



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

webmaster@town.arlington.ma.us

Minutes 7-26-2006

**THE ARLINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, JULY 26, 2006**

Present: Sue Sheffler, Chair
Susan Lovelace, Vice Chair
Paul Schlichtman, Secretary
Kathy Fennelly

Sean Garballey
Jeff Thielman
Martin Thrope

Superintendent: Nate Levenson
Asst. Supt. Kevin Hutchinson
Sp. Ed. Director: Barbara Cataldo
Student Rep.: Sean Conroy

Call to Order: 7:30

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Rose Udics and Carol Ober, Ottoson Middle School parents, addressed the Committee relative to the after school options at the middle school for September 2006. They requested that the School Committee remain committed to quality after school programs for students.

Maria Simoneau and Bob Shatten of Sustainable Arlington wind presented a proposal for a feasibility study to put a wind turbine near Brackett. The School Committee would have to approve to move forward with grant application in order for the Town to submit an application by August 17th for a grant that would support a wind feasibility study.

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 requests, in which event the item will be considered in its normal sequence.

- *Approval of Warrant # 06176 in the amount of \$478,117.76
- *Approval of Warrant #06180 in the amount of \$262,860.73

On a motion by Mr. Schlichtman seconded by Ms. Lovelace it was Voted to approve the consent agenda as presented.

21st CENTURY SKILLS. KNOWLEDGE HABITS OF MIND

Supt. Levenson explained that the summary of the research is a result of forums conducted with 321 participants, 218, staff, parent, and student surveys, many hours of group discussion, 12 articles, 2 think tanks and 3 books.

The Superintendent made a powerpoint presentation of What skills, knowledge and habits of mind will best prepare our students for the 21st century?

Nate then reviewed the seven broad changes that have been identified; which in turn suggest 20 potential changes for the Arlington Public Schools. All groups agreed with four habits of mind:

- .. Persisting (another name for work ethic)
- .. Listening to others with understanding and empathy (teamwork)
- .. Thinking and communicating with clarity and precision
- .. Learning continuously (adaptability)

Supt. Levenson emphasized that there needs to be more discussion with all involved, it remains a district goal and will be part of the 2007-2008 school budget.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

WindPower

Supt. Levenson reported that the district has been asked to participate in a wind power feasibility study. The application costs \$5,000.00 but if the grant is approved it could provide up to \$40,000 for the study. The Superintendent requested input from the Committee asking if this is a direction that they wish to pursue. Mr. Levenson did note that this would be a major issue, and pointed out that it could present a time constraint for his staff.

Ms. Simoneau reported that the Town Manager, Brian Sullivan agreed to pay half of the \$5000. with the school picking up the other half of the cost. There was some concern voiced by the Committee with the time constraint on the Central Administration.

On a motion by Ms. Fennelly seconded by Mr. Thielman it was
Voted that the School Committee takes the next step to support participate in the application for the wind feasibility study.
Unanimous

Cell Tower Rental

The district has been approached to rent space for a cell tower on one or more of our schools. Supt. Levenson questioned if this is something that the Committee wishes to pursue. Nate stated that the schools could receive approximately \$1000 -\$2000 rent per month.

On a motion by Ms. Fennelly seconded by Mr. Thielman it was
Voted to move forward with the investigation and work with the budget subcommittee on the cell towers. Mr. Thrope amended the motion to read that due consideration be given to the community on the issue.
Unanimous vote.

School Lunch Price

Mr. Levenson informed the Committee that due to rising costs (energy, food) Food Director Rob Rice has requested an increase in the lunch menu. The increase at the elementary level would be from \$2.00 to \$2.25 with a similar increase at the secondary levels.

On a motion by Ms. Fennelly seconded by Ms. Lovelace it was
Voted to increase the price of lunch at the elementary schools to \$2.25 as recommended by Supt. Levenson. 7-0

On a motion by Mr. Thrope seconded by Mr. Thielman it was unanimously
Voted to refer increases at the secondary level to the budget subcommittee review and for solutions for a sliding fee schedule at the secondary level.

Centralized Calendar

The Superintendent reported that one outcome of the administrator's retreat was the decision to create a district wide web based calendar of all school events; this should be up and running sometime in September.

Ottoson After school

Supt. Levenson explained that there has been a temporary setback in the Ottoson After School Program. After much work and research into a new program, the Boys and Girls Club decided that it would not be a good fit. Nate emphasized that the commitment for an after school program has not faltered but that there probably will not be a program up and running before January.

Community Partnership

Leader Bank and Bowes Real Estate would like to propose a community-school partnership. Mr. Levenson noted that based on the Hardy school pilot program he believes that it will help students, staff, parents, and recruiting/retention issues and strongly endorses the concept. Leader Bank and Bowes Real estate would like to present a proposal to the Community Relations Subcommittee.

On a motion by Mr. Schlichtman seconded by Mr. Thielman it was unanimously:
Voted to support the community-school partnership concept proposal by Leader Bank and Bowes Real Estate.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

Proposed Motion for School Calendar

Move to accept the holiday calendar as listed below for the "informational" section of the regular school calendar (bottom half).

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Arlington is enriched by the cultural and religious diversity of its community and teaching staff.

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The Arlington School Committee publishes this list to inform our community of days in which students may be participating in observances with their families.

Parents should inform teachers when observances may conflict with school activities.

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Please notify your principal if you observe a holiday that is not included in this list.

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2006

Rosh Hashanah (Jewish) September 23-24, 2006*
First Day of Ramadan (Islamic) September 24, 2006
Yom Kippur (Jewish) October 2, 2006*
Succoth (Jewish) October 7-8, 2006*
Shemini Atzeret (Jewish) October 14, 2006*
Simchat Torah (Jewish) October 15, 2006*
Diwali (Hindu) October 21, 2006
Eid ul-Fitr (last day of Ramadan) (Islamic) October 22-24, 2006
All Saints Day (Christian) November 1, 2006
Birthday of Guru Nanak Dev Sahib (Sikh) November 5, 2006
Birth of Baha'u'llah (Baha'i) November 12, 2006
Feast of the Immaculate Conception (Christian) December 8, 2006
First Day (of eight days) of Hanukkah (Jewish) December 16, 2006*

2007

Eid ul-Adha (Islamic) December 31, 2006 - January 2, 2007
Chinese (Asian Lunar) New Year February 18, 2007
Ash Wednesday (Christian) February 21, 2007
Magha Puja (Dharma) Day (Buddhist) March 3, 2007
Purim (Jewish) March 4, 2007*
Passover – first two days (Jewish) April 2 – 3, 2007*
Maundy Thursday (Christian) April 5, 2007
Good Friday (Christian) April 6, 2007
Holy Friday (Eastern Orthodox) April 6, 2007
Easter (Christian) April 8, 2007
Easter (Eastern Orthodox) April 8, 2007
Passover – last two days (Jewish) April 9 - 10, 2007*
Baisakhi (Sikh) April 13, 2007
Buddha Day (Buddhist) May 2, 2007
Feast of the Ascension (Christian) May 17, 2007
Feast of the Ascension (Eastern Orthodox) May 17, 2007
Shavu'ot (Jewish) May 23 – 24, 2007*
Ascension of Baha'u'llah (Baha'i) May 29, 2007
*Jewish holidays begin at sundown on the previous evening.

*On a motion by Mr. Schlichtman seconded by Ms. Fennelly it was
Voted to accept the holiday calendar as an informational section of the 2006-2007 school calendar. Unanimous vote.*

MERIT PAY SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Thielman reported that the School Committee has awarded Supt. Levenson 60 points to date. The Merit Pay Subcommittee met on July 24th and reviewed and voted on the remaining goals.

*On a motion by Mr. Thielman seconded by Ms. Lovelace it was
Voted to award Supt. Levenson 4.75 points on Goal One, Measure 1: Corrective Action Plan.
6-1-0 Abstention by Mr. Thrope.*

*On a motion by Mr. Thielman seconded by Ms. Lovelace it was
Voted to award Supt. Levenson 2 points on Goal One, Measure 3: Special Education Survey.
5-2-0 Mr. Garballey & Mr. Thrope abstained.*

*On a motion by Mr. Thielman seconded by Ms. Lovelace it was
Voted to award Supt. Levenson 2.5 points on Goal Two, Measure 1: Essential standards K-9 in math and writing. 6-1-0
Abstention by Mr. Thrope.*

*On a motion by Mr. Thielman seconded by Ms. Lovelace it was
Voted to award Supt. Levenson 2.5 points on Goal Two, Measure 2: Common assessments K-9 in math and writing. 6-1-0
Abstention by Mr. Thrope*

*On a motion by Mr. Thielman seconded by Ms. Lovelace it was
Voted to award Supt. Levenson 5 points on Goal Three, Measure 3: 2006-07 Professional Development Plan. Abstention by Mr.
Thrope*

*On a motion by Mr. Thielman seconded by Ms. Lovelace it was
Voted to award Supt. Levenson 4 points on Goal Four, Measure 4: Survey of 21st century skills.
6-1-0 Abstention by Mr. Thrope.*

*On a motion by Mr. Thielman seconded by Ms. Lovelace it was
Voted to award Supt. Levenson 4 points on Goal Four, Measure 5: Document justifying desired skills for 21st century. 6-1 Mr.*

Thrope with a no vote

On a motion by Mr. Thielman seconded by Ms. Lovelace it was Voted to award Supt. Levenson 2 points on Goal Five, Measure 4: Shifting of resources to meet district goals. 6-1-0 Abstention by Mr. Thrope

.. On a motion by Mr. Thielman seconded by Mr. Lovelace it was Voted to award Supt. Levenson 2 points on Goal Five, Measure 5: Budget survey. 6-1-0 Abstention by Mr. Thrope.

On a motion by Mr. Thielman seconded by Ms. Lovelace it was Voted to certify that Superintendent Levenson has been awarded at total of 88.75 out of 100 possible points. Per the contract, the merit adjustment will be based on the percentage of points awarded (88.75) and will mean an increase in the Superintendent's salary retroactive to July 1st. 6-1-0 Abstention by Mr. Thrope.

Both Mr. Garballey and Mr. Thrope pointed out that the completion of the goals represents a lot of work from a large number of employees and that they should be commended. Mr. Thrope also noted that the increase is just less than 9% and stated from the start that if the Superintendent receives a 10% increase then, we, as a committee have not done our jobs. Mr. Thielman stated the benefit of the process used this year is that we have the opportunity to create 5 new goals this year; Mr. Thielman also suggested that the process that was used this year be discussed to development improvements.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Community Relations

Mr. Schlichtman reported on the subcommittee meeting.

The following motions were approved by the subcommittee and recommended to the full committee for approval. Mr. Schlichtman pointed out that the motions address the process and the procedures of what should happen with the track/field.

On a motion by Mr. Schlichtman seconded by Mr. Garballey it was Voted to make the Peirce Field track available to the community when not in use by the Arlington School Department or other permitted users. The track should be available from sunrise until sunset, but hours should be extended when the lights are on and the facility is open for other uses. Unanimous vote

On a motion by Mr. Schlichtman seconded by Mr. Thielman it was Voted to direct the Superintendent to take steps to install signage, pertaining to field use regulations, at the entrance to the football field. Unanimous vote.

Steve Moniak volunteered to layout a sign for the field at no cost to the town, provided the town told him what information should be placed on the sign, and would encourage the Arlington Soccer Club to pay for the signage costs out of their field fund. Mr. Moniak also urged that the field use should be affordable for Arlington youth. Mr. Schlichtman thanked and acknowledged the Mr. Moniak's generosity.

On a motion by Mr. Schlichtman and seconded by Mr. Thielman it was Voted to direct the Superintendent to consult with the recreation department pertaining to appropriate fees for lighting and usage for the artificial turf field, as well as priorities for awarding usage, by the first meeting in September. Unanimous vote.

On a motion by Mr. Schlichtman seconded by Mr. Thielman it was Voted to direct the Superintendent to consult with the parks department pertaining to the purchase and use of a machine that would properly maintain the artificial surface, and to investigate purchasing the cart from Unico. Unanimous vote.

On a motion by Mr. Schlichtman seconded by Mr. Thielman it was Voted to direct the Superintendent to ensure the fencing is adequate to carry out the school committee's policy. Unanimous vote.

Policy & Procedures

Policies GCD-E, JH-E-1,

Mr. Garballey presented policies GCD-E Professional Staff and Observance of Major Religious Holidays exhibit and JH-E-1 Student absences for Observance of Major Religious Holidays exhibit for approval. Mr. Garballey noted that these policy exhibits were pulled from the Consent Agenda of a previous meeting and that this is the second reading for both

.. On a motion by Mr. Garballey seconded by Mr. Thrope it was Voted to approve policy exhibit GCD-E Professional Staff and Observance of Major Religious Holidays. 6-1- Mr. Schlichtman

.. On a motion by Mr. Garballey seconded by Mr. Thrope it was Voted to approve policy exhibit JH-E-1 Student Absences for Observance of Major Religious Holidays

On a motion by Ms. Fennelly and seconded it was unanimously Voted to move the 11:00 rule for 15 minutes.

Policy JLCE - Mr. Garballey presented Nutrition and Wellness Policy for approval.

Mr. Schlichtman voiced opposition over adopting an 8-page policy and urged the committee not to approve the policy until the verbiage is separated from the policy itself. After discussion on approving the entire document as policy or to separate it out as supporting documentation Mr. Thrope made the following motion:
Moved to amend approval of the policy and refer it back to the policy & procedures subcommittee for rework/reformatting. Mr. Schlichtman requested a sunset provision with a date certain of December 31, 2006. Voted 7-0.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Correspondence reviewed by Mr. Schlichtman

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Garballey questioned if floor mats for the cheerleaders had been ordered. (yes) If the CAPP program had been cancelled, Nate responded no, but that it would be expanded in a different way. Nate also responded to a question on the transfer of an OMS life skills teacher to AHS and a change in personnel in the CTDS program.

On a motion by Mr. Thrope seconded by Mr. Thielman it was:

Voted to enter executive session for the purpose of negotiations with no further business to be conducted upon the return to open session except to adjourn. Roll Call: Unanimous Vote

Executive Session 11:15 - 11:30 pm.

On a motion by Mr. Thrope seconded by Ms. Lovelace it was
Voted to adjourn @ 11:30 pm

**Submitted by
Karen Tassone
Committee Secretary**