



**Town of Arlington, Massachusetts**  
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## **School Committee Minutes 06-24-2003**

**THE ARLINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
REGULAR MEETING  
TUESDAY, JUNE 24, 2003**

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

**Superintendent:     Kathleen Donovan**  
**Budget Analyst:     Janet Collins**  
**Special Education Director:   Marilyn Bisbicos**

**Absent:                Joanne Gurry**

**Call to order: 7:00 PM**

### **OPEN MEETING LAW DISCUSSION**

Glenn Koocher, Director of Massachusetts Association of School Committees reviewed the open meeting law for the Committee. Mr. Koocher emphasized that any questions members may have can be addressed through the State Ethics Commission, the District Attorney's office, or MASC.

### **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Bob Sprague stated that it was a pleasure to work for APS, that part of his goal as communication specialist was to try to promote public awareness in Arlington Public Schools. Bob suggested that in order to receive more complete coverage in the Arlington Advocate the Committee consider moving their meetings to Thursday nights.

Amy Cohen spoke relative to private fundraising for Arlington Public Schools; as a parent Ms. Cohen would be interested in making a donation if the money was earmarked for a specific position or program and believed that many parents would be willing to donate if that was in fact the situation. As president of the town-wide PTO Ms. Cohen suggested forming a new committee at the elementary level to coordinate parent volunteers with teacher needs. The principals could identify certain roles where parents could help and the PTOs could coordinate the requests. Marvin Lewiton spoke on behalf of the SPOT group requesting that additional revenues go towards direct student services, ongoing communication with families on staff changes and voiced concern over the loss of guidance counselors.

Deborah Kaden requested continued communication with parents relative to scheduling at AHS. Due to evolving changes parents and students are unsure of course offerings and also requested that students be placed in courses rather than directed studies.

Josh Lobel spoke relative to the loss of a teacher during the school year and being replaced by a permanent substitute instead of placing a teacher in that position. Is there an incentive for a teacher to stay until the end of the school year and if not how can that be addressed. He also questioned the closing of an elementary school in order to save money.

## **WARRANT APPROVAL**

On a motion by Ms. LaMachia and seconded by Ms. Goodman it was unanimously Voted to approve warrant #03170 in the amount of \$487,305.11.

Supt. Donovan reported that there would be another warrant ready for approval on June 30<sup>th</sup> .

## **SECRETARY'S REPORT**

Ms. LaMachia reviewed correspondence

On a motion by Ms. LaMachia and seconded by Mr. Schlichtman it was Voted to approve the regular meeting minutes of May 13, 2003. (Mr. Thielman abstain)

On a motion by Ms. LaMachia and seconded by Mr. Thrope it was unanimously Voted to approve the regular meeting minutes of May 27, 2003.

## **ACCEPTANCE OF PRIVATE FUNDS**

Julie Dunn, President of Arlington partners In Education Foundation and Jane Culbert , Treasurer spoke to the Committee relative to the fundraising for the schools. They explained that APEF is a public charity that was established in 2001 with the sole mission of raising funds to support excellence in education in APS. APEF has agreed to the fundraising to "maintain the improvements achieved and to minimize the effects of the severe budget reductions. The money raised will be used to fill the prioritized list developed by the school administration and the school committee. Communication will be via letters sent on June 30<sup>th</sup>, phone banking, leaflets and press releases.

## **SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT**

**Budget Subcommittee** – Mr. Schlichtman reported out on the budget subcommittee meeting held that afternoon and recommended the Committee's support on the following motions (approved by the subcommittee)

On a motion by Mr. Schlichtman and seconded by Ms. LaMachia it was unanimously Voted to approve the transfer of \$15,185.00 from instruction support services to the Special Education Tuition and Transportation budget.

On a motion by Mr. Schlichtman and seconded by Ms. LaMachia it was unanimously Voted that the School Committee receive a report from the Superintendent by December 1, 2002 on a short-term and a long-term facilities plan for the operation of the Arlington School System.

On a motion by Mr. Schlichtman and seconded by Mr. Thielman it was unanimously Voted the approval of the Budget Timetable for the 2003-2004 School Year.

## **Policy & Procedures**

Mr. Thielman reported that the subcommittee met and presented the following policies for a first reading:

Field Trip Release form File IJOA-E

Email Distribution List Policy

Private Donations to the APS

Memorandum of Understanding Regarding Private Fundraising – Mr. Thielman moved approval seconded by Mr. Thrope with the suggestion that the budget subcommittee work towards the goal of consolidated budgeting and reporting as soon as possible (to clarify in the budget detail which items are funded by town \$ and which are funded by other sources, i.e. grants, fundraising, etc.).

## **Specialized Student Services**

Mr. Thrope reported that the subcommittee met and discussed various user fees (athletic, music, rental, bus) and the reinstating of the special education “hot line”. The subcommittee will meet over the summer to look at what other communities do.

## **SUMMER WORKSHOP**

Ms. Owayda reported that the School Committee would hold a workshop with department heads, teachers, and member of the AHS faculty senate on July 11<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 – 12:00. The purpose of the workshop is to receive input from and to discuss the prerequisite issue with faculty. The School Committee will work with the Administration to evaluate and think through and modify something that is already in place.

Mr. Schlichtman requested if possible a time change to 8:00 – 10:00 due to a work conflict.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

Ms. Owayda introduced to the Committee the idea of holding one school committee meeting a month as a “working meeting”. The purpose would be to have a meeting that is more business like and focused possibly on one specific issue that can be discussed in depth. Suzanne would like to meet in July, possibly the 22<sup>nd</sup> to work out the details and asked the Committee to think how we can be more focused, productive, and discuss what the School Committee wants to accomplish.

On a motion by Mr. Thrope and seconded by Ms. LaMachia it was unanimously Voted to adjourn @ 9:40 PM

Submitted by  
Karen Tassone  
Committee Secretary