

CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Monday, May 4, 2015 – Regular Meeting

7:00 p.m. - Board of Aldermen's Chambers – Somerville City Hall

Members present: Mr. Sweeting, Mr. Roix, Ms. Pitone, Mr. Bockelman, Ms. Normand, Alderman White, Ms. Rafal and Mayor Curtatone (7:30 p.m.)

Members absent: Mr. Futrell

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Adam Sweeting called a Regular Meeting of the School Committee to order in the Board of Aldermen's Chambers at City Hall at 7:18 p.m., with a moment of silence and a salute to the flag of the United States of America. Mr. Sweeting asked for a roll call, the results of which are as follows: - Present – 7 – Sweeting, Roix, Rafal, Pitone, Normand, Bockelman, and White, and ABSENT – 2 – Futrell and Curtatone.

II. STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL

Mr. Ojo was not present this evening. Ms. Rafal read Mr. Ojo's report into the minutes of the meeting in his absence.

Currently Student Council is working on formulating a plan to establish outside eating privileges. Many students think that these privileges should be only for students that are obtaining a 3.5 or higher GPA. but then again many students think that would be unfair and if we are going to establish outside eating or outside privileges it should be for the entire school not, just a select few.

I'm glad to say the Assembly committee has got on a roll, finally and students that sit on the committee have started planning their first event which is a Student VS Teacher basketball game.

Now this is something I've personally discussed with my peers, well the ones that care at least, and they think it is highly important that what we have going on at SHS with student leadership is really making a change. I believe we need to also establish it even more within the middle schools. Younger students I think would love to see and be inspired seeing former alumnus from their schools in positions of power within the high school, which would inspire them to get involved in clubs and different social activities.

Many students are constantly complaining about the stairs right outside the back of city hall, many students feel the city isn't doing enough to either get it fixed or seal it off from kids going over the blocks. There is also the other stairs on the right of the high school main entrance that have decided to take a leave of absence, so many students just want to know what the school plans to do.

And with that, when will a new high school be planned or is one being planned?

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- March 26, 2015 Regular Meeting minutes
(This was an open meeting that followed an Executive Session Meeting)

MOTION: Mr. Roix made a motion, seconded by Ms. Normand, to approve the minutes of March 26, 2015.

The motion was approved via voice vote.

Mr. Sweeting announced that we will take the next item out of order – that of the Art Department's presentation which is listed under the Superintendent's District Report.

A. District Report

- Art Department Presentation

Dr. Luci Prawdzik and some of her staff presented information via a PowerPoint presentation (included at the end of these minutes).

Art Department staff members present were Dorothy Contos, Sean Bianchi, Joe Santos, May Chau, Tom Linville, and Stephanie Stiassni.

After the presentation was complete, discussion ensued among School Committee members and the Art Department staff which included the following:

- Structure of the Art Major classes
- Partnering the school art programs with the Somerville Arts Council and Open Studio artists
- The sense of school pride that comes from working on the various mosaics
- How art is for everyone, whether there is natural art talent or not
- Integrating the arts into the curriculum
- The great amount of participation in the program
- The wonderful displays of student artwork that is on display all across the city and state.

Mr. Sweeting and others thanked Dr. Prawdzik for her leadership and commented that the success of our art programs leads to the positive image of our city.

IV. REPORT OF SUBCOMMITTEES

A. School Committee Meeting for Finance & Facilities April 28 (Ms. Normand)

The School Committee met as a Committee of the Whole for Finance and Facilities on Tuesday, April 28, 2015 at 42 Cross Street. Member present were Carrie Normand, Dan Futrell, Steve Roix, Adam Sweeting, Christine Rafal, Laura Pitone and Paul Bockelman.

Also in attendance were Superintendent Pierantozzi, Finance Director Durette and Assistant Superintendent McKay. There was one member of the audience.

Ms. Normand called the meeting to order at 7:09.

There were five items on the agenda.

- 1) Approval of the Chair's Report of April 1, 2015 Finance and Facilities meeting. Mr. Sweeting made a motion to accept the report, seconded by Ms. Rafal. The report was approved by unanimous voice vote.
- 2) FY 2016 Budget – The Superintendent and the Finance Director presented a list the Superintendent's draft budget increases for the upcoming school year. At a previous meeting the School Committee received a list of all budget requests submitted by principals, School Councils, PTAs, or department heads.

The revised April 24 draft of the proposed budget has \$375,00 in additional spending over a level-service budget. The list includes an additional elementary teacher, an Assistant to the Director of Student Services, special education positions (including a possible reorganization of special education facilitators.)

School Committee members asked several questions about the various recommendations and made some of their own. The School Committee also discussed the possibility of creating an internal program for Somerville staff to get their principal licensure. School Committee members were asked to present new budget items at this Thursday, May 7th's Finance and Facilities meeting. We still have the public hearing and two more Finance meetings before the school budget must be finalized and sent to the city.

- 3) Student Activity Accounts – Finance Director Durette explained the need for the School Committee to authorize a separate account for each of the 76 Student Activity subaccounts. Mr. Futrell moved to approve the creation of each of the 76 accounts, seconded by Mr. Roix. The motion was passed by a unanimous voice vote.
- 4) FY 2014 End of the Year Report – Powers and Sullivan, Certified Public Accountants, audited FY 2014 budget. The Somerville Public Schools sailed through the audit with no irregularities. Thank you to Finance Director Durette and all who help manage the funds.
- 5) Facilities Report – The Capuano School got a new ventilation system, the Edgerly School received a new power and fire system, the East Somerville's exterior was damaged during snow removal and is being repaired, and a request for information about repairing the stairs from SHS to School Street was made. School Committee Chair Mr. Sweeting will contact the Brown School Council to schedule a time to discuss their community forum on the school's

facility held on March 7th. On May 4, 2015 the city's architect will present a report on the Brown School's roof partial collapse.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:30

MOTION: Ms. Normand made a motion, seconded by Mr. Roix, to accept the report of the Chair of Finance for the School Committee meeting for Finance and Facilities of April 28, 2015. The motion was approved via voice vote.

V. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT

A. District Report

The Superintendent provided his report on various happenings across the district:

- Mr. Pierantozzi thanked the Mayor, Board of Aldermen and School Committee for their support of the arts. When other districts have been struggling to keep the arts, our programs have had dramatic positive changes and the accolades received have grown as a result. We have had award winning Public Service Announcements produced by our students, had student artwork displayed in the Capitol Rotunda, in the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's offices, on the cover of the Massachusetts School Building Authority's Annual Report and more!
- We are approaching the Events segment of the year with many activities scheduled for the next six weeks or so. Check the website, school websites, and the District's Connections newsletter for more information.
- 3rd Annual World Language Awards Night – Tuesday, May 5th, 6:30pm at the SHS Auditorium
- Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds Workshop – Wednesday, 5:00-6:30pm at the West Somerville Neighborhood School
- CTE Vocational Senior Awards Banquet – Wednesday, May 6th, 6:30pm at the SHS Atrium and Field House
- West Somerville Neighborhood School Mosaic Mural Unveiling – Thursday, May 7th, 5:00pm at the front entrance to the WSNS
- Spring String Fling – Thursday, May 7th, 7:00pm at the SHS Field House

The Superintendent deferred to Finance Director Patricia Durette for her brief update on financial matters:

The School Committee meeting for Finance and Facilities is this Thursday at 7:00 p.m.

Tomorrow, agenda items will be posted to the packet page and, on Wednesday, paper packets will be delivered to members' homes. Ms. Durette reviewed a list of the contents of the packet for members and the audience.

The Superintendent continued his district report:

- SCALE is offering 2 Adult Basic Education Orientations next month to help people prepare for the HiSET. Orientation dates and times are:
 - Tuesday morning, June 9th from 9:00-10:30am
 - Wednesday evening, June 10th from 6:00-7:30pm.
 - Please call (617) 629-5500 to register.
- The 41st Annual Somerville PTA Scholarship Dinner Dance will be held Friday, May 15th at Anthony's in Malden. Tickets are available through Thursday, May 7th, and can be purchased at any of our schools' PTA offices, or by contacting Leah Arredondo in our central office. (\$38/ticket) It's a great annual event with proceeds benefiting the Somerville PTA Scholarship Fund.

The Superintendent deferred to Assistant Superintendent Vincent McKay for his report on curriculum-related matters:

- Math and Science testing will be taking place very soon. We ask parents to help prepare students by ensuring they get a good night's sleep, eat breakfast and arrive to school on time each day.
- On May 7, the Special Education Parent Advisory Council will host a meeting for parents and guardians with representatives from the Public Consulting Group (PCG) who will discuss the results of the recent review of Special Education services. The meeting will begin at 6:00 p.m. at the Kennedy School.

The Superintendent concluded his district report:

- On May 2, the Brown School attended Saturday School as part of their makeup time for when school was closed due to the roof collapse. Attendance for the day was about 55%, which is not surprising given the many things that happen on Saturdays in May.
- Upcoming Calendar Change Reminder
 - Next Wednesday, May 6th, was originally scheduled to be a Half Day Wednesday, will now be a full day for all students.
- Parent/Guardian Conferences are coming up – check with your student’s school personnel for more information.
- Student of the Quarter Awards continue this week:
- Supporting our Friends and Family from Nepal
To assist Somerville families who may have been directly impacted by the recent earthquakes in Nepal, we have compiled some resources that we hope will help families to support their children. The list is available on our website at www.somerville.k12.ma.us/families/nepal/earthquake, and includes agencies that are reported to send at least 80% of donations to direct aid. Our thoughts are with all of those impacted by this terrible tragedy.

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Somerville Public Schools Policy Manual

The following policies were presented this evening by Rules Management Chair Mr. Roix for second reading and action:

- File: KF Community Use of School Facilities – as presented, for adoption

MOTION: Mr. Roix made a motion, seconded by Ms. Rafal, to approve File KF, Community Use of School Facilities, as presented, for inclusion in the Somerville Public Schools Policy Manual.

The motion was approved via voice vote.

- File: KF-R Community Use of School Facilities, as amended

MOTION: Mr. Roix made a motion, seconded by Mr. Bockelman, to approve File KF-R, Community Use of School Facilities, as amended, for inclusion in the Somerville Public Schools Policy Manual.

The motion was approved via voice vote.

- File: JLCE Student with Comfort Care/DNR/MOLST Orders, as presented, for adoption

MOTION: Mr. Roix made a motion, seconded by Mr. Bockelman, to approve File JLCE Students with Comfort Care/DNR/MOLST Orders, as presented for inclusion in the Somerville Public Schools Policy Manual.

The motion was approved via voice vote.

B. Field Trips (recommended action: approval)

May 10-15, 2015

One (1) Somerville High School student to Pittsburg, PA to participate in the International Science and Engineering Fair. Transportation via plan/bus at no cost to student. All costs are covered by the International Science & Engineering Foundation.

MOTION: Mr. Bockelman made a motion, seconded by Ms. Normand, to approve the field trip. The motion was approved via voice vote.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Field Trips (recommended action: approval)

June 5, 2015

Healey School grade 3 students to the Museum of Science, overnight. Transportation via car/carpool/MBTA. Cost to students is \$50.

MOTION: Ms. Normand made a motion, seconded by Ms. Rafal, to approve the field trip. The motion was approved via voice vote.

B. Acceptance of Donations

The Superintendent recommends the acceptance, with gratitude, of a donation of \$265.00 from Christ the King Presbyterian Church of Somerville, MA to the Welcome Center of Somerville High School. These funds will be used to assist unaccompanied minors.

MOTION: Ms. Rafal made a motion, seconded by Mr. Bockelman, to accept the donation, with gratitude.

The motion was approved via voice vote.

VIII. ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERSMs. Rafal

1. The recent musical concert at Somerville High School was amazing and it was to see that so many parents and others stayed for the entire program rather than leaving after their student performed.

Mr. Bockelman

1. Thanked colleagues and parents/guardians for attending the Somerville Public Schools Information Night held last week at the Real Estate office of Thalia Tringo. The information shared from parent to parent was probably the most influential and it was great for everyone to make these connections.
2. Friday Night is the Somerville High School Scholarship Foundation's \$10,000 raffle. All money goes to scholarships for our students and is the highest ranking item on Mr. Bockelman's donation list. Buy a ticket!!

Mr. Pierantozzi remarked that, as of this morning, 70 tickets still needed to be sold.

Ms. Pitone

1. This is Teacher Appreciation Week. Thank you to our teachers for their work and thanks, also, to the PTA and others who organize appreciation luncheons, etc. for our teachers.

Mr. Sweeting

1. Announced that the Youth Peace Conference will take place this Saturday from 12:30 – 5:00 at Somerville High School.
2. Congratulated Mayor Curtatone for being named the Massachusetts Association of Portuguese Speakers (MAPS) Person of the Year for his work with the immigrant community.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m. via voice vote.

RELATED DOCUMENTS:

1. Agenda
2. Minutes of March Regular Meeting
3. Art Department PowerPoint presentation
4. Shore Collaborative Agreement for approval
5. Three (3) Policies for second reading and action
6. One (1) overnight field trip request
7. One (1) donation acceptance form
8. One (1) condolence letter
9. Additional information related to the field trip to Cuba
10. Additional information regarding the student trip to the National Science Fair