

NORTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Norton, Massachusetts

NORTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
MINUTES OF MEETING

***Date of School Committee Meeting:*** Monday, October 15, 2012

***Location:*** J. C. Solmonese Elementary School Library

***Attending:*** Committee Members: Chairperson Andrew Mackie, Vice-Chairperson Deniz Savas, Mr. Phillip Lynch, Mrs. Elizabeth McManus, and Mrs. Marge Werner. Interim Superintendent of Schools Christopher H. Martes and student representative Tyler McNeill were also present.

***Call to Order:*** Chairperson Mackie called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M.

***Pledge of Allegiance:***

***Approval of Meeting Minutes:***

MOTION: by Mr. Savas to approve minutes of the October 1, 2012 Open Meeting

SECOND: by Mr. Lynch

VOTE: 5-0 Motion carries

***Budget Transfers:*** None

***Norton High School AP Classes – Mrs. Megan Lafayette:***

Principal Megan Lafayette reported to the Committee on the upward trend in students taking Advanced Placement courses. Massachusetts Math and Science Initiative provided grant money for additional teachers to be trained. The enrollment restrictions have been removed and there is now an open enrollment policy. Currently 205 students are enrolled in AP courses. AP Physics is the most recent addition, and Chemistry, Environmental Science, and Statistics & Probability have been added over the last several years. Last year 73% of the students reached the qualifying score of 3. Overall, Norton is just above the state average, and 10% over the global average. Several high school students gave their individual reasons for taking AP courses. Mrs. Werner said many students don't realize how difficult college courses are, and AP courses give them valuable experience. Mr. Mackie cautioned the students not to overload themselves with the number of courses they take. Mrs. McManus asked Mrs. Lafayette how the teachers are chosen. Mr. Savas said that receiving college credits for the courses could provide substantial financial savings. Mrs. Lafayette said she does not plan to add any new classes at this time, but she would like to increase participation in some of the present classes.

Mrs. McManus discussed the lack of interest in Homecoming. Mrs. Lafayette said high school students are not that interested in dances. The possibility of promoting other activities to raise interest in Homecoming was discussed.

Chairperson Mackie thanked Mrs. Lafayette and the students for their participation.

***Opening of School Report – Principal Riitta Bolton:***

Principal Riitta Bolton welcomed the Committee, staff members, and parents and thanked the supportive staff for the hard work in getting the school ready to open in September. She announced that the J. C. Solmonese School has received accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). New staff members were introduced. Several events such as open houses, an Audubon program, and Easton Children's Museum program have taken place. Mrs. Bolton introduced members of the Solmonese Parent Organization (SPO). Mrs. Jill Bercovitch-Blake told the Committee that the purpose of the SPO is to build a community. It supports many events throughout the year, and the main focus for this year is the replacement of the school playground. The SPO also provides funds for field trips, teaching supplies, NHS scholarships, and other items cut from the budget.

Mrs. Bolton said 66% of the students participated in summer reading. JCS served as the child care center for the TPC Tournament, and funds from that helped to purchase Smart Boards. Enrollment at JCS is 498 students. She reviewed instructional initiatives for the year, and classroom teachers Carol Shipkin, Maureen Allen, and Kerry Goodrich explained responsive classrooms. Mrs. Bolton commented that the teachers are still analyzing the MCAS results, and that the third grade scored higher than the state average on many of the items. She covered the strengths and weaknesses, and plans for improvement.

Mr. Mackie praised the SPO and told the new teachers that NPS is a strong supporter of professional development and provides many learning opportunities.

***Superintendent Search Update – Mrs. Beth McManus and Mrs. Marge Werner:***

Correspondence soliciting search committee members has gone out and quite a few people have responded. Advertisement for the position of Superintendent will be out the week of October 15<sup>th</sup> with an application deadline of November 30<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Savas said they should decide on a compensation package beforehand to avoid last minute problems. The Search Committee will consist of (2) School Committee members; (2) Administrators; (2) Teachers, one K-5 and one 6-12; (1) Central Office Staff; (1) Selectmen or Finance Committee Representative; (1) Citizen-at-Large; (1) Student Representative; (2) Parents.

***Vote to Authorize the Chairperson to Sign the State Financial End-of-Year Report:***

The FY '12 End-of-Year Report is due to the DESE by October 31<sup>st</sup>. This is a report of all revenue and expenditures of the Norton School Department for the year. Prior to the Chairman signing the report, it will be reviewed by the Superintendent of Schools and the Town Accountant.

MOTION: by Mr. Savas to authorize the Chairperson to sign the State Financial End-of-Year Report

SECOND: by Mrs. McManus

VOTE: 5-0 Motion carries

***Vote to Approve Executive Sessions Policy Revisions:***

The Massachusetts Association of School Committees has reviewed recent opinions and cases resolved by the Attorney General after implementation of changes in the Open Meeting Law relative to executive sessions. There are changes in the procedure to enter executive session and changes in the practice of releasing executive session minutes.

MOTION: by Mrs. McManus to approve the executive sessions policy revision

SECOND: by Mr. Lynch

VOTE: 4-1 Motion carries

***Fall Town Meeting Article for J. C. Solmonese Roof– Mr. Barry Nectow:***

The School Department requests approval to submit an article to the October Special Town Meeting, in the amount of \$1,500,000, for the replacement of the roof at the J. C. Solmonese Elementary School. The article will request an increase of \$575,000 to the article approved at the spring town meeting in the amount of \$925,000. The Town has received approval to submit a schematic design for participation in the MSBA Accelerated Repair Program. If the design is approved and the project moves forward, the Town will be reimbursed at a rate of approximately 56%. The project will begin after school closes and be completed before the first day of school in September, 2013. The warranty for the roof is 20 years.

MOTION: by Mr. Savas to approve Fall Town Meeting Article for J. C. Solmonese Roof

SECOND: by Mr. Lynch

VOTE: 5-0 Motion carries

***Personnel:***

***Retirement:***

Mrs. Lisa Adams, JCS Special Education Teacher, effective December 31, 2012, after 32 years of service

***Adjourn:***

MOTION: by Mr. Savas to enter executive session for the purpose of discussion and/or ratification of Norton Teachers' Association Contract. The Committee will not return to open session.

SECOND: by Mr. Lynch

VOTE: Mr. Mackie-yes; Mr. Savas-yes; Mr. Lynch-yes; Mrs. McManus-yes;  
Mrs. Werner-yes Motion carries

The meeting adjourned at 8:28 P.M.

***Documents and Other Exhibits Used at Meeting:***

- Copy of October 1, 2012 Open Meeting Minutes
- List of composition of Search Committee
- List of where the position will be advertised
- Copy of advertisement
- Copy of brochure with NPS information and application details

- Proposed additions/amendments to the current Executive Session Policy
- Copy of current Executive Session Policy
- Personnel letter

***NEXT MEETING DATE:*** Monday, November 5, 2012 at Norton Middle School

Respectfully Submitted,  
Christopher H. Martes, Ph.D.  
Secretary pro tem

---

---

---

---

---

***Date Approved:*** November 5, 2012