

NORTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Norton, Massachusetts

NORTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING

Date of School Committee Meeting: Monday, November 19, 2012

Location: Norton High School Library

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

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

Pledge of Allegiance:

Norton High School Building Project Tour:

A tour of the new addition was provided for those in attendance.

Update on Norton High School Building Project – W. T. Rich:

Following the tour, Steve Roman, project manager for W. T. Rich Construction, and Tom O'Neil, Pinck & Company Project Manager made a slide presentation of the progress to date. Phase 1 is nearly completed and most materials have been secured. The project is on schedule and February vacation will most likely be the change over for students to utilize the new cafeteria area. Box lunches will still be served until the food preparation area is finished. The existing cafeteria seating area will be converted to temporary classroom space. Phase 2 will focus on the administration area and completion of the new addition. Mr. Savas asked about the unique shape of the new roof and its durability. Mr. Roman stated that after the heavy rain during the recent storm there were not leaks.

Approval of Meeting Minutes:

MOTION: by Mr. Savas to approve minutes of the November 5, 2012 Open Meeting and Executive Session.
SECOND: by Mrs. Werner
VOTE: 4-0 Motion carries

Recognition of Norton High School Volleyball Team:

Coach Newell and three senior athletes were present to receive recognition for their outstanding season and advancement to the state play-offs. Coach Newell pointed out that the team has grown substantially over the last four years. The team also held several fundraiser activities and made donations to several charities.

Opening of School Report – Mrs. Megan Lafayette:

Principal Lafayette began by introducing the new Assistant Principal, Geoffrey Zini, and several new classroom teachers. She thanked the district's custodial staff for getting the building ready for opening on September 5th. There are currently 707 students. Mrs. Lafayette cited two program changes this year. The STEP program has an added teacher for academic instruction.

The second program is called Freshmen Academy. It is a pilot program to assist struggling 9th grade students. There are currently 14 students in the program with one teacher, one paraprofessional, and Wheaton tutors.

Mrs. Lafayette reviewed class size and MCAS scores. The staff has identified the questions that students had difficulty with, and will work on them to raise scores in the future. Another focus is on SAT preparation. Recently Norton High School was named to the College Board's 3rd Annual AP District Honor Roll, being one of 46 high schools in Massachusetts to receive this honor. Preparation has also begun for the 2015 New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) evaluation visit.

A discussion took place regarding how many students are lost to other schools such as charter, private, and vocational/technical. The Committee and Dr. Martes suggested ways in which the positive aspects of NHS could be provided to parents of younger students. Mrs. McManus stated that over the last decade Norton High School's reputation has greatly improved.

The Committee thanked Mrs. Lafayette for her presentation.

FY '13 Budget Update – Mr. Barry Nectow:

The current year budget is in good shape. Approximately 97% of the funds have been spent or encumbered. The areas to watch closely are utilities, substitutes, building issues/kitchen equipment, tuitions, and out-of-district transportation. Mr. Nectow will report again in December.

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

Applications for the Search Committee have been reviewed by Dr. Martes, Mrs. McManus and Mrs. Werner, and final selections will be made. The deadline for superintendent applications is November 30th, and the initial meeting will be held the first week in December to review packets. Dr. Martes stressed that all members of the Search Committee need to attend all meetings. Twenty application packets have been received and more are expected in the next two weeks.

Personnel:

Mrs. JoAnn Petrelli – Promoted from Head Cook at JCS to Interim Food Service Director for the duration of the 2012-2013 school year.

Mrs. Cheryl Benkart – Promoted from Cafeteria Assistant at JCS to Head Cook at JCS for the duration of the 2012-2013 school year.

Adjourn:

MOTION: by Mr. Savas to enter executive session for the purpose of discussion of potential litigation. The Committee will not return to open session.

SECOND: by Mrs. McManus

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:12 P.M.

Documents and Other Exhibits used at Meeting:

- AP District Honor Roll Press Release
- Safety Handbook Table of Contents and Administration and Organization section
- Three Week Look Ahead Schedule, November 13-December 4, 2012
- Budget/General Ledger Information
- Personnel Letters

NEXT MEETING DATE: Monday, December 3, 2012 at Norton Middle School

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