Arlington School Committee

Facilities Subcommittee

Meeting Minutes

Monday, October 30, 2014 @ 6:00 p.m.

Attendance

Subcommittee Members: Jeff Thielman (Chair), Cindy Starks, Kirsi Allison-Ampe, M.D.

District Leadership: Kathleen Bodie, Ed.D. (Superintendent), Diane Johnson (CFO)

Other SC Members: Bill Hayner, Jennifer Susse

Guests: Len Kardon, Alex Bilsky, Andy Forbes, Jennifer Irvine

The meeting was called to order at 6:10 p.m.

1. **Public Participation** 
   * Alex Bilsky, Jennifer Irvine, and Andrew Forbes spoke about issues with the Hardy playground. They said several children have been injured on some of the structures.
   * All three speakers are parents of Hardy school students. They raised concerns about the safety of several structures in the school’s playground. They noted that a study was done in the summer of 2013 by Real Associates, but they have not seen work done at the playground in response to the study’s findings. A parent noted that one item that created several safety hazards is the low level of wood chips on the surface of the playground. The parents reported that one truck load of chips was delivered, but it was not enough to cover the surface.
   * The parents spoke of the need for parity in the playgrounds across the district.
2. **Hardy Playground discussion** 
   * Diane Johnson reported that 100 cubic yards of wood chips are being delivered in early November to make the playground surface safer. She and Dr. Bodie said other repairs could be made relatively soon. (Following the meeting, Ms. Johnson said that she and Mark Miano decided on another 100 cubic yards of wood chips because the first installment was not enough.)
   * Ms. Johnson said that she in touch with the town to set up a regular schedule of visits/reviews of all playgrounds in the town. Some of the playgrounds are under the jurisdiction of the Park & Recreation Department, and some are under the jurisdiction of the school department. The town and school department will coordinate so the visits cover all playgrounds, regardless of which town body has jurisdiction.
   * Dr. Bodie said ultimately it is the call of the building principal as to whether all or part of a playground should be shut down for use because of safety concerns.
3. **Menotomy Pre-school** 
   * The rodent problem experienced last year appears to have been contained. The custodians are checking the pre-school frequently for rodents.
4. **Space Planning for 2015-16**
   * Because the district has seen an increase of 450 students during the past three school years, the School Committee asked the Superintendent for a plan of what it will do to accommodate increasing enrollment. The current projection that enrollment will increase by 127 students next year, the fourth year in a row of an increase.
   * Dr. Bodie said that she and the Town Manager have discussed hiring an outside consultant to do an analysis and provide the town and school district with various options for accommodating continued enrollment growth. This would be a long-term study and would not provide solutions for the 2015-16 school year.
   * Dr. Bodie said that some elementary schools, particularly Brackett and Dallin, are more crowded than others. Len Kardon, a parent attending the meeting, said he would be concerned if the district moved the Structured Learning programs that serve Special Education students out of the Brackett. Dr. Bodie said her preference would be to keep them there, but no decision had been made yet.
   * The subcommittee asked that a report be prepared by the first meeting in February on options for 2015-16. The subcommittee agreed to review the plan at a meeting in January.

The meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m**.**

**The next meeting will be Thursday, January 22nd at 5:00 p.m.**