



**Town of Arlington, Massachusetts**  
730 Massachusetts Ave., Arlington, MA 02476  
Phone: 781-316-3000

**webmaster@town.arlington.ma.us**

## **School Committee Minutes 4/26/2012**

*Approved by the Arlington School Committee June 7, 2012*

*Arlington School Committee  
Regular Meeting  
Thursday, April 26, 2012  
6:30 p.m.  
Arlington High School  
School Committee Room – Sixth Floor  
869 Massachusetts Avenue  
Arlington, MA 02476*

**Present:** *Dr. Kirsi Allison-Ampe, Chair, Mr. Judson Pierce, Vice Chair, Ms. Leba Heigham, Secretary, Mr. Jeff Thielman, Ms. Cindy Starks and Mr. William Hayner.*

*Dr. Kathleen Bodie, Superintendent, Ms. Diane Johnson, Chief Financial Officer, Mr. Robert Spiegel, Human Resource Officer, Ms. Siobhan Foley, AEA Representative, Ms. Ashley Smith and Ms. Caroline Merta, Student Representatives and Ms. Karen Fitzgerald, Administrative Assistant*

**Absent:** *Dr. Wallis Raemer, Interim Assistant Superintendent, Ms. Kathleen Lockyer, Interim Special Education Director and AAA Representative.*

*Ms. Johnson exited the meeting at 7:57 p.m. and returned 7:59 p.m.*

*Student Reps exited the meeting at 8:04 p.m.*

*Ms. Foley exited the meeting at 8:37 p.m.*

### Opening Remarks

*Dr. Kirsi Allison-Ampe opened the meeting at 6:35 p.m. and had a moment of silence in remembrance of Shariah Ali, former Arlington students who sadly passed away during April vacation. Dr. Allison-Ampe appreciated all the support from the Guidance staff and community during this very difficult time.*

### Public Participation

*Ms. Jerri Newman, SEPAC, Co-Chair, 2011-2012 spoke on the failed search for the Director of Special Education and requests the School Committee to appoint people to research the hiring process and provide feedback to them.*

*Dr. Allison-Ampe welcomed the two students representatives to tonight's meeting, Ms. Ashley Smith and Ms. Caroline Metra.*

### Update on Committee Vacancy and Commencement of Unexpired Term Fulfillment BBBE Process

*Dr. Allison-Ampe stated that when a vacancy occurs in the membership of the School Committee, the remaining members of the School Committee shall, after a one week's notice, fill such vacancy by ballot. The School Committee did inform the public through all available media, including the School Department's website, Arlington Advocate and other media that a position on the School Committee is vacant. All candidates shall be invited to an open meeting on Thursday, May 3, 2012 from 8:00 -10:00 p.m. make a case for their appointment, and each member of the School Committee may ask the candidates questions. The appearance of the candidates will be determined by lot prior to the first speaker. The order of the questions from School Committee members shall be by rotation. The Chair of the School Committee has the discretion to set an appropriate time limit for each candidate's presentation and for questioning by the School Committee. The following six candidates are, Karen Bjorkman,*

David Brecht, Jim Flanagan, Len Kardon, Andrew O'Brien, and Paul Schlichtman. One candidate did not qualify as a registered voter. Once all candidates have presented, the School Committee shall take a roll call vote to select the new member. Balloting shall continue until one candidate secures a majority. The candidate with the least amount of votes shall be excluded in the next round of balloting. Upon winning a majority, the new member shall begin service on the School Committee after taking the oath of office.~

#### Additional Subcommittee Appointments

Dr. Allison-Ampe suggested the creation of a temporary Legal Services Review committee and to appoint herself to the Salary Group committee.

#### New Legal Services Review Subcommittee

**Mr. Thielman moved that the School Committee create a temporary Legal Services Review Subcommittee, as allowed by Policy BDE, for the purposes of examining the expenditures on legal services: documenting legal needs around special education disputes; and performing other work as appropriate. Scope of examination is to include the current fiscal year, and as far back in time as the Legal Services Review Subcommittee feels it needs to analyze for useful comparisons. Subcommittee is to deliver a report by the first meeting in October 2012, seconded by Mr. Hayner.**

**Voted: 6-0**

**Mr. Thielman moved to appoint, Dr. Allison-Ampe, Mr. Pierce, and Mr. Hayner to the Legal Service Review Subcommittee, seconded by Mr. Hayner.**

**Voted: 6-0**

#### Salary Group

**Mr. Thielman moved to nominate Dr. Allison-Ampe to serve as the School Committee representative on the Salary Group, seconded by Ms. Starks.**

**Voted: 6-0**

#### Updates on hiring and searches

Dr. Bodie updated the School Committee members on the failed search of the Special Education Director, High School Principal and the Stratton School Principal, even after extending the search time for another month for the two of these positions. Dr. Bodie said various reasons such as candidates accepting other offers, candidates withdrawing and candidates not being the right fit, Dr. Bodie could not extend offers to fill our vacancy. Dr. Bodie informed the committee that many districts are facing similar circumstances, and about 17 districts are searching for a Special Education Director and suggested to the School Committee that a discussion be had on hiring a firm to do additional networking.

Dr. Bodie has hired Ms. Kathleen Lockyer as Interim Special Education Director and Ms. Mary Villano as Interim Principal of the High School for one more year and will re-open the search for the Stratton Principal. If we should not find the right candidate for the Stratton search, Dr. Bodie plans to appoint an Interim Principal for next year.

Dr. Bodie said she will bring forth a candidate for Assistant Superintendent on May 10<sup>th</sup> for the School Committee's approval and pointed out the district is still searching for Director of Math, and will advertise for the Metco Director position, since Mr. Pereira is retiring after thirty years of service.

#### Update on Thompson Rebuild

Ms. Diane Johnson said the Thompson Rebuild Committee has switched their meeting nights from Wednesdays to Tuesdays due to Thompson Rebuild now falling under Permanent Town Building Committee and they meet on Tuesdays and many are serving on the same two committees. They will meet Tuesday, May 1, 2012 at 6:30 p.m. at Town Hall Annex. The Thompson School project is still on schedule and ground breaking will be soon.

#### Monthly Financial Report

Ms. Diane Johnson had provided the committee with the Monthly Financial Reports at the April 12<sup>th</sup> meeting and said she will provide year end budgets soon and review purchase orders and see where funds are available in the budget, then the administration can decide where to spend the surplus money.

#### Town Meeting Update:

Warrant Articles, 2012

*Dr. Kirsi Allison-Ampe confirmed with committee members that a member would be available at Town Meeting to speak to school-related warrant articles. The following Articles will have the following School Committee member or Administrator available at Town Meeting.*

Article 12: Vote Bylaw Amendment/Human Resources Department (Mr. Thielman, Dr. Bodie)  
Article 13: Bylaw Amendment/ Budget Submissions (none)  
Article 14: Bylaw Amendment/ Municipal Charges Liens-School Fees (Dr. Allison-Ampe)  
Article 19: Personnel Bylaw Amendment/ Vacation Carryover (Mr. Spiegel)  
Article 26: Establish Committee/ Building Maintenance (Mr. Hayner)  
Article 27: Transfer of Real Property/ Gibbs Jr High School (Ms. Heigham)  
Article 32: Report/ Implementation of Consolidated Town-School Finance Dept (none)  
Article 33: Home Rule Legislation/ Municipal Finance Department (no action)  
Article 36: Endorsement of CDBG Application (Mr. Hayner)  
Article 37: Revolving Funds (none)  
Article 40: Appropriation/ Town Budgets (School Committee members, Administration) (none)  
Article 44: Appropriation/ Court Judgment in favor of Minuteman Regional Vocational Technical School District (none)  
Article 45: Appropriation/ Minuteman Regional Vocational Technical High School (none)  
Article 46: Vote/ Establish Minuteman Regional Vocational Technical High School Stabilization Fund (none)  
Article 47: Appropriation/ Special Education Reserve Account (Dr. Allison-Ampe)  
Article 58: Appropriation/ Arlington High School Concussion Reduction Program (TM members)

Special Town Meeting:

Article 7: Capital Budget/ Thompson School (Ms. Johnson)  
Article 41: Capital Budget (Ms. Johnson)

#### Approval of METCO Director Job Description

*Mr. Robert Spiegel said that the current METCO Director plans to retire after thirty years and the following job description has been reviewed and revised to include Academic Liaison, K-12.*

***Mr. Thielman moved to approve the METCO Program Director/Academic Liaison, K-12 Job Description as amended to insert "or" between social worker, counselor required, seconded by Ms. Heigham.***

***Voted: 6-0***

#### Superintendent Report

*Dr. Kathleen Bodie informed the committee that the new Kindergarten students for 2012-2013 will be doing assessments the Thursday and Friday before they start school on Monday, September 10<sup>th</sup>. Dr. Bodie also informed the committee that she plans to bring the 2012-2013 School Calendar forward on May 10<sup>th</sup> for the committee's approval.*

#### Update on 2011-2012 District Goals

*Dr. Kathleen Bodie gave a brief update on District Goal 2 which is to improve communication between schools and parents. Dr. Bodie said the district has already improved communication with Alert Now Communication systems and said parents are utilizing Power School portals to look up student's attendance and students grades. Dr. Bodie also spoke of assessment software being used in the elementary classrooms and said is a great way to share written assessments. Dr. Bodie said Goal 3 is to support district initiatives and learning environments and to implement tech tools and to continue to implement the technology plan. Dr. Bodie said the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade wing of the Ottoson Middle School is now wireless and sights at the Elementary Schools are too. The high school will be the hardest to wire but the Learning Center/Media Center is wireless. Dr. Bodie said that many special education classrooms have iPads and students are using these with certain learning applications.*

*Ms. Johnson provided the School Committee details of improvements around the collection of fees for Kindergarten, bus and athletics. Dr. Allison-Ampe suggested that the Budget Subcommittee or Policies and Procedures Subcommittee review the Promissory Fee forms parents are signing. The committee briefly discussed if Warrant Article 14: Bylaw Amendment/ Municipal Charges Liens-School Fees would pass maybe the committee should wait to meet and discuss the forms in case they need to be changed and the committee agreed to wait to finalize the forms but then the following motion was made.*

***Mr. Thielman moved to have the Budget Subcommittee review the Arlington Public School Promissory Fee Forms which parents are required to sign, seconded by Mr. Hayner.***

***Voted: 6-0***

#### Subcommittee & Liaison Reports

*Policies & Procedures, Mr. J. Pierce – none*

*Budget, Ms. C. Starks – none*

*Community Relations, Ms. L. Heigham will be setting up a meeting soon.*

*Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment & Accountability, Mr. J. Thielman – none*

*Facilities, Mr. W. Hayner – none*

*Kindergarten Advisory Committee-Mr. W. Hayner said a copy of the approved minutes were included in the packets and said his goal is to bring the full report of the Kindergarten Advisory Committee to the full committee at the last meeting in May, but may need additional time.*

*Legal Services Review, K. Allison-Ampe - none*

*Chair, K. Allison-Ampe – Mr. Hayner asked the chair to bring forward Executive Session minutes for the committee to review and approve. Mr. Hayner also suggested that a subcommittee be formed to draft contracts for the Chief Financial Officers, Special Education Interim Director and other contracts. Mr. Hayner would also like to receive additional input from MASC on models for the Superintendent’s Evaluation and to have the Policies and Procedures or Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Subcommittee meet to review policies and the evaluation process.*

*Consent Agenda*

*Mr. Thielman moved to approve the Consent Agenda, Approval of Warrant: Warrant # 12137 Dated, April 5, 2012 , Total Amount: \$229,987.86, and Warrant # 12145 Dated, April 12, 2012, Total Amount: \$396,990.75, seconded by Mr. Hayner. Voted: 6-0*

*Secretary’s Report*

*Ms. Heigham reported on all correspondence received*

*Executive Session*

*Ms. Heigham moved to enter into Executive Session at 8:36 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 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 and to exit only for the purpose for adjournment, seconded by Ms. Starks.*

*Roll Call: Mr. Hayner Yes, Ms. Starks Yes, Mr. Thielman Yes, Ms. Heigham Yes, Mr. Pierce Yes, and Dr. Allison-Ampe Yes. Voted: 6-0*

*Adjourn*

*Mr. Hayner moved to adjourn at 9:04 p.m. seconded by Ms. Starks.*

*Voted: 6-0*

*Respectfully submitted by*

*Karen Fitzgerald*

*Administrative Assistant*

*Arlington School Committee*