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School Committee Minutes 01-08-2002

Arlington School Committee
Tuesday, January 8, 2002
Regular Meeting
7:30 PM

Present: *Joani LaMachia, Chair*
David McKenna, Vice Chair
Denis Sullivan (exited @ 10:20 PM)
Barbara Goodman
Suzanne Owayda
Paul Schlichtman
Martin Thrope

Superintendent Kathleen Donovan
Chief Financial Officer David Kale
Asst. Superintendent Joanne Gurry
Director Special Education. Marilyn Bisbicos

Call To Order: 7:40

On a motion by Mr. Sullivan and seconded by Mr. Thrope it was voted to enter executive session to obtain advice from legal counsel. RC: Unanimous. Executive Session 7:35 – 7:40 PM

Chairperson Joani LaMachia presented the AEA the opportunity to have the grievance hearing in open session or executive session. Ms. Fuller, AEA president chose to remain in open session.

*Ms. LaMachia addressed the AEA members relative to the December issue of **The Reflector**, the AEA newsletter, and its reference to the School Committees' insensitivity in postponing meetings. Ms. LaMachia did apologize for the postponement of the meetings. Ms. LaMachia stated that the tone of the newsletter projected an adversarial relationship between the teachers and the administration that was unnecessary. The School Committee holds teachers in the highest regard and voted raising teacher salaries as their number one goal.*

AEA Grievance Hearing

AEA President Virginia Fuller presented grievance G02-01 Meetings. Ms. Fuller stated that the Arlington School Committee has violated the following articles of the collective bargaining agreement between the Arlington School Committee and the Arlington Education Association:

Article I Recognition

Article III Negotiation Procedure

Article IV Grievance Procedure

Article VIII Work Year, Work Hours, Work Load, Change in established past practices The AEA stated that teachers were required to attend professional development meetings in addition to the required staff meetings each month. Although the administration offered the workshops as voluntary, many teachers viewed them as mandatory. Ms. Fuller reminded the School Committee that they have fifteen days to respond to the grievance.

Ms. Fuller requested to hold the remainder of the hearing in closed session.

On a motion by Mr. Schlichtman and seconded by Mr. Sullivan it was Voted to enter executive session for the purpose of a grievance hearing and to return to open session to finish the remainder of the agenda. RC: Unanimous Executive Session: 8:35 – 9:15 PM

Public Participation

Brackett parent Paul Sheehan spoke on the full day kindergarten program. Mr. Sheehan voiced his disappointment with the fact that the half-day kindergarten program does not offer the same educational opportunities as the full day program. Mr. Sheehan admitted he received a promissory note to attend the full day program but was planning on sending his child to the half-day program. However on the recommendation of his teacher Mr. Sheehan enrolled his child in the full day program in September. Mr. Sheehan received a number of communications regarding payment and a letter stating that if no payment was received by December 18th that the child would be enrolled in the half-day program after the winter break. Upon reviewing all of the curriculum documents published by the school he pointed out that his

child would not receive the same education as the students in the full day program and that the school would have to create a program for his child. Mr. Sheehan took issue with the fact that there should not be any fee to attend public school. Mr. Sheehan presented the Superintendent a check in the amount of \$266.40 for the time his son spent in the full day program.

A moment of silence was observed for Walter Devine, former superintendent of Arlington of Public Schools (from 1983 to 1993), who died on January 2, 2002.

Vote AHS Mission Statement

Jim Brown and Jack Duranceau, AHS teachers and co-chairs of the accreditation committee requested the vote and support of the School Committee on the Arlington High School Mission Statement.

On a motion by Mr. Sullivan and seconded by Mr. McKenna it was unanimously Voted to accept the Arlington High School Mission Statement.

Vote/Tuition Increase Menotomy Preschool

Mary Villano presented the Committee with a survey outlining tuitions at other preschools in Arlington. Although Menotomy Preschool is self-supporting and offers the lowest tuition, Ms. Villano is requesting an increase to offer a competitive salary to the preschool teachers. The tuition would increase from \$800.00 to \$950.00 for three days per week and from \$550.00 to \$700.00 for two days per week.

On a motion by Mr. Sullivan and seconded by Mr. McKenna it was unanimously Voted to approve the proposed tuition at Menotomy Preschool.

The Budget Discussion was postponed until later in the meeting

Subcommittee Report

Curriculum & Instruction – postponed until next meeting

Policy & Procedures – Mr. Thrope presented policies **EBAB Pest Management Policy,, JEB Entrance Age, JF School Admissions** as a first draft to the Committee for their review. A final vote will be taken at the next meeting. The subcommittee endorsed the change of the entrance age that will now require a child to be 5 years of age by August 31st with a transition stage. Mr. Schlichtman took the opportunity to point out that the process used in developing the policy was superb; he thanked his colleagues on the subcommittee and other school committee members who also attended the meeting. He noted that a large amount of compromise took place that resulted in a policy that is educationally sound and meets the needs of the child.

The subcommittee is working through numerous policy samples of file KHC-distribution of literature.

On a motion by Mr. Thrope and seconded by Mr. Sullivan it was

Voted to approve the amended change (delete **'and offer to send him/her the appropriate form..'** in the second paragraph) in policy KEB-R - Public Complaints About School Personnel. Unanimous.

Secretary's Report

Mr. Sullivan reviewed correspondence noting the Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration taking place on Monday, January 21st at the First Baptist Church. The School Committee will support an advertisement in the AHS Yearbook as in previous years.

On a motion by Mr. Sullivan and seconded by Mr. Schlichtman it was Unanimously voted to approve the regular meeting minutes of November 13, 2001.

On a motion by Mr. Sullivan and seconded by Mr. McKenna it was Unanimously voted to approve the regular meeting minutes of November 27, 2001.

PTBC Update

Mr. Thrope reported that progress at the Peirce School is excellent and on target.

Reconfirm Vote on Dallin School/Confirm Thompson and Stratton Schools

The Committee discussed the class size for the remaining schools. Concern was voiced over the number of classrooms projected in the remaining schools, the possible increase of student enrollments and returning the students in the BIP program to the Stratton School when that school is complete.

On a motion by Mr. Thrope and seconded by Mr. Sullivan it was

Voted to approve the design capacity of the Dallin School at 380 students, the Thompson School at 350 students and the Stratton School at 325 students exclusive of the BIP Program. Roll Call: Unanimous

Mr. Sullivan left at 10:20 PM

New Business

After School MCAS Program - Dr. Gurry outlined the MCAS after school program. It is a voluntary program lasting eight weeks and this year is fully funded by the State. The high school received \$40,000.00 in grant money for after school MCAS tutoring and \$35,000.00 for grades 4 through 8. The response from the students and teachers so far has been wonderful.

Supt. Donovan stated that she would like to submit the usual warrant articles and asked the committee's support on the following:

- .. Revolving Accounts
- .. FY2003 School Operating Budget
- .. Special education legislation or changes
- .. Kindergarten Grant

.. Acceptance of any new legislation relative to retirement legislation or changes
.. Acceptance of any and all grants, Federal, State, local, private
.. Appropriation for the Dallin School
.. "To Appropriate a sum of money to construct an athletic facility on or near the Peirce field. To determine how the funds will be raised and expended including the possibility of all
On a motion by Mr. Thrope and seconded by Mr. McKenna it was unanimously
Voted approval to submit the proposed warrant articles to Town Counsel.

Supt. Donovan informed the committee that the Capital Planning Committee has laid on the table the school's request for financing the field house at Peirce Field. She would like to discuss the matter further at the next meeting. Mr. Thrope noted that the proposed field house is part of the remediation plan for the clean up and that the schools/town face a June deadline.

On a motion by Mr. McKenna and seconded it was unanimously
Voted to move the 11:00 rule.

.. MASC Division II Meeting will be held at the Hardy School on January 30, 2002.
.. The meeting of January 22nd will begin at 6:00 PM to discuss the budget.
.. Ms. Goodman's request for a public forum on the budget process was referred to the Community Relations Subcommittee.

On a motion by Mr. McKenna and seconded it was
Voted to enter executive session for a negotiation issue with no further business to be conducted upon return to open session. RC:
Unanimous Executive Session 11:10 – 11:20 PM
On a motion made and seconded it was unanimously voted to adjourn at 11:20 PM