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School Committee Minutes Special FY 13 Budget Hearing **03/01/2012**

Approved by School Committee October 11, 2012

*Arlington School Committee
Special School Committee Meeting
Thursday, March 1, 2012
6:30 p.m.
FY 13 Budget Public Hearing
Arlington High School
School Committee Room – Sixth Floor
869 Massachusetts Avenue
Arlington, MA 02476*

***Present:** Ms. Cindy Starks, Chair, Dr. Kirsi Allison-Ampe, Vice Chair, Mr. Judson Pierce, Secretary, Mr. Jeff Thielman, Mr. Joseph Curro, Jr., Ms. Leba Heigham, and Mr. William Hayner.
Dr. Kathleen Bodie, Superintendent, Mr. Robert Spiegel, Human Resource Officer, Ms. Diane Johnson, Chief Financial Officer, Kathleen Lockyer, Interim Special Education Director, Ms. Sihbon Foley, AEA Representative, Mr. Alexis Moisand, Student Representative and Ms. Karen Fitzgerald, Administrative Assistant*

***Absent:** Dr. Wallis Raemer, Interim Assistant Superintendent, and AAA Representative*

*Mr. Pierce exited the meeting at 7:44 and returned at 7:49 p.m.
Mr. Curro exited the meeting at 8:10 and returned at 8:14 p.m.
Ms. Foley exited the meeting at 8:45 p.m. and returned at 8:55 p.m. and exited at 9:30 p.m.
Ms. Johnson exited the meeting at 9:37 p.m. and returned at 9:45 p.m.
Ms. Lockyer exited the meeting at 9:45 p.m.
Mr. Curro exited the meeting at 9:45 p.m. and returned at 9:57
Dr. Bodie exited the meeting at 10:50 p.m.*

Ms. Starks, Chair of the School Committee opened the meeting at 6:35 p.m. and welcomed Kathleen Lockyer, Siobhan Foley, and Alexis Moisand. Ms. Starks appreciated the artwork displayed in the School Committee Room from the Brackett Elementary School.

FY 13 Budget Public Hearing

Dr. Bodie reviewed the budget and the budget priorities of the Arlington Public Schools. The district wide proposal is to hire a full time Assistant Superintendent, permanent High School Principal, Stratton Principal, K-12 Math Director, Technology Database Administrator and invest in personnel and infrastructure to hire the full time Human Resource Officer and Benefits Clerk and reserve of Teacher Assistance and Teachers.

The amount the school has to work with is \$1.8 million and \$950,000 needs to go toward salaries so there is not a lot of money for this year, but this would be a multi year proposal.

Public Participation

Mr. Stephen Harrington spoke on how he felt it was difficult for him and others to read and look at the budget as it was posted to the website on February 9, 2012 as a PDF file with over 148 PDF's. Mr. Harrington suggested fewer words, and would like to have charts or graphs and a high level of overview of changes. Mr. Harrington said no linkage with salary to know who staff is, and recommends peoples names with salary in the budget. He also recommends the athletic budget to be clearer in understanding where the money is being spent and to show beginning balances, and equipment expenses so everyone can understand it.

Ms. Linda Hanson, K-8 Reading Coach and AEA 2nd Vice President handed out her concerns for the School Committee to examine and articulate the goals and priorities over the next four years, not just this coming year. She would like to see the full impact of how adding the proposed positions affect the funds available for other cost areas. Linda said teachers have made significant sacrifices in terms of health insurance coverage and future pension benefits at state level and would like to Arlington to establish a goal on closing the salary gap between Arlington and similar towns.

Ms. Hanson suggested the following:

- CFO and Superintendent model the affect of these proposed staffing increases to the level service budget on available funds for the next four years
- Consider creating personnel trend charts, bar graph, showing position changes
- Addressing the issue of comparable wages, and consider this a value or a priority
- See a longer-term vision to understand trade offs between staffing levels and compensation levels.

Ms. Hanson would like this opportunity of a new beginning, a start, to create a budget that takes all the pieces of the budget pie in a multi year plan.

FY 13 Budget Discussion

After the committee discussed the budget, the School Committee members requested the following budget documents and or information to be included in the Chief Financial Office's, Ms. Johnson's Update on the FY 13 Budget Report for March 8, 2012 meeting.

- Title Nine compliance and more detail on Athletic Budget girls' vs. boys.
- Multi year sources of revenue, what would be the town appropriations and what

are not in the kindergarten revenues.

- How ticket revenue would be reflected in budget.
- If we put all positions into the budget now, what would be the affect in 1 year?

Would we need to eliminate positions? What would the budget impact and projections of new positions be?

- What percentages of teachers are without professional status?
- Additions vs. restorations reflected as changes, not added and then reduced in the

budget.

- 1) Level service budget (if we did nothing). 2) Academic goals and what would it project out to? 3) Mapping against revenue plans and see where lines diverge.

- Concerns with class sizes and space issues and would like to see a plan for both.
- More depth of Athletic and Kindergarten fees and more info on collection of these

fees, and wants Thompson money not currently being paid out, how it will be used in FY 13.

- Budget book to be more visual and less words and to include graphs and charts.
- Committee would need a proposal and data if the committee were to reduce any fees before March 8, 2012 to change any budget lines.
- What each stipend was and who gets each one.
- Stipend detail for all cost centers.
- To provide unfilled sub positions data from high school due to low sub pay.
- Two to three yearlong term of where Arlington Public Schools are going.
- Wants to see trend on Kindergarten growth and ballpark enrollment numbers.
- Wants the projection of Kindergarten Fees collected to be lower than projected in

the budget.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Bodie attended the concert for the Select Chorus at the Ottoson Middle School an Honors Orchestra at Arlington High School. Dr. Bodie

congratulated OMS teacher, Allison Oropallo for the wonderful job on the Technology Engineering Room at the middle school. Dr. Bodie also congratulated Rebecca Robinson, AHS senior, who had won the State Championship in the 300 again. Dr. Bodie said the bid phase will start mid April on the Thompson School. Dr. Bodie informed the committee that Arlington Public Schools would be hosting a diversity job fair on March 21, 2012 from 4 to 6 p.m. at the high school and said the Arlington Public Schools brochure has been updated.

Subcommittee & Liaison Reports
Policies & Procedures

Mr. Judson Pierce presented First Readings of BBBE- Unexpired Term Fulfillment and BBBE-E Application To Fill A Vacancy On The Arlington School Committee. Mr. Curro exited the meeting before discussion on this policy. The committee suggested additional language and the Policies and Procedures Subcommittee would be meeting again March 7, 2012 and would continue the discussion on the policy language.

Mr. Pierce presented the Second Readings for School Committee approval.

HE/HF School Committee Negotiations Agents

Mr. Pierce moved to approve second reading of HE/HF School Committee Negotiations Agents, seconded by Mr. Thielman. Voted: 6-0, Mr. Curro had exited the meeting.

KDBA Public Request for Documents
KDBA-E

Mr. Pierce moved to approve KDBA and KDBA-E Public Request for Documents as amended, seconded by Mr. Hayner. Voted: 7-0

BEC Executive Sessions

Mr. Pierce moved to approve second reading of BEC, Executive Session as amended, seconded by Mr. Hayner. Voted: 7-0

Ms. Heigham moved the 10 o'clock rule to 10:20 p.m., seconded by Mr. Hayner. Voted: 7-0

Budget

Ms. Heigham motioned to move that Ms. Starks be allowed to sign the letter responding to the request for comments from the Town Manager regarding the Report's recommendations on the DOR Town and School Financial Analysis Report dated January 2012, seconded by Dr. Allison-Ampe. Voted: 7-0

To the Town Manager:

We write this as official comments from the School Committee regarding the DOR Town and School Financial Analysis Report dated January 2012. We are responding to the request for comments from the Town Manager regarding the Report's recommendations.

The Report has many sections. In particular, we note that the bulk of the recommendations suggest significant changes in the organization of the Town financial management structure, and further, that this reorganization is suggested to occur **in advance of discussions of consolidation** of Town/School financial offices.

In regard to the recommendations to the school department, we are in agreement with most: for example, inclusion of payroll in a consolidated financial department, and implementation of an automated absence & substitute tracking system. The recommendations of MUNIS terminals to the schools and payroll warrants need more study on how to resolve certain technicalities. (See addendum for all responses.)

While we do not take issue with any of the details regarding the organizational changes of the Town financial structure, we do not feel it is our purview to make detailed comments on them either.

At this time, we do **not** feel we have sufficient information to agree to a final consolidated Town/ School finance office. We understand that this is seen as a potential final step by the DOR; however some of our members are concerned that unless we are explicit in our views, we will be assumed to be in agreement.

We do not feel we have sufficient information about a consolidated Town/School department for the following reasons:

1. There is no mention of the oversight role of the School Committee of the whole in the recommendations.
2. There is no mention of the School Committee on the proposed organizational chart (Report page 28).
3. There is no clarity of the Superintendent/Finance officer relationship on the organizational chart.
4. It is unclear what the final structure of the Town finance department will be at this early time, and thus it is difficult to understand how the School Administrative personnel and/or the School Committee should best interact with it.

We are also note the absence of a definition of the role of the Finance Committee with a consolidated Town/School Finance Department.

We are not ruling a possible merger in or out, just trying to be clear that there are still a lot of things to clarify, and that many of them are not dependent on the Schools.

In conclusion, we reiterate the School Committee's authority over our budget [MGL 71 s34], and to agree to any eventual School-Town consolidation [MGL 71 s37M]. In addition, we require that any future blueprint for a consolidation include clear lines of authority that incorporate the Committee and the Superintendent before we enter discussions of consolidation.

Thank you for your attention,

Addendum regarding the recommendations:

We are in agreement about the following:

w Recommendation #5, page 23: Migration of phones to the IT department.

w Recommendation #7, page 24: Inclusion of the payroll department in the consolidated financial department.

w Recommendation #8, page 24: Regular meetings between Superintendent, Town Manager, Comptroller, CFO; and addressing outstanding issues of previous town-school consolidations.

w Recommendation #9, page 24: Purchase of automated absence tracking/substitute calling.

w Recommendation #10, page 24: Improving administrative capacity at building or cost center level.

w Recommendation #14, page 25: Creating written agreement concerning allocation of municipal costs to be included in net school spending.

We are in the process of working out the technicalities involved in the following:

w Recommendation #10, page 24: Rolling out MUNIS terminals to schools and piloting decentralized purchasing, payroll, and budget monitoring. Our concerns include staffing ability, software ability (example: hold function on purchase order) and hardware purchasing.

w Recommendation #15, page 26: Recommendation around School Committee payroll warrants. Our concerns include implementing policy so there is no possibility of payroll warrant delays if the Chair is unavailable.

Community Relations

22 Mill Street recommendation

Ms. Leba Heigham moved to motion to take no action at this time on the 22 Mill Street request and thank them for their interest, seconded by Mr. Hayner.

Voted: 7-0

Advisory Committee on Kindergarten Fees

Ms. Heigham motioned, seconded by Mr. Hayner, to forward to the Arlington School Committee the following names for appointment to the Kindergarten Advisory Committee: Brendan O'Day, Dolores McGee, Farhana Riaz, and Ruthellyn Jacob, seconded by Mr. Curro.

Voted: 7-0

Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment and Accountability Subcommittee

Mr. Thielman noted the discussion regarding Special Education Teacher Assistants was already reported on from Ms. Lockyer at the beginning of this meeting during the budget discussion.

Chair

Reminder about deadline for officers is March 12

Ms. Cindy Starks reminded the School Committee members about MASC Day On The Hill, March 27, 2012, and to also have the committee members who are interested serving as Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary of the School Committee for 2012-2013 to forward letters of interest to her and to the administrative assistant.

Mr. Hayner moved:

- 1. To have the Superintendent provide a secure place for any member of the School Committee who chooses to review performance documents such as, but not limited to, evaluations, job related courses, letters of commendation, attendance, etc. These documents shall not be copied or removed from this location.***
- 2. These documents are limited to those positions that are under the immediate purview of the School Committee as stated in Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71 sections 41, 59: Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Director of Special Education, Financial Officer, etc.***
- 3. These documents are limited to only those positions whose contracts will end on June 30, 2012, and require notification, of contract renewal, specific changes of the existing contract, or termination prior to April 1, 2012.***
- 4. These documents are limited to those that were created during the contract period, July 1, 2009 to present.***
- 5. These documents must be provided in a timely manner so that the School Committee may determine, in an open meeting, the***

determination of said contract(s) prior to April 1, 2012, seconded by Mr. Pierce.

Ms. Starks presented the legal opinion she was tasked with obtaining from Ms. Elizabeth B. Valerio Deutsch Williams Brooks DeRensis & Holland, P.C.

This shall constitute my advice on a legal question posed to us by the School Committee.

The Committee has asked whether members of the Committee may review the performance reviews/evaluations of certain APS employees. As I understand it, the request pertains only to those employees whose appointment and terms and conditions of employment are determined directly by the Committee. In statutory terms, those employees are the "Superintendent", G.L. c. 71, secs. 41 and 59; the "school business administrator", G.L. c. 71, sec. 41; and "Assistant Superintendents", G.L. c. 71, sec. 59.

There appears to be nothing directly on point in the statutes or in DESE regulations. MASC has advised generally that because these are "personnel records" which are confidential and not subject to public disclosure, access is limited to "specific circumstances where a need to know applies", and has urged against review of these documents in this instance.

In my view, and purely as a matter of legal analysis, I believe that the School Committee has the right to review the evaluations/reviews of these specific employees for their current contract terms, as part of the decision whether to reappoint or continue their employment. It would make little sense, and would seem to frustrate the responsibilities of the School Committee, if it were barred from fully assessing the performance, compliance with DESE evaluation requirements, etc. of employees who are directly appointed by the Committee, which must ultimately determine their reappointment/retention. I therefore believe that this would fall within the "need to know" exception stated by DESE's policy (which, of course, is not a binding legal document itself). The Committee may therefore authorize members to review these specific documents.

Review is limited as follows. These documents are confidential and (unlike the employees' contracts themselves) are not subject to public disclosure. Accordingly, no copies may be made or obtained by a Committee reviewer. No one else may be involved in the review. The content of these documents may not be disclosed or discussed with anyone else, including with the employee or with any other staff or employees. If the Committee intends to discuss it as a body, of course, all requirements of the Open Meeting Law should be complied with. Finally, as noted, the review should be confined to records relating to the current contract term of the employee.

Mr. Thielman, Ms. Heigham, Mr. Curro and Dr. Allison-Ampe said they would not support the motion because they do not want this to affect the evaluation process of the Superintendent and that Arlington would be the only School Committee in Massachusetts to actually review evaluations as stated by Mr. Koocher, Executive Director of MASC in his response to Ms. Starks.

Mr. Hayner said it is his intent to be objective with this information and not subjective.

Roll Call: Mr. Hayner Yes, Ms. Heigham No, Mr. Curro No, Mr. Thielman No, Mr. Pierce Yes, Dr. Allison-Ampe No, and Ms. Starks No

Voted: 2-5

Mr. Hayner motioned to have the Superintendent bring forward her contract renewal recommendations to the third meeting in March, before April 1, 2012, seconded by Mr. Curro.

Voted: 7-0

Mr. Curro moved the 10 o'clock rule to 10:30 p.m., seconded by Mr. Thielman.

Voted: 7-0

Consent Agenda

Ms. Heigham moved to Approval of Warrant: #: 12109, Dated February 9, 2012 in the amount of \$470,573.74, Approval of Warrant:# 12116, Dated February 23, 2012 in the amount of \$513,177.85, Approval of School Committee Minutes: December 22, 2011 and January 12, 2012 and Approval of AHS Penn Model Congress Trip March 2012 and Approval of trip to Japan for OMS and AHS students, July 2012, seconded by Mr. Curro.

Voted: 7-0

Secretary's Report

Mr. Pierce presented the Secretary's Report – Correspondence 2/10/12-3/1/12

Copy of Town Treasurer's response to DOR Finance Consolidation recommendations.

Mr. Thielman forwarded us a sample "dashboard" for review and we received an acknowledgement back from Nancy Walser.

Notice and Agenda for 2/15/12 Policies and Procedures Subcommittee Meeting.

Email from Mr. Hayner concerning learning more about the special education TA's with response from Dr. Bodie.

Email from Mr. Thielman with draft revision to files BBBE and BBBE-E concerning unexpired term fulfillment.

Notice of agenda for the meeting of the Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment and Accountability Subcommittee on **Tuesday, February 28th.**

Posting regarding Arlington School Committee inviting parents to participate on a committee to review Kindergarten fees.~

Email forward from a concerned citizen regarding FY 13 projected revenue increase and athletic fees.

Email forward with legal advice on Employee Record review.

Invitation to the unveiling of the new Ottoson Middle School Technology Suites on February 27th. ~ ~

Email from the Superintendent regarding suspending for this year the AHS Principal search.

Legal Notice for tonight's March 1st FY 13 Budget Review Special School Committee meeting.

*Notice and Agenda for Budget Subcommittee Meeting Thursday, Feb 23rd.
Press Release regarding an ARRA grant received in December.
Athletic Update with information on some of our students' recent successes.
Email regarding a February 15th incident at AHS and email from concerned parent regarding this incident at the high school.
Email regarding EDCO decision.
Email from the Superintendent informing the School Committee of a recent Boston Globe Article – Congratulating our Physical Education Dept.
Emails regarding redistricting.
Email forward with the Budget subcommittee draft response to the DOR report.
Motions from Mr. Hayner concerning requests for documents.
Superintendent and Arlington School Committee Retreat Posting and Agenda for March 1st.
Email forward from Mr. Curro regarding a piece in Education Week: Sports Rules Shift in Light of Concussion Research.
Email informing the School Committee of the sad news of the passing last week of longtime Finance Committee member Erin Phelps.
Email forward from the Superintendent regarding a Sabbatical Request and Details.
Email response from the Chair and Mr. Hayner regarding a parent's concerns for her child.
Draft ASC Minutes from 12/22/11, 1/12/12 and 2/9/12.
Letter from Kerry Dunne to SC regarding approval of AHS model congress trip and trip to Japan in July.
Copy of 2012 Arlington Community Education Summer Fun Brochure.
Invitation to METCO 3rd Annual Evening of Champions Dinner Dance on May 11th at the Quincy Marriott Hotel.
Copy of February 10, 2012 letter from MSBA to the Town Manager regarding the Thompson project.
Copy of January 13, 2012 letter from Dr. Bodie to Mr. John Cole Chair of the Permanent Town Building Committee regarding her request to be appointed or a designee to be appointed as a representative of the APS.
Copy of February 20, 2012 letter from Ms. Harriet Goldin, President of the Goldin Foundation to Paula Nicholas, French teacher at the OMS, and Sabata D'Agostino, Music Director/Conductor, recognizing their nominations as outstanding educators with invitation to April 3rd Goldin Foundation Educators Forum.
Email from Dr. Bodie regarding Assistant Superintendent Screening Committee.
Approved Minutes from 2/3/12 Policies and Procedures Subcommittee Meeting.
Information regarding ACMI workshop schedule March 2012.
AHS The Principal's Office Newsletter February 2012.
Ponder Report February 2012.*

Executive Session

***Mr. Curro moved to enter into Executive Session at 10:25 p.m. To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with union and/or nonunion personnel or contract negotiations with union and/or nonunion in which if held in an open meeting may have a detrimental effect and To conduct strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation, in which if held in an open meeting may have a detrimental effect, Collective bargaining may also be conducted, ant to exit out of Executive Session only to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Heigham
Roll Call: Unanimous
Voted: 7-0***

Adjourn

***Mr. Curro moved to exit out of Executive Session to adjourn at 10:34 p.m, seconded by Mr. Pierce.
Roll Call: unanimous
Voted: 7-0***

Respectfully submitted by

*Karen M. Fitzgerald
Administrative Assistant
Arlington School Committee*