LHS is projected to decline by 50 students. We are confident that in April, after students sign up for classes we will be able to reduce the teaching staff at LHS by 1.0 FTE.

Phyllis Neufeld (LEA president): I am disappointed about the cuts of resource room teachers and speech teachers. I was told that this decision was not based on the report of the student services department, but that is what Dr. Ash told the Budget Summit. This information has not yet been fully processed by all the stakeholders. I am also disappointed in the consolidation of part-time positions. A number of these teachers do not even take health care. Many administrative positions have been added over the last few years and more are being recommended this year. Teachers on the front lines are being cut while administration is being added.

Jaime Tingle (Speech and Language pathologist at Estabrook and Bridge): My caseload has fluctuated between 15 and 36. The 1.0 reduction in last year's budget has negatively affected the children.

Erin Barrett (Hastings parent): When kids move from the SPED program that does not mean they do not need support. Classroom teachers should be considered by the Committee when looking at the budget. There are many benefits to allowing part-time teachers.

Gabe Walsh (LHS teacher and coach and LHS graduate): The level that kids perform at is very much due to the work they have done with resource teachers and speech and language pathologists. A lot of things that happen in a classroom cannot be measured in data. Some additions are troubling when put up against the proposed subtractions.

- b. Amended FY 12 Capital Recommendations. Dr Ash introduced the topic by saying that the Committee received his initial list of capital requests in November. What is now before the Committee is the recommended capital budget. Pat Goddard and Mary Ellen Dunn pointed out which items have changed since November for both the school and municipal capital budgets. Pat Goddard also pointed out how these requests tie in to the 10-year capital plan.

There were questions and comments from the Committee.

- c. FY 12 Department of Public Facilities Budget. Presented by Pat Goddard. This is a level service budget. The biggest impact on this budget is the work that will be done on the Estabrook School.
 - d. FY 12 Technology Budget. Thomas Plati, Director of Educational Technology and Assessment took questions from the Committee and the audience.
2. Fundraising/Contribution Policy. Introduced by Margaret Coppe, a member of the School Committee policy sub-Committee. She would like to propose voting on allowing two schools, Hastings and Bridge, to purchase Elmos, which would result in greater equity among the six elementary schools. This technology does not require a lot of PD.

This issue was discussed by the Committee.

Motion to accept with gratitude the donations of Elmos by the Bridge and Hastings school PTAs (Steigerwald, Alessandrini). The motion passed 5-0.

V. Action Items

1. Vote to Appoint a School Committee Member and Pat Goddard as the District's Authorized Representatives to Serve on the *Owner's Project Manager* and *Designer* Selection Committees for MSBA's Green Repair Program Relative to Lexington High School.

Pat Goddard explained this action item.

Motion to appoint Sandro Alessandrini as the district's authorized representative to serve on the *Owner's Project Manager* and *Designer* Selection Committees for MSBA's Green Repair Program relative to Lexington High School (Steigerwald, Stewart). The motion passed 5-0.

Motion to appoint Pat Goddard as the district's authorized representative to serve on the *Owner's Project Manager* and *Designer* Selection Committees for MSBA's Green Repair Program relative to Lexington High School (Steigerwald, Alessandrini) The motion passed 5-0.

2. Vote to Accept a \$1,000 Donation to the Lexington High School Science Fair.

Motion to accept with gratitude a \$1,000 donation to the Lexington High School Science Fair (Stewart, Coppe). The motion passed 5-0.

3. Vote to Accept \$450 in Donations to the William G. Tapply Memorial Fund.

Motion to accept with gratitude \$450 in donations to the William G. Tapply Memorial Fund (Steigerwald, Stewart). The motion passed 5-0.

4. Vote to Accept a \$100 Donation to the Nick Barnett Science Olympiad Team.

Motion to accept with gratitude a \$100 donation to the Nick Barnett Science Olympiad Team (Stewart, Coppe). **The motion passed 5-0.**

5. Vote to Accept a \$500 Donation to the LHS 2011 Science and Engineering Fair from Burwen Technology, Inc.

Motion to accept with gratitude a \$500 Donation to the LHS 2011 Science and Engineering Fair from Burwen Technology, Inc. (Steigerwald, Stewart). **The motion passed 5-0.**

6. Vote to Accept a \$100 Donation from Lueders Environmental, Inc.

Motion to accept with gratitude a \$100 donation from Lueders Environmental, Inc. (Steigerwald, Coppe). **The motion passed 5-0.**

7. Vote to Approve School Committee Minutes of November 15, 2010.

Motion to approve School Committee minutes of November 15, 2010 (Stewart, Steigerwald). **The motion passed 5-0.**

- VI. **Motion to go into Executive Session for the purpose of collective bargaining, to return to public session only for the purpose of adjourning** (Alessandrini, Stewart). **Alessandrini-aye; Cole-aye; Coppe-aye; Steigerwald-aye and Stewart-aye.**

The meeting went into Executive Session at 9:10 p.m.

The meeting returned to open session for the purpose of adjourning. Motion to adjourn (Coppe, Stewart). **The motion passed 5-0.**

Documents: *Meeting agenda; FY 12 Budget Gap Report Summary; Recommended FY 12 Budget; LPS Capital Requests Summary Comparison Sheet 2012-2016; Town of Lexington FY 2012 Budget Development Departmental Budget Requests, Department of Public Facilities; Draft, Fundraising for School Improvements, School Committee Policy; Selection Criteria Form Owner's Project Manager Green Repair Program and Designer Green Repair Program; memo from Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Business Mary Ellen Dunn, to Superintendent Paul Ash re: Acceptance of Donation of \$1000 from Joseph Pato & Mitre Corporation, Acceptance of Donation of \$450 for William G. Tapply Memorial Fund; letter from Patrick Mehr to Superintendent Paul Ash, re: \$100 donation to LHS Nick Barnett Science Olympiad Team; letter from Burwen Technology, Inc., re: \$500 donation for 2011 Science and Engineering Fair; letter from Lueders to Superintendent Paul Ash re: donantion to LPS; minutes, Lexington School Committee meeting 11/15/10.*