



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

webmaster@town.arlington.ma.us

School Committee Minutes Special Meeting 09/04/2008

Approved by School Committee September 23, 2008

**THE ARLINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 2008
7:30 PM**

Present: School Committee Members:

Chair, Denise Burns, Vice Chair, Joe Curran, Joe Curro, Leba Heigham, Secretary Ronald Spangler, and Jeff Thielman.

Superintendent: Interim Superintendent: Kathleen Bodie, Director of Special Education, Mark Ryder Chief Financial Officer, Sue Mazzarella,

Absent: Sue Sheffler

Public Participation

(only related to Superintendent Search and process)

Mr. Josh Lobel appreciates Kathleen Bodie stepping up and encouraged the School Committee members to fill the position within and work for stability.

Outline of Objectives

Ms. Denise Burns outlined the objectives of tonight's meeting and why the committee asked her to bring in experts from MASC and MASS to receive information to help with the process to look for a superintendent or interim superintendent. Ms. Burns also acknowledged all the work Ms. Bodie has been doing over the few weeks and appreciates keeping the schools run smoothly.

Experts Opinion

Mr. Glen Koocher, Executive Director of Massachusetts Associations for School Committee spoke on how a transition begins and noted that Arlington is a very attractive community and what has happened over that past few months is now history and we need to move forward. Mr. Koocher noted we have plenty of time to deal with the long-term administrative issues, and he knows of candidates available, but is confident we will do well with our choice. Mr. Koocher noted that the MASC has the resources to help support the search for a superintendent or an interim superintendent with no financial interest and is committed to support our School Committee today, next week or next year.

Mr. Tom Scott, Executive Director of Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents stressed to the committee that a candidate would look at how the Arlington School Committee is as a group and how they work with the community and work towards consensus and an attractive community to bring in great candidates. We will have competition with other communities and we need to get out front with the process.

Q&A School Committee members

The committee members asked about the difference on the length of contract for an interim superintendent 1 year vs. 2 year and if the interim superintendent can be part of the pool of candidates. Mr. Koocher said it's all about what the School Committee wants. Some districts have selected an interim to serve a two-year period for specific reasons. Mr. Koocher said interim candidates could be considered a candidate. He also noted with media, faculty and the community doing reference checking on their own, some candidates would not compete with an internal candidate due to the public nature of the search process.

The cost of the search process was raised and if committee members do own search it is rather small cost but if

recruiters were involved it would range from \$15,000 - \$80,000. The committee itself would be looked at by candidates and it was recommended that the MASS offers a transitions team building program for School Committee members and at no cost to Arlington and this could be very productive and would take three to four months to complete. Tom noted looking forward a school committee needs to hire a candidate that is a school plan leader and needs to deal with many issues and meet the needs of each School Committee. Experienced superintendents are no guarantee to fit the schools needs and each candidate's needs common sense and can bring various experiences.

Subcommittee Appointment

Ms. Burns the chair of the School Committee would like to appoint Ms. Leba Heigham, Mr. Jeff Thielman and herself to the Subcommittee of the Superintendent Search Process to investigate hiring a superintendent or interim superintendent.

Interim Search decision

Mr. Ron Spangler motioned that we create a subcommittee and the chair be charged with making recommendations for an Interim Superintendent, by date certain, September 9, 2008 and charged with recommending a process to be used for searching for a permanent Superintendent, by date certain, September 23, 2008.

Vote 6:0

The committee stressed the importance on the options and will consult the MASC and MASS and work together on the search process.

Ms. Leba Heigham point of privilege acknowledged Ms. Bodie on the Interim Superintendent and the duties she has already done.

Mr. Curro also exercised a point of personal privilege to praise Ms. Bodie and in particular the work she did to ensure a smooth opening day.

Interim Superintendent Bodie wanted Arlington to know how great the teachers and the leaders are and thanked the team.

Other (superintendency-related) business

Adjourn

Mr. Curran motioned to adjourn at 8:55pm with Ms. Leba Heigham seconding the motion.

Vote 6:0

Unanimous

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