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School Committee Minutes 07/02/2009

*Approved by the School Committee October 27, 2009
and enter ACMI video into the record*

**THE ARLINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY JULY 2, 2009
7:30 P.M.**

Present: Joe Curran, Chair, Denise Burns, Vice Chair
Joe Curro, Secretary, Leba Heigham
Ronald Spangler

Interim Superintendent: Kathleen Bodie
Interim Asst Superintendent: Wallis Raemer
Chief Financial Officer: Sue Mazzarella

Excused Absence: Jeff Thielman
Cindy Starks
Mark Ryder, Special Education Director

Mr. Curran exited the meeting at 8:30 and returned at 8:33 p.m.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mary Cummings, Ottoson Middle School Special Education Teacher, spoke about the Readiness Project group and continues holding meetings with various groups and legislators.

Gina Yarbrough expressed support for Dr. Bodie's proposal for hiring two interim directors for the Fine Arts Department.

Diane Briner voiced support for Dr. Bodie's proposal for hiring two interim directors for the Fine Arts Department.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Ms. Heigham moved to enter into Executive Session at 7:50 p.m. to conduct strategy session with respect to collective bargaining; collective bargaining may also be conducted, seconded by Dr. Spangler.

Voted 4-1

Roll Call: Ms. Heigham – Yes, Mr. Curro - Yes, Ms. Burns – No, Mr. Curran – Yes, Dr. Spangler – Yes.

Ms. Burns excused herself, stating that she will not go into Executive Sessions, due to trust issues with other committee members.

Dr. Spangler moved to exit from Executive Session at 8:00 p.m. and return to the regular meeting, seconded by Ms. Heigham.

Voted 4-0

Roll Call Ms. Heigham – Yes, Mr. Curro - Yes, Mr. Curran – Yes, and Dr. Spangler – Yes.

DISCUSSION OF FY 10 BUDGET

Dr. Bodie announced that the Budget was signed by the Governor, after she and Ms. Mazzarella reviewed the models they determined cuts from tier 3 and 4 would be are needed. Ms. Mazzarella explained the budget and the saving offsets.

Dr. Bodie welcomed Dr. Raemer to her first School Committee meeting in her role as the Interim Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction.

The discussion included concerns with the creation of a K/1 Classroom. Dr. Raemer explained that parents and teachers have been meeting on the new classroom and it was noted that the curriculum would continue to be consistent.

Dr. Spangler moved that the School Committee approve the following changes to the previously voted FY 2010 budget,

Reduce high school and district wide stipends budget by \$18,500

Reduce athletics budget by \$10,000

Reduce teaching assistants budget by \$16,000

Reduce elementary classroom teaching staff budget by \$48,500

Reduce high school house dean budget by \$46,000

Reduce electricity supply & delivery budget by \$25,000 and

Reduce central office operations staff budget by \$19,000, for total reductions \$177,500 seconded by Ms. Heigham.

Dr. Spangler made the motion for moving the budget discussion along tonight.

The discussion between the committee and Mr. Skidmore was on clarification on the ratio number with having just two House Deans, reduction of other high school staff and on reduction of Administrative Assistants in the Central office.

Mr. Curro amended the motion to strike the high school house dean reduction proposed budgeted by \$46,000, to double the elementary classroom teacher reduction by \$97,000 and reduce electricity supply and delivery budget by \$22,500, Seconded by Ms. Burns.

Voted 4-1, Dr. Spangler No

Roll Call: Ms. Heigham – Yes, Mr. Curro - Yes, Ms. Burns – Yes, Mr. Curran – Yes, Dr. Spangler – No.

Motion amended

After Ms. Mazzarella reviewed the numbers of the proposed budget reductions, Ms. Mazzarella stated that the motion that was just voted and approved running total was \$183,000, instead of the \$177,500.

Dr. Spangler moved to amend the motion to put back in to the Central Office operations of \$4,500. Ms. Heigham recommended leaving \$25,000 reduction proposal for the electricity supply and delivery budget and putting back \$2,500 to Central Office.

Dr. Spangler withdrew his amendment.

Ms. Heigham moved to amend to reduce the electricity supply and delivery budget back to \$25,000 and reduce the Central Office operations staff by \$12,000 to total \$178,500 reductions, seconded by Dr. Spangler.

After additional review of the numbers, Ms. Heigham modified her amendment to reduce the Central Office Operations by \$11,000, seconded by Dr. Spangler.

Voted 5-0 unanimous

The original motion made by Dr. Spangler with the following amendments for a total of \$177,500 in additional reductions and cost savings.

Reduce high school and district wide stipends budget by \$18,500

Reduce athletics budget by \$10,000

Reduce teaching assistants budget by \$16,000

Reduce elementary classroom teaching staff budget by \$97,000

Reduce electricity supply & delivery budget by 25,000 and

Reduce central office operations staff budget by \$11,000, seconded by Ms. Heigham
Voted 5-0 unanimous

CONSENT AGENDA all items listed with an asterisk (*) are considered to be routine and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a member of the committee so request, in which event the item will be considered in its normal sequence.

***Approval of Warrant # 09179 dated June 23 2009 Total Warrant Amount \$608,628.46**

***Minutes to be approved: June 2, 2009**

Ms. Heigham moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented, seconded by Mr. Curro.
Voted: 4-1, Ms. Burns voting No

SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

Dr. Kathleen Bodie asked that the School Committee members make a motion to approve her proposal to hire two part-time Interim Arts Directors for 2009 – 2010 school year, and stated her belief that no job description is needed due to the fact that the position will not be changing.

Mr. Curro moved to approve Dr. Bodie's proposal to hire two part time Interim Directors, one for Fine Arts and one for Music, seconded by Ms. Heigham.

The committee seemed to be in agreement to split the job but most requested to have the job descriptions of each position presented.

Dr. Spangler moved to amend that the School Committee resolves in principal its support for splitting the Fine Arts into two positions for one year but reserves final approval until the committee is able to review the job description, seconded by Mr. Curro.

Dr. Spangler moved to amend the amendment to include that the School Committee requests to see the job descriptions for the two positions, seconded by Ms. Burns.

Dr. Bodie explained to the committee that the two positions would be split but will not be considered full time. Dr. Bodie will present the job descriptions to the committee at our next meeting.

*The committee continued the discussion on the process of posting the job, the position being interim versus permanent and who will do the evening duties for the Fine Arts department. Mr. Curran and Mr. Curro agree that we should seek a legal opinion regarding the necessary procedure. **Dr. Spangler withdrew the substitute motion. Mr. Curro withdrew the original motion.***

Mr. Curro moved to have the chair of the School Committees requests an advisory opinion from our contracted attorney, Stoneman, Chandler and Miller, regarding the options available to us in filling interim positions, by Dr. Spangler.
Voted 5:0

Dr. Spangler moved to refer questions on the Chief Financial Officers (CFO) salary to the Budget Subcommittee and to have the subcommittee work with the Superintendent to check comparables, including the information provided to us by the Superintendent and then come back to the full committee with a recommend salary range and the budget implications, seconded by Ms. Heigham.
Voted 5-0

The committee had asked for the Budget Subcommittee to review all aspects for filling the position of the CFO.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Mr. Curro reported on the amount of correspondence received in support of Dr. Bodie's proposal for the Fine Arts and Performing Arts Director. A letter was received on the way the committee was conducting it self at meetings. Mr. Curro said the following three committees are requesting appointments from the Arlington School Committee: 1) the Town wide PTO; 2) the Arlington Schools Foundation; and 3) the Town Government Reorganization Committee.

ROUNDTABLE

Ms. Burns announced her upcoming Policy and Procedures Subcommittee meetings and will be held at the Arlington

Community Safety Building during the summer. The discussion will be on creating a policy on how to proceed with various requests such as the cell tower

Ms. Heigham provided a Community Relations Subcommittee update, discussing a proposed fee reduction fund that had been discussed by the subcommittee with proponents from Vision 2020.

***Ms. Heigham moved to refer to the Policy and Procedures Subcommittee the question of establishing a policy and/or investigating the applicability of existing policies, including seeking legal opinions and mechanisms for the establishment regarding the Arlington Fees Fund with language around how to administer and disburse funds when the School Committee is the collecting agent, seconded by Mr. Curro.
Voted 5-0***

Ms. Heigham included language in the motion to seek legal opinion as recommended by Ms. Burns.

Mr. Curro offered an Independence Day Reflection on what the committee has been working through and asked the committee to reflect on recent events, and the responsibility the committee holds.

Mr. Curran is seeking volunteers from members of the School Committee for the three openings Mr. Curro announced.

Ms. Heigham reflected on the dynamics of our last meeting and noted she had received personal emails regarding School Committee meetings in the past. Ms. Heigham had noted at the last meeting when the mistake was made with in the budget book that the Superintendent and the CFO took full responsibility and apologized to the public and now the School Committee needed to apologize for not getting the correct information to the public.

Point of Clarification – Ms. Burns asked if Ms. Heigham has received additional letters other than the one letter the committee received. Ms. Heigham pointed out that she received personal emails and maybe others did, too.

After reviewing the past fifteen Budget Books that had been sent to Town Meeting, Ms. Mazzarella stated that no two Budget Books were the same and suggested to the School Committee that they define what materials should be presented to Town Meeting in the future. Ms. Burns continued to express her concerns with Ms. Mazzarella and Dr. Bodie on the materials presented in the Budget Book to Town Meeting this year.

ADJOURNMENT

***Dr. Spangler moved to adjourn at 9:50 p.m., seconded by Ms. Burns
Voted 5-0***

*Respectfully submitted by
Karen M. Fitzgerald
Administrative Assistant
Arlington School Committee ljc*