

NORTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Norton, Massachusetts

NORTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING

Date of School Committee Meeting: Monday, April 23, 2012

Location: Norton Middle School Library

Attending: Committee Members: Chairperson Elizabeth McManus, Vice-chairperson Deniz Savas, Mr. Andrew Mackie, Mr. Tom Golota, and Mrs. Marge Werner. Superintendent Patricia Ansay was also present.

Call to Order: Chairperson McManus called the meeting to order at 6:35 P.M.

Pledge of Allegiance:

Transfer:

Dr. Ansay recommended a transfer of \$1,200 from the Project Early Teacher Salary Account to the LGN Supply Account for paper. Mr. Savas made a motion to approve the transfer, seconded by Mr. Golota. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

Vote to Approve Minutes of Prior Meeting:

Mr. Golota made a motion to accept the minutes of the April 10th meeting, both regular and executive sessions, seconded by Mr. Mackie. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

Public Hearing and Vote on School Choice Program:

The School Choice Program requires a public hearing and then a vote by the School Committee on whether or not to participate for the following school year. A Choice School District would have to publish the number of seats that are available to children from other communities. Considering the financial constraints and large class sizes, it was Dr. Ansay's recommendation, as in past years, to not participate in the School Choice Program for the 2012-2013 school year. Students accepted into the program would be guaranteed a spot to complete their education in that district. No action is interpreted as an affirmative vote by the School Committee. Dr. Ansay noted that Norton students are free to attend school in any School Choice community. On a motion by Mr. Savas, seconded by Mr. Golota, the Committee voted to opt out of the School Choice Program for the 2012-2013 school year. The vote was 5-0. Dr. Ansay's office will officially inform the DESE of the vote by June 1st.

Vote to Approve Loan of Technology Policy:

The Committee previously reviewed the policy on March 5th and March 19th, and the most recent updated version. The purpose of approving a policy at this time is to have something in place if and when the time comes. This policy may also be revised at any time in the future. Several minor changes were suggested. Mr. Mackie made a motion to approve the policy with the suggested changes. Mr. Golota seconded the motion, which passed by a 5-0 vote.

Vote to Approve Revision of 2012-2013 School Calendar:

An early release day was added on Wednesday, September 19th for the three elementary schools for mandated training relative to the new Educator Evaluation Regulations, which has to be completed by early October, 2012. Mr. Savas made a motion to approve the change, seconded by Mr. Golota. The motion passed by a 5-0 vote.

Vote to Approve Bi-County Collaborative Charter Changes:

Dr. Ansay explained that each member district must approve the Collaborative's Charter changes.

Amending Collaborative Agreement – The following amendments to Bi-County Collaborative's Member Agreement require a vote by each member School Committee. These amendments have been approved by legal counsel and affirmatively voted by the Board of Directors in compliance with the process outlined in the Agreement. After the amendments are approved by 2/3 of member School Committees, the amended Agreement is submitted to the Commissioner for approval.

Inactive membership on the part of a few member districts has negatively impacted the Collaborative's ability to achieve a quorum from time to time and therefore, the ability to conduct business. The amendment seeks to remedy this. It also is aligned with the requirements of the new legislation (Chapter 43) wherein Boards of Directors have increased fiduciary responsibilities for their Collaborative on behalf of their School Committees. This ensures that participation is consistent and regular, and therefore, Boards are a more informed body.

The following Amendments were read by Mr. Mackie:

Amendment #1: Inactive Membership

When a voting representative of a member school district has not attended five (5) scheduled meetings of the Board of Directors within one school year, the member school district shall automatically become an inactive member without further action of the Board of Directors of the member school district. The presence of a designee at a meeting(s) does not affect the operation of this rule. An inactive member shall forfeit benefits of membership such as member tuition rates, but not the right to vote. The determination of a quorum shall be made without reference to any inactive member. In extenuating circumstances, as determined solely by the Board of Directors, the rule concerning automatic inactive status due to the absence of a voting representative of a member community can be waived.

An inactive member may return to active, voting status and receive all other member benefits after submitting a letter to the Board of Directors which indicates its desire to be an active member, and its attendance at a minimum of five (5) scheduled meeting of the Board of Directors within one school year.

Mr. Mackie made a motion to accept Amendment #1 as read, seconded by Mrs. Werner. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

Amendment #2: Board Meeting Schedule

Meetings of the Board of Directors shall be held from October to June, and at least once during the months of July, August, or September, for a total of seven meetings per year.

Mrs. Werner made a motion to accept the Amendment #2 as read, seconded by Mr. Golota. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

Vote to Approve Prepayment of Special Education Tuitions Per M.G.L.:

State law allows the payment of out-of-district tuitions for the months of July, August, and September with current year budget (FY'12) funds. This has been a practice for the last six years, and requires a vote by the Committee. Failure to do so would result in approximately \$401,000 being added to the FY'13 budget. After a brief discussion, Mr. Mackie made a motion to authorize the prepayment, seconded by Mrs. Werner. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

Vote to Approve Special town Meeting Article for J. C. Solmonese School Roof:

ARTICLE

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate, borrow or transfer from available funds, an amount of money to be expended under the direction of the Norton School Committee and the Town of Norton for the repair and replacement of the roof at the J.C. Solmonese Elementary School, located at 315 West Main Street, Norton, MA 02766, including all costs incidental and related thereto, which proposed repair project would materially extend the useful life of the school and preserve an asset that otherwise is capable of supporting the required educational program and for which the Town has applied for a school construction grant from the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA). The Town acknowledges that the MSBA's grant program is a non-entitlement, discretionary program based on need, as determined by the MSBA, and if the MSBA's Board of Directors votes to invite the Town to collaborate with the MSBA on this proposed repair project, any project costs the Town incurs in excess of any grant that may be approved by and received from the MSBA shall be the sole responsibility of the Town.

This is the same article as previously proposed, and no reimbursement rate is known at this time. Mr. Mackie made a motion to approve the Article as written, seconded by Mr. Golota. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

Vote to Approve Superintendent's Contract:

Chairperson McManus stated that after several negotiating sessions, the Committee was unable to reach an agreement with Mrs. Bradshaw. The Committee will weight its options.

Personnel:

Retirement: Mrs. Cynthia Reardon, NMS ELA Teacher, after 20 years of service.

Dr. Ansay announced that this is the last meeting for member Tom Golota, and presented him with a token of appreciation from the district. Members paid tribute to Tom for his six years on the Committee. Mr. Golota chose not to seek reelection, and will continue his education with the goal of teaching at the middle school level.

Mr. Mackie made a motion to adjourn and enter executive session for the purpose of Collective Bargaining, Teachers' Union – New Educator Evaluation Regulations, and not return to open session. Mr. Savas seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mrs. McManus-yes, Mr. Savas-yes, Mr. Mackie-yes, Mr. Golota-yes, and Mrs. Werner-yes. The regular session adjourned at 7:08 P.M.

NEXT MEETING DATE: Monday, April 30th at 6:30 P.M., Norton Middle School Library.

Respectfully Submitted,
Patricia H. Ansay, Ed.D.
Secretary pro tem
