

NORTH ANDOVER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: Tuesday, February 27, 2007
Place: North Andover High School Lecture Hall
Present: Alfred Perry, Chairman, Assistant Chairman, William Kelly, Dr. Charles Ormsby, Tim Pybus, and Barbara Whidden

Also Present: Dr. Daniel O'Connor, Superintendent, Richard Bergeron, Assistant Superintendent, Paul Szymanski, Director of Management Support Services and members of the school department and the community.

Chairman Al Perry called the meeting to order at 6:38 p.m.

1. Meeting with the North Andover High School Student Advisory Committee.

Members of School Committee introduced themselves to the Student Advisory Representatives. Kevin Kinneman, Katan Jhaveri, Morgan Healey, Jaclyn Keshian and Constanstine Moriates

Constantine Mariates asked what the committee thinks will happen with the budget from this year to next year? Bill Kelly answered that it appeared that the base budget will be covered this year. Mr. Kelly also explained the different audits that have been done at the School department over the last few months.

The students expressed the need for more elective courses. Electives have been declining due to budget cuts over the years.

Kevin Kinneman asked for an explanation on what not being accredited at the High School really will mean to students.

Sue Nicholson explained the impact of being unaccredited will be felt when students are apply to colleges and for scholarships. Being from an unaccredited High School could be the deciding factor between two equally matched applicants.

The students concurred that our High School students are performing well through the difficulties such as large class sizes, scheduling, faculty availability and lack of electives.

Mr. Perry invited the students to make a meeting with the Student Advisory Committee and the School Committee a monthly occurrence.

2. Recommended Action:

Warrants of Bills Payable were circulated for distribution.

Public Participation:

Cindy Jalbert a parent, expressed concern about the joint meeting held with the Selectman last night. Cindy stated that the students at the High School now are not the students who are most effected by the budget cuts. These students are in Middle and Elementary school now.

3. Superintendent's Report:

Dr. O'Connor informed the committee of the large number of students inducted into the National Honor Society.

Dr. O'Connor noted that our sports teams have been recognized in the larger Boston papers.

Dr. O'Connor suggested a joint meeting with the Finance Committee on March 7th. Dr. Ormsby suggested that the meeting be held at the High School before the regular scheduled School Committee meeting.

4. Old Business

a. Accept the Thomson Elementary School.

Barbara Whidden stated that no vote was needed tonight because the original vote stated that the Thomson School was accepted contingent on the receipt of a letter from the School Building Committee stating that the Thomson School project is complete. The letter was presented to the committee.

b. Update and discussion on the Superintendent Search

NESDEC representatives Art Bennecourt and Ken Di Benedictis were present.

Mr. Bennecourt questioned whether the two candidates from the search committee were still viable candidates or if the committee is starting new.

Dr. Ormsby- Thought the candidate, Mr. O'Neill, was well suited and would like the committee to reconsider Mr. O'Neill

Mr. Bennecourt stated there are three people who may be interested in position. Two have submitted applications. One is currently in negotiations with their school committee. Since they are sitting superintendents their school districts may counter offer. There was conversation regarding reconsidering the candidates interviewed previously and conducting site visits.

Dr. Ormsby made a motion to select Mr. James O'Neill as the next Superintendent of Schools contingent on a site visit next week, subject to a revote on March 7th. Motion was seconded by Bill Kelly. Chairman, Al Perry, vice Chairman, Bill Kelly, Yes, Dr. Charles Ormsby, Yes, Tim Pybus, No, Barbara Whidden, No. Motion passed. 3-2 majority vote.

Barbara Whidden, Tim Pybus and many members of the audience expressed concerns that process is being rushed.

C. High School Honors Program

Sue Nicholson asked for support for implementing a ninth grade honors program.

The committee applauded the initiative taken by Mrs. Nicholson and her staff.

Old Business

a. Discussion re : Budget Communication Group's request that the School Committee vote to release the Bradstreet School

There was discussion regarding the capital improvement plan for school property being submitted by the Town Manager without school committee's prior knowledge.

Tim Pybus relayed that the town manager felt there was a time limit. There is a sense of urgency. The Bradstreet is the first step. If we drag our feet, the other processes will not happen. Nothing will happen until the school committee makes a decision on this.

Barbara Whidden made a motion to delay any other discussion regarding Bradstreet until we have a superintendent in place.

Tim Pybus made a motion to release the custody and control of the Bradstreet over to the town. Bill Kelly seconded the motion for discussion.

Members of the committee and the public questioned the timing of releasing Bradstreet with so many questions still unanswered.

Mr. Kelly stated he is certain the Bradstreet will not be used for housing children in the future and wants to be a good partner with the town. He stated that Main St. is lagging in commercial viability.

Barbara Whidden - We need to have more public hearings on this. We are giving up the Bradstreet without knowing who is in favor of this.

A member of the public stated we have no plan in place to address what may come to North Andover. We have taken classroom space from the elementary schools and we don't have a functioning facilities plan. When Foster Farm went away the issue needed to be readdressed.

Tim Pybus expressed concern that if the Town doesn't get the CPA funding they could take funds out of the school operating budget.

Motion to release the custody and control of the Bradstreet over to the town.

Roll call vote. Chairman, Al Perry, Yes, Bill Kelly, Yes, Dr. Ormsby, No, Tim Pybus, Yes, Barbara Whidden, No. Motion passed. 3-2 majority rule.

b. Approval of Victim Impact statement- Commonwealth vs. Catherine L. Entsminger

Motion to suspend the rules was made by Barbara Whidden. Tim Pybus seconded.

Roll Call vote. Chairman, Al Perry, Yes, Bill Kelly, Yes, Dr. Ormsby, Yes, Tim Pybus, Yes, Barbara Whidden, Yes. Motion passed. 5-0

Barbara Whidden made a motion to accept the impact statement as written. Tim Pybus seconded the motion. Roll call vote. Chairman, Al Perry, Yes, Bill Kelly, Yes, Dr. Ormsby, Yes, Tim Pybus, Yes, Barbara Whidden, Yes. Motion passed. 5-0

Barbara Whidden expressed her concern about the vacancies in administration and her concern that we keep our current administrators who have only one-year contracts. She noted specific concern regarding keeping the SpEd Director.

Dr. O'Connor stated we are screening for elementary principals and assistant principals at the middle and high school

Bill Kelly made a motion to enter into executive session for the purpose of discussing contract negotiations with non-union personnel. Tim Pybus seconded the motion.

Roll call vote. Chairman, Al Perry, Yes, Bill Kelly, Yes, Dr. Ormsby, Yes, Tim Pybus, Yes, Barbara Whidden, Yes. Motion passed. 5-0

Meeting adjourned