

**NEWBURYPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
Tuesday, September 6 2011**

Newburyport High School
Meeting Convened at 7:02 PM

Room 118
Mayor Donna Holaday/Bruce Menin Presided

Present: Steve Cole , Cheryl Sweeney, Bruce Menin, Mayor Donna Holaday,
Stephanie Weaver, Nick deKanter, Dan Koen

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Mayor Donna Holaday called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM. A Roll Call of members showed all members present. All those present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

READING OF MISSION STATEMENT:

Mayor Holaday read the Newburyport School Committee Mission Statement.

At this point Vice-Chairman Bruce Menin assumed chairmanship of the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Dr. Ralph Orland, Wm. Hall DR. **CONCERN:** He commented on the School Committee recent Retreat agenda items.

Dominique Deare, Warren St. **CONCERN:** She spoke about looking for input from the community and the audience in attendance at meetings.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Motions

Warrants:

On a motion by Cheryl Sweeney and seconded by Nick deKanter it was

VOTED: To approve, receive and forward to the City Auditor for payment the
Following warrant:
\$2,984.54

Motion Passed Unanimously

On a motion by Cheryl Sweeney and seconded by Stephanie Weaver it was

VOTED: To approve, receive and forward to the City Auditor for payment the following
warrant:
\$189,982.94

Motion Passed Unanimously

Minutes

On a motion by Stephanie Weaver and seconded by Mayor Holaday it was

VOTED: To approve, receive and file the Newburyport School Committee meeting minutes
of Monday, August 22, 2011 as amended.

Motion Passed Unanimously

INTRODUCTION OF NEW ADMINISTRATORS:

Superintendent Dr. Marc Kerble introduced Lorene Marx, the new Principal of the Molin School. He spoke of her background and commented that she is a great asset to our school community. Ms. Marx commented on how happy she was to be a new member of the Newburyport School community, meeting her teachers and students.

Discussion:

Nick deKanter asked Ms. Marx three questions – what was her favorite food, what was her favorite book and how would she use her expertise in SPED at the Molin School. Ms. Marx said her favorite food was anything sweet, her favorite book was “Thank you Mr. Faulkner”, and she hoped to create a sense of community and make the 4th and 5th grade more memorable for students, and would work closely with the SPED department.

Bruce Molin extended a welcome to Ms. Marx on behalf of the School Committee.

Superintendent Dr. Kerble stated he would introduce NHS Associate Principal Michael Testa at a later point in the meeting.

MSBA UPDATE:

Assistant Superintendent Farrell outlined and explained the Mass. School Building Authority updates as follows:

1. A Selection Committee was appointed by the Mayor of the City of Newburyport from members of the City of Newburyport School Building Committee. The task of the Selection Committee was to prepare the Request for Services (a report of the Owner’s Project Manager Selection Process – Bresnahan Model School Project had been given to each Committee member) for an Owner’s Project Manager for the Bresnahan Model School project, review responses to the RFS, Interview qualified firms and make a recommendation to the Mayor. The Selection Committee ranked Heery International first based on their level of relevant experience, their approach to prioritizing the needs of the facility, and the procedures that they have in place to ensure that the project design is as complete as possible, combined with the fact that they scored in the initial ranking by the Selection Committee.
2. A Selection Committee was appointed by the Mayor of the City of Newburyport from members of the City of Newburyport School Building Committee. The task of the Selection Committee was to prepare the Request for Services (a report of the Owner’s Project Manager Selection Process – Nock/Molin Renovations and Additions Project had been given to each Committee member) for an Owner’s Project Manager for the Nock/Molin renovations/addition project, review responses to the RFS, interview qualified firms and make a recommendation to the Mayor. The Selection Committee ranked Heery first based on their level of relevant experience, their approach to prioritizing the needs of the facility, and the procedures that they have in place to ensure that the project design is as complete as possible, combined with the fact that they scored highest in the initial ranking by the Selection Committee.

Discussion:

Mayor Holaday spoke of Assistant Superintendent Deirdre Farrell’s hard work in this very complex process. She reported on the meeting at the State House with Katharine Craven and MSBA to include pre-K, K in the model school. They walked through the process to date and timelines. The next phase is to attend a meeting on September 12.

Assistant Superintendent Farrell spoke of the next step to enter into the FSA agreement, the model school design selection. She stated she got commitment today from MSBA for pre-K, K. This news

brought a round of applause from all in attendance. They now need to get teams selected and site visitations formulated.

Stephanie Weaver inquired as to how could community members let someone know of their interest. Assistant Superintendent Farrell explained.

Mayor Holaday asked School Committee members to let her know if they were interested, and asked the Daily News representative to publish information for the community to become involved. She explained that there had been several meetings during the summer. This is a campaign (the debt exclusion). There will be a September 14th workshop to learn what can and cannot be done for the campaign. This will be a community event, which will break up into 4 groups. **Nick deKanter** spoke about the website and said they were close to having this up and running within the next few days. Updates will be added as necessary. **Mayor Holaday** said she will e-mail the Committee with further information. She spoke of bonding and past practices.

Cheryl Sweeney inquired if Newburyport will be the only model school with pre-K, K? Assistant Superintendent Farrell explained.

Dan Koen stated the architect/designer comes with the school, and asked if there was a limit of 6 model schools, and asked if there was room for changes. Assistant Superintendent Farrell explained.

Mayor Holaday stated there has been some discussion about fields. They are putting together a comprehensive list of fields, and possible new sites for fields.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Dominique Deare **CONCERN:** She spoke of several things; transparency, at what point the mayor can begin talking about restructuring the debt, economy, and are there restrictions from MSBA regarding financing.

Dr. Ralph Orlando **CONCERN:** He stated he believes in the value of the new school project, but we need to look at and discuss what goes on inside schools.

SUPERINTENDENTS REPORT:

Superintendent Dr. Kerble acknowledged the following:

1. The two day leadership retreat for districts' leaders at which time there were presentations concerning leadership, the new evaluation process, strategic thinking, goals, and a presentation by Angela Bik.
2. Opening day for teachers – this was an absolute fantastic day. He spoke to teachers about what he expects. Our students depend on the greatness of our teachers. The facilities were terrific, the teachers ready and people were happy.
3. Wireless program – this takes time. He thanked the NEF for their funding. They will roll out wireless in pieces as it happens.
4. X2 Program/X2 Family Portal – Letters will be going out tomorrow; each parent will get a log-in and password. It is a little bit hectic, but by October 1 we will be in the groove. He extended thanks to Judy Webster and the Technology Department
5. Boston Magazine – Boston Magazine ranked Newburyport 16th in Massachusetts in the “Best High School” category. This is very exciting, but, we need to look at all of the scores, we need to increase MCAS efficiency scores in grades 3-8. We have a lot of work to do.

He thanked Cathy Manning and the Central Office staff.

ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENTS REPORT:

Assistant Superintendent Farrell reported on the following:

1. Transportation – this is off and rolling. We have a wait list of 25 families and hope to accommodate some of these in the near future.

2. Safety – We had a Public Safety meeting with public health, police, fire, etc. This was a very successful meeting.
3. Enrollment August 29 – the Committee was presented with the August 29 figures for enrollment – system wide the figure was 2,337 students; but the official enrollment is October 1 and she will be reporting figures to the Committee after that date.
4. Facilities – There were 284 work orders that were processed.

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT (Continued):

1. We had a full professional development day workshop – this sets a tone for the year. A lot of work went into the day. He thanked EBC, Heather Hanson, Business Coalition, Melody Cody and Ken Spinney. He asked Nick deKanter to give a further report on the day’s activities.

Nick deKanter: This was a luncheon – the purpose of which was a place-based learning project based on learning. All teachers were here with 39 businesses in attendance. Businesses, which were set at tables, networked with teachers providing information and business cards; there was a raffle based on teachers writing down an idea on place based learning and project based learning. This was a positive exciting day. Thanks were extended to Bill Heenehan, Cindy Johnson, NEF that sponsored tote bags, and all the businesses that participated.

Assistant Superintendent Angela Bik reported that she has received positive feedback from teachers. She reported on the Common Core standard workshops, the X2 refresher workshop, assessment and integration training, anti-bullying training. There were 4 different facilitators. The day was a great success.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW ADMINISTRATORS (Continued):

Superintendent Dr. Marc Kerble welcomed and introduced NHS Associate Principal Michael Testa. Associate Principal Testa spoke of his background and of his new job at NHS.

Discussion:

Nick deKanter asked Associate Principal Testa three questions; name three artists on your play list, what was the last book you read and what excites you most about your new job? Associate Principal Testa said he has a wide array of musical tastes, he has just finished reading “Education of Little Tree” and he is excited about working with the kids.

Stephanie Weaver asked what positive things does he see about Newburyport, and what part of his role did he see stretching himself? Associate Principal Testa said he was impressed with the facilities and how well they are kept up, but it is all about the kids. He has enjoyed meeting the staff. He sees stretching himself in dealing with the responsibility of the student master schedule.

The School Committee gave a big welcome to him.

CALENDAR OF TOPIC AGENDA ITEMS:

Bruce Menin asked Committee and community members to e-mail him with their ideas for agenda items. Stephanie Weaver asked if the Committee could be provided with the list that they were given last year; this would be very helpful.

REPORT OUT FROM COMMUNICATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE:

Nick deKanter report on the progress of the website they are developing for the Bresnahan School project. They will be developing a “twin version” for the Nock/Molin project. They will be doing a visual tour of Bresnahan and this will be part of the website. He stated there is a video that MSBA has developed and asked Assistant Superintendent Farrell if she could try to secure a copy. They are looking at the district website. They will be meeting again every two weeks and will be looking at the process

we have in responding to e-mails, how we communicate with the community. There is a lot of work to be done.

ADJOURNMENT/EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Motion

On a motion by Mayor Holaday and seconded by Stephanie Weaver it was

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting at 8:29 PM to Executive Session for the purpose of contract negotiations.

Motion Passed Unanimously