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School Committee Minutes 02/15/2005

THE ARLINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE SPECIAL MEETING TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2005

Present: Paul Schlichtman, Chair
Jeff Thielman, Vice Chair
Martin Thrope, Secretary
Barbara Goodman
Joani LaMachia
Suzanne Owayda
Sue Sheffler

Asst. Supt. Joanne Gurry
CFO: Rob Addelson
Sp. Ed. Director Marilyn Bisbicos

Absent: Supt. Kay Donovan

Call to order: 7:35

Chair Paul Schlichtman announced that Superintendent Donovan was out of town on family business.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

ARLINGTON HIGH SCHOOL STUDIO

AHS sophomores, Cameron Rogers, Michael Loud, Ryan Hurley and Gabriel Gents requested permission from the school committee to direct and utilize the AHS television studio. The students would like to create new programs that would interest students at the high school. Some ideas include sporting events, assemblies, concerts, club related programs and interviews with school officials. Between them the four students have more than six years of experience working at the Arlington Cable Television Studio. Committee members voiced concern over security of the studio and its equipment and supervision of any programs produced and questioned if they have the support of Mr. Skidmore. The students stated that Mr. DiLoreto was their advisor and that he would view any program prior to airing for appropriateness and that they have a meeting with Mr. Skidmore the following day to present their request. Mr. Skidmore, although supportive wanted to speak with the students further and thought that Mr. DiLoreto's time constraints and availability may warrant considering another advisor with more availability. The School Committee supported the students contingent upon Mr. Skidmore's meeting with the students and setting structure and guidelines.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Budget Revenue Task Force Rob Addelson reported that at the BRTF the five-year plan was discussed without an override (where the current budget stands) and with a \$6 million override. The current structural deficit is 3.9 million with shortfalls growing to 11 million in FY2010. Mr. Addelson stated that the next BRTF meeting is February 28th at 6:00 and that the Board of Selectmen may vote to approve the override after that meeting at their own meeting on the 28th. The Committee discussed the pros and cons of going to the Board of Selectmen with an approved or recommended dollar figure and agreed that since Mr. Tosti, chair of Finance Committee was yet to determine an exact dollar amount the School Committee could vote to support an override on the ballot but not name a dollar amount.

Ms. Sheffler pointed out that there was a proposal to increase the override to 7.5 million dollars. Ms. Owayda requested that CFO Rob Addelson work with the assessors office to see what the dollar amount would look like with an override of 6 million, 6.5 million, 7 million and 7.5million dollars.

On a motion by Mr. Thrope seconded by Ms. Goodman it was

Voted to urge the Board of Selectmen to determine that an override be placed on the ballot in June with the exact working amount to be determined.

Dallin School Update – Dr. Gurry reported that the construction of the school is moving on schedule and that Supt.

Donovan believes that the move to the new school will take place sometime during the middle of the school year.

• **Peirce Field Update** – Dr. Gurry reported that the Pierce Field is also on schedule and is hopeful that it will be available for high school graduation in June.

• **PTBC Report** – Ms. Owayda reported that most of the discussion at PTBC is centered on the Dallin School; it is on time and on budget. The PTBC did pick out and approve the brick color for the new building.

• **Report out on Snow Days** - Dr. Gurry stated that there is no new information relative to waivers from the DOE on snow days due to the State of Emergency. Currently the last day of school is Monday, June 27th There is still one more snow day on the calendar.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

• **Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment** Ms. Goodman reported that at its meeting the subcommittee met with the Safe Schools Task Force. In keeping with the goal of safe and drug free schools the task force requested a commitment from the School Committee to support professional development in both system-wide and building based meetings. Dr. Gurry and Cindy Bouvier will work on a document that demonstrates what we currently do in the system and look at possible next steps for APS. Dr. Gurry, AHS principal, Charles Skidmore and Asst. principal, Ellie Freedman presented the changes and recommendations in the AHS 2005-2006 program of studies.

On a motion by Ms. Goodman seconded by Ms. LaMachia it was Unanimously

Voted to approve the Arlington High School 2005-2006 Program of Studies as presented by Charles Skidmore and Elinor Freedman.

Mr. Skidmore reported on “turnitin.org” a pilot program at the high school this year. The program is an internet service that checks students’ research papers for plagiarism. The goal is to make students aware of the importance of research and the consequence of plagiarism. The program is being phased in by department heads, and for the 1st year will be used in an instructive way.

• **Policy & Procedures** - Mr. Thrope reviewed the minutes of the last meeting and reported that a review of the LTA shows that the policy is in place and working well. Mr. Thrope will also follow up with John Maher, Town Counsel on policies related to Title IX. The Committee continued review of section G of the manual and Mr. Thrope brought forth the following policies for a 1st reading.

• **JJ** – Co-Curricular and Extracurricular Activities the addition of paragraph 7.

• **GCA – Professional Staff Positions** change the last sentence from annually to when they are made.

• **GDE/GDF** - Support Staff Recruiting/Posting of Vacancies/Support Staff Hiring. change Assistant Superintendent for Business to Chief Financial Officer.

• **GDC** – Support Staff Leaves and Absences – change as above in GDE

Mr. Schlichtman requested that the subcommittee review policy IL to ensure that we are following policy.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 3, at 4:00

Budget Subcommittee – Mr. Thielman reported that:

1. The subcommittee discussed the Budget process and requested to hold a meeting of the entire School Committee in February or March to review the \$34,280,902 preliminary budget. The meeting will have the following agenda:

• The purpose of the meeting is to review the \$34.3 million budget and to consider proposals from members to amend it.

Members will be invited to ask questions and make proposals about any part of the FY '06 Budget. Any member can make a proposal on any section of the budget.

• Members are asked to let the Superintendent and the Chair know in advance if they would like specific administrators to attend the meeting to answer questions. If they want to address or propose changes in a specific program, they are asked to let the Superintendent and Chair know in advance.

• School Principals will be invited to attend and answer questions as needed.

Committee members will email specific questions or concerns to Supt. Donovan the week of February 21st who will then address them at the Budget Subcommittee meeting on February 28.

Mr. Schlichtman agreed to devote time at the March 8th School Committee meeting for the purpose of budget discussion.

SECRETARY’S REPORT

• **Correspondence** - reviewed by Mr. Thrope. Mr. Thrope will organize the placement of the school committee advertisement in the AHS yearbook.

NEW BUSINESS

• **Schedule Organization Meeting** – On a motion by Ms. Owayda seconded by Ms. LaMachia it was

Voted to schedule the organizational meeting for Tuesday, April 12th at 7:00 and to arrange for new member orientation session prior to that date. 6-0-1 abstention by Ms. Goodman

Mr. Schlichtman noted that members of the committee must declare their intent to run for office to the chair or the secretary by the 1st meeting in March.

• **Budget Transfers** - Mr. Addelson presented the recommendation for budget transfers for the FY2004-2005 school budget.

Mr. Addelson explained that the three factors driving the transfers are; the distribution of \$1.3 million, the reallocation of funds, and \$155,000 in transfers from town to school for custodial and maintenance contract.

On a motion by Mr. Thrope seconded by Ms. Owayda it was

Voted to approve the FY2004-2005 School Budget transfers as presented. 7-0

Mr. Schlichtman announced that he would be appointing an ad hoc committee in technology with the charge of looking at technology issues in the system; Ms. Sheffler will be chair of the committee. Any other member interested in serving should let the chair know.

On a motion by Mr. Owayda seconded by Ms. LaMachia it was Voted to enter executive session

.. To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel, to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel. Roll Call: Unanimous

9:15 – 10:05 EXECUTIVE SESSION

On a motion by Ms. Sheffler seconded by Mr. Thrope it was Voted to adjourn at 10:05 PM 7-0

*Submitted by
Karen Tassone
Committee Secretary*