

**ACTON PUBLIC SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES (approved 6/17/10)**

**Cafetorium
Luther Conant School**

**May 20, 2010
7:30 pm**

Members present: Jonathan Chinitz, Michael Coppolino, Xuan Kong, Terry Lindgren, Sharon Smith McManus, John Petersen
Others: Marie Altieri, Liza Huber, Steve Mills, Beth Petr

The meeting was called to order at 7:34 p.m. by Xuan Kong, Committee Chair.

SUPERINTENDENT’S INTRODUCTION and ELECTION OF OFFICERS

It was moved, seconded and unanimously

VOTED: That John Petersen serve as Chairperson of the Acton Public School Committee for 2010 - 2011.

It was moved, seconded and unanimously

VOTED: That Michael Coppolino serve as Vice-Chairperson of the Acton Public School Committee for 2010 - 2011.

It was moved, seconded and unanimously

VOTED: That Beth Petr serve as Secretary of the Acton Public School Committee for 2010 - 2011.

Xuan Kong was thanked for his hard work and dedication all year as APS School Committee Chair. Christine Price was thanked by the Committee for her enthusiastic efforts as Conant Principal for the past three years. They wished well in her future position in Weston.

STATEMENT OF WARRANT

Warrant #201023 dated 5/18/10 in the amount of \$238,756.71 was signed by the Chair and circulated to the Committee for approval.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of May 3, 2010 and May 6, 2010 were approved as written

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - no participation

EDUCATION REPORT - Conant School, Christine Price, Principal

Dr. Price shared highlights of the year at Conant, as well as some of the focus areas for the future. She spoke about how valuable the before and after school care programs are, how supportive the PTO is and how Conant is planning to celebrate their 40th birthday next Spring. Space issues as well as maintaining a 40 year old building are some areas of focus. Lack of space is a key issue for all of our elementary schools. Regarding class size, Dr. Price said that having an assistant in every class, in every building, is more valuable, in her opinion, than trying to lower class size with fewer assistants.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Conant Principal Announcement

Steve Mills welcomed Damian Sugrue as the new Conant Principal. Mr. Sugrue said that he was very excited to be joining our School District and looked forward to meeting everyone.

2. ALG/Acton Finance Committee Reports - Xuan Kong

The last ALG meeting was 3/24/10.

The new Chair of the Acton Finance Committee is Mary Ann Ashton. The new Vice-Chair is Bill Mullin and Clerk is Doug Tindal.

3. FY'10 and FY '11 Budget Update - Steve Mills

It is expected that \$120,000 - \$130,000 will be turned back to the town at the end of FY10.

Steve Mills said that 9C cuts in FY11 should be expected and it will be another difficult financial year. He expects to have to revisit the level 5 cut levels from last spring.

4. Health Insurance Trust Report - John Petersen

The Trust is expected to breakeven at the end of the year. June 23 is the next meeting.

5. Kindergarten Enrollment Update - Marie Altieri

321 Kindergartners are enrolled. Average class size of kindergarten is 20 with 21 for all day K.

6. IT Plan and Assistant Principal Updates - Steve Mills

To fund the two Assistant Principals, two IT positions were eliminated and combined into one position with two sets of skills. Priscilla Kotyk has been the Assistant Principal at Gates and Conant for the past few months and this has worked out well. The second Assistant Principal and new IT Director searches will begin soon. When asked why the Douglas School was not being given an Assistant Principal, Steve Mills said that Dr. Whitbeck felt strongly that he did not need one at this time.

7. Superintendent's Perspective on Negotiations - Steve Mills

The Committee has been asked when the public will have the opportunity to weigh in on negotiations. John Petersen said that they are negotiating with the Acton Education Association (AEA), the Office Support Association (OSA), and the custodians/maintenance (AFSCME). He invited the public to express themselves at a meeting or any time via email to the Committee. Dr. Mills explained that the citizens of Acton elected their School Committee members to make significant decisions, including choosing a Superintendent, creating the budgets, and negotiating successful contracts. These legal contracts are between the three associations and the legal entity, which is the School Committee.

As more organizations ask their staff to cover more of their health insurance costs, Steve Mills recommended that non union employees be moved from an 85-15 to a 75-25 split. This will be on the next Joint School Committee agenda for the June 3rd meeting, and was not discussed at this APS meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

- 1. Recommendation to Approve Douglas School Field Trip to Manshentucket Pequot Museum**
It was moved, seconded and unanimously

VOTED: To approve the Douglas School Field Trip to Manshentucket Pequot Museum in CT on May 21, 2010.

- 2. Recommendation to Accept Gift from Community Education All Day K Program**
It was moved, seconded and unanimously

VOTED: To accept with gratitude the gift of \$100,000 to the Acton Public Schools which represents the first disbursement of projected surplus from the All Day Kindergarten Program for FY'10.

- 3. Recommendation to Accept Gift from Community Education Extended Day Program at Conant**

It was moved, seconded, and unanimously

VOTED: To accept with gratitude the gift of \$20,000 to the Conant School which represents the first disbursement of Conant's share of the surplus generated by A-B Community Ed's Extended Day Program at Conant during FY'10.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

- The Superintendent referred to several items.
- Dr. Mills announced the appointment of Lynne Laramie as the Elementary Special Education Chairperson. She has been the interim Chair for the past year.
- Dr. Mills highlighted the Educational Values and Needs Survey Results Presentation to be held on June 1, 2010 at 12:30 – 2:00 at Temple Beth Elohim. Mike Coppolino asked if further analysis had been done, or if it would be discussed, based on the presentation in January. Liza Huber said that there was a backup document on the SMART goals in the last regional packet (VI .3.b. in 5/6/10 packet). It will be on the agenda for the June 3rd AB meeting.

ISSUES FOR THE COMMITTEE

- 1. Race to the Top – Round 2 (May 24 deadline)**

Although Massachusetts did not make the first cut, there is now a second opportunity. Three signatures are best: Superintendent, School Committee, and the AEA. The AEA will not sign because they are uncomfortable about the amount of uncertainty that exists with this opportunity. The letter of support from the Superintendent and School Committee submitted for the first application is being resubmitted for the second application.

- 2. New Class Size Subcommittee**

Terry Lindgren proposed a new subcommittee to investigate what it would mean to reduce class size K-12. He will bring a proposal to the June 3rd Joint School Committee meeting.

NEXT MEETINGS - June 3, 7:30 p.m. Joint and AB Regional SC Meetings, Jr High Library
June 17, 7:30 p.m., Jr High Library

The meeting was adjourned at 9:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Beth Petr