

North Andover School Committee
Regular Session

Date: November 20, 2008

Present: Members Allen, Ormsby, Whidden, Limpert and Nobile, Superintendent Marini, Assistant Superintendent Hutchinson, Business Administrator Fortado and Selectman Mark Caggiano

Location: High School Lecture Hall

Call to Order:

Chair Whidden called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m.

Public Comment:

Ms Whidden asked for public comment not relating to the teachers' union contract extension. There was no public comment not related to the contract.

The Chair asked for contract extension comments from the public, stating that this would be the only time during the evening that the public would have an opportunity to speak on this matter.

Mr. Tripp spoke against the teachers' contract extension, citing the current economic situation. He raised concerns over the drop in town revenue, the rising costs of health care and other expenses; the step increases already in place and the need to avoid staff layoffs.

Mr. Nardone, union president, spoke in support of the extension. He expressed his and the teachers' appreciation of the School Committee's willingness to support the extension. He also spoke of the union's intention to work with the School Committee on the health insurance issue.

Chairman's Report:

Chair Whidden stated that the Bradstreet School vote would be on the next agenda. The School Committee should be prepared to vote to either take back or let the town meeting vote stand.

Several members of the committee and school administration looked at the Stevens Estate as a possible central office location.

The chair requested two questions from each member to ask the superintendent candidates. Chair Whidden is working on the contract negotiations with the Secretary and Paraprofessional unions. She asked for volunteers for the Custodians and Café Workers negotiations. After discussion, Mr. Limpert and Dr. Ormsby agreed.

Superintendents Report:

Dr Marini reported that Bob Fraser is researching whether or not Bradstreet is already out of the School Department ownership. He informed the committee that the DOE has asked NAPS to participate in a Youth Risk Survey for grades 9-12. He is awaiting more information and will share that once it becomes available. The FINCOM is requesting better budget communication between the two boards.

The superintendent asked the business administrator for a brief energy update. Mr. Fortado highlighted the rebates received from National Grid for the NAMS gym

lights and that the NAHS lights were being reviewed; the latest gas bid is significantly less than budgeted; the thermostats at the High School will be monitored via the internet at night; a campaign to shut the computers off at the high school could save upwards of \$400.00 per month; and training programs with the custodians on heat and energy conservation management are being researched.

Teachers Contract Extension:

Chair Whidden stated that Selectman Caggiano was attending the meeting and would vote on this matter as a representative of the Board of Selectmen.

Chair Whidden reminded the audience and the committee that all public comment on this agenda item was heard at the beginning of the meeting during the public comment section. She would recognize only the School Committee and Selectman Caggiano during the discussion of the contract extension. Ms Whidden then read the extension as written.

Dr Ormsby prefaced his prepared statement (see attached) with a few comments: His stance on the extension was not a reflection of his feelings on the teachers or their abilities and he recognized the Chair and the subcommittee for keeping the process in the public view very different from the last teacher contract. Dr Ormsby then read his statement.

Selectman Caggiano stated the Board of Selectmen's views on the contract extension. Concerns included the economy in general and the town specifically, potential cuts in state aid, and that the extension was not reflective of the times.

Selectman Nardello and FinCom Vice Chair Mark Rogers arrived late and asked to be heard from the floor. Chair Whidden repeated that all public comment was closed and she was only accepting discussion from the School Committee and Selectman Caggiano. The committee discussed whether to open the floor for Mr. Nardello and/or Mr. Rogers. Mr. Rogers was allowed to read a statement from the FinCom. The FinCom is not in favor of the contract extension and asked the committee to vote the measure down and return to the bargaining table for concessions on Healthcare.

The school Committee continued their discussion, and Mr. Nobile read his prepared remarks supporting the extension (see attached).

Ms Allen commented on the lack of public comments, very little in the way of phone calls or emails.

Dr Ormsby reiterated his stance, Selectman Caggiano remarked on how delightful it was to work with the teachers, thanked both Ms Allen and Mr. Nobile for their participation.

Mr. Nobile moved to approve the Teachers Union Contract Extension as written. Mr. Limpert seconded the motion. The vote was 4-2, Ms Allen, Ms Whidden, Mr. Limpert, Mr. Nobile voting yes, Dr Ormsby and Selectman Caggiano voting no.

North Andover Middle School and Thomson School AYP Plan

Dr Hutchinson recapped that both NAMS and Thomson School failed to meet AYP and read the proposed plans for each school.

Ms Allen moved to approve the NAMS and Thomson AYP Plans as presented. Motion seconded by Mr. Limpert. The vote was 5-0, Ms Allen, Dr Ormsby, Mr. Limpert, Mr. Nobile and Ms. Whidden.

FY09 Budget Update:

Dr Marini was asked if there were any updates from the town, he responded that no-one was saying there would be problems. Ms Whidden will ask specifically.

Mr. Fortado stated that the budget is in good standing.

Mr. Fortado asked for a budget transfer to the contracted services line to cover the cost of administering and monitoring the schools 403(b) activity by an outside group. This is the result of IRS changes requiring oversight of the 403(b) programs.

Mr. Nobile made a motion to transfer funds to the 4410 contracted services line in the Budget to cover the 403(b) management. Ms Allen seconded the motion. The vote was 5-0. Ms Allen, Dr Ormsby, Mr. Limpert, Mr. Nobile, Ms Whidden

Special Ed Director Laundre requested a transfer from the salary line to the consultant line in order to pay the fee for Larry Borin, who has accepted a critical position with important responsibilities. Mr. Borin comes highly qualified, with the experience needed to start work immediately.

Mr. Limpert made a motion to transfer funds from the salary line to the consultant line. Ms Allen seconded the motion. The vote was 5-0. Ms Allen, Dr Ormsby, Mr. Limpert, Mr. Nobile, Ms Whidden

Mr. Fortado discussed the major issue the Central Office and the NAHS are having with the existing phone system. Because the maintenance contract had been cut in the past the system is in terrible shape and has periodically broken down. He was able to broker a 3 year lease of new equipment to upgrade the system, which at the end of, the school department will own the equipment. The cost is \$46,000 this year and \$80,000 for the final 2 years. Mr. Fortado is asking the School Committee to approve moving this year's \$46,000 from the Gas Utility budget line to the Telephone budget line. Dr Ormsby asked about putting the entire project out to bid, for a better price. Mr. Fortado felt it was difficult information to quantify, that the school department did not have the expertise to write and then evaluate the RFP and that the contractor was already vetted by the state.

Dr Ormsby made a motion to transfer the money from Gas to Telephone lines to cover the first year's lease for upgrade phone services. Motion seconded by Mr. Limpert. The vote was 5-0. Ms Allen, Dr Ormsby, Mr. Limpert, Mr. Nobile and Mrs. Whidden

FY10 Capital Budget:

Two items to be added from last year's budget are carpets, which will need to be rebid, and windows and sprinkler systems. Energy efficiency and possible rebates need to be

considered for the windows. Sprinklers are not required in some of the older buildings, but do need to be added when renovating. Ms Whidden raised the issue of not having an overflow school in the event of a fire. Adding sprinkler systems before windows might be a consideration. Dr Marini reviewed the Capital Improvement Plan for the School, starting with the need for space for the Central Office. The current lease for High Street expires June 30, 2009. It's been difficult to find a suitable location. The Carriage House at Stevens Estate has been suggested. After a brief site visit, it is a consideration. Pluses include it's a permanent location owned by the town. Although it would need renovation, it should be investigated. After some discussion on cost savings versus renovation costs and how timely it could be to complete, the Committee felt it was worth pursuing and agreed to collect additional information.

Dr Marini's other CIP update was on the Community Programs need for space. Although a separate building was the preferred choice, that is not very realistic. His suggestion was to install 2-3 modular classrooms at the Kittredge School that could be used as office space for Community Programs and as music and art rooms for the student body during the school days and CP classroom space after school. This solution would allow the Kittredge School to have equity around the fine arts programs with the other 4 elementary schools and provide the Community Programs group the opportunity to expand their offerings. Dr. Marini stressed that these modular classrooms were not the portables of old, they are vastly improved and would not pose any health issues. Funding for these classrooms would come from the Community Programs revolving funds and not the operating budget.

Subcommittee Reports:

Personnel: no update

Policy: Gift Policy Subcommittee would be established at the Dec 4th Meeting
Sections one and two of the Policy Guide will reviewed in the December meetings.

Athletics: no update

Superintendent Search: All the interviews are done; the list will be to the School Committee soon. Site visits are being arranged, if SC members would like to attend, please contact Chair Whidden. Ms Whidden is not planning to vote the night of the interviews, but at a later date.

Chair Whidden thanked everyone that worked on the superintendent search committee.

School Building Committee: The sewer hook-up for preschool will be less expensive than originally thought.

Dr Marini thanked Cindy Jalbert for her help on the salary breakdown.

Adjourn

Adjourn: At 9:20, Ms Allen moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Nobile. The vote was 5-0 Ms Allen, Dr Ormsby, Mr. Lippert, Mr. Nobile and Ms Whidden