

**ACTON PUBLIC AND ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL
COMMITTEE MEETINGS** (Joint Minutes approved 9/2/10)

Sargent Library
427 Massachusetts Ave.
Boxborough

Wednesday, July 28, 2010
6:00 p.m. Joint Executive Session
followed by Joint School Committee Workshop
followed by Joint School Committee Meeting
followed by Acton-Boxborough Regional SC Meeting
followed by Acton Public SC Meeting (separate packet)

Members present: Brigid Bieber, Michael Coppolino, Herman Kabakoff, Terry Lindgren, Sharon Smith McManus, Maria Neyland, John Petersen, Bruce Sabot
Members absent: Xuan Kong
Others: Don Aicardi, Marie Altieri, Attorney Peter Ebb (6:00 – 7:50 p.m.), Steve Mills, Beth Petr

The Joint School Committee Meeting was called to order at 6:08 pm. by Brigid Bieber and John Petersen, respective chairs.

JOINT EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 6:09 p.m., it was moved, seconded and unanimously

VOTED by role call: that the **Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee** go into Executive Session (Joint School Committee) to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining.

YES (Bieber, Coppolino, Kabakoff, Lindgren, McManus, Neyland, Petersen, Sabot)

This was done after Brigid Bieber declared that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the Board. She said the purpose of the executive session was to discuss contract negotiations with the AEA, OSA and AFSCME unions.

At 6:10 p.m., it was moved, seconded and unanimously

VOTED by role call: that the **Acton Public School Committee** go into Executive Session (Joint School Committee) to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining.

YES (Coppolino, Kabakoff, Lindgren, McManus, Petersen)

This was done after John Petersen declared that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the Board. He said the purpose of the executive session was to discuss contract negotiations with the AEA, OSA and AFSCME unions.

At 6:11 p.m., it was moved, seconded and unanimously

VOTED by role call: that the **Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee** go into Executive Session (Joint School Committee) to discuss strategy with respect to litigation.

YES (Bieber, Coppolino, Kabakoff, Lindgren, McManus, Neyland, Petersen, Sabot)

This was done after Brigid Bieber declared that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the Board. She said the purpose of the executive session was to discuss a suit filed by a former school employee.

At 6:12 p.m., it was moved, seconded and unanimously

VOTED by role call: that the **Acton Public School Committee** go into Executive Session (Joint School Committee) to discuss strategy with respect to litigation.
YES (Coppolino, Kabakoff, Lindgren, McManus, Petersen)

This was done after John Petersen declared that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the Board. He said the purpose of the executive session was to discuss a suit filed by a former school employee.

The Executive Session ended at 7:50 p.m.

JOINT SCHOOL COMMITTEE ANNUAL WORKSHOP (7:55)

(Marie Altieri and Don Aicardi were not present for the Workshop.)

1. Annual Agenda

The Chairs will work with Beth to update this list of upcoming business (particularly VOTES).

2. List of Committee Assignments

See Attachment A. The new Director of Curriculum and Director of Educational Technology positions will be added to the Admin Benefits Handbook, page 14, for School Committee to vote on at next meeting. Beth will work with Steve and Marie on this. Beth will see if Herman is required to do the New School Committee member training, given that he was appointed for a term of only 8 months. Steve Mills will get an update on the Corporate Sponsorship activity for the next meeting.

3. Open Meeting Law Changes - change any current practices?

Major changes have been made to Postings, Minutes, and Executive Sessions. Most members attended the Acton and Boxborough Open Meeting Law forums. Beth attended both and is comfortable with the changes and asking our attorney, if necessary.

4. Potential Areas for Committee Work:

a. Central Office Reorganization

John Petersen asked what role the committee would like to play in this process, and how they would like to feed ideas to Steve. Maria and Bruce feel they have no role in how Steve sets up his Central Office, or salaries. Sharon agreed. John agreed but pointed out that CO is different because of School Committee's fiduciary responsibility. Terry said that the Committee needs to understand the job descriptions, but should not be in the role of creating. Mike questioned why we don't have an assistant superintendent and formal chain of command. Steve Mills is completing the most significant work he'll do during his Superintendency by creating his own Administrative team. He is very excited about how it is shaping up. Brigid asked Steve to speak up if School Committee members are going directly to staff for too much information. Steve was asked to give the message to his Central Office staff that it may be OK to say no to a School Committee member if they are asking for too much, given the time constraints the Central Office is working under.

b. Explore ways to move Hayward Center/other sped programs for long-term savings

Mike wants to pursue any and all initiatives that might bring programs and kids back into our districts. He would like Liza and Don to consider the return on investment that programs would bring (buy a van?). He does not want this to be a subcommittee.

c. Increase targeted professional development

APS and ABRSD are way behind in per pupil expenditures on professional development, an important way to make better teachers. This is a budget discussion item – where on the priority list should targeted professional development be.

d. Sub-Committee to engage in long term visioning and planning

The Committee agreed this is valuable, but some members questioned the priority level given all of their other pressing issues. Varying opinions were expressed regarding who is responsible for developing the vision for our schools (Superintendent or School Committee?). The demographics survey data is one tool that can help guide the vision. Boxborough Schools have their 5 year enrollment plan on their website. The Committee agreed to continue this important discussion at a future meeting. Xuan's original email will be included in the next meeting packet.

e. Policy Issues (i.e. Early Admission to K, Exchange Students, Field Trips)

Policies will be a focus for the fall. A new one for Corporate Sponsorships will be needed. Sharon will pull a list together. Religious holiday/calendar issues should be reviewed before doing next year's calendar (January).

5. School Committee Effectiveness

a. Have meetings end by 10p.m.

The Committee agreed to try to stay on topic and the Chair was asked to control discussion as appropriate. It was requested that joint meetings and presentations be kept to essentials only. More frequent meetings during budget time may be considered.

b. Improve Committee working together constructively

Some members felt the Ground Rules and Contributions cards created last year were valuable and should be kept. The Committee represents the community and should exemplify civility at all times. Differences in understanding statements and ideas are to be expected in any group. A key in a disagreement is often a misperception. When starting a debate, the Committee agreed to be very clear about what the SC is being asked to do or decide. It helps to focus on the discussion.

c. Discuss public perception of School Committee

The Committee agreed about the importance of respectful behavior and good judgment when it comes to their meetings. The public is relying on them to make important decisions and they agreed that they all take that responsibility very seriously. It was suggested that a group photo be taken and posted on the School Committee website.

JOINT SC BUSINESS MEETING (9:00)

1. CHAIRMAN'S INTRO

Steve Mills welcomed Herman Kabakoff as our newest School Committee member. Herman was appointed to fill the remaining term of Jonathan Chinitz who resigned in June.

2. APPROVAL OF JOINT MINUTES of 6/3/10

The Joint minutes of June 3, 2010 were approved (as written) by the Acton Public and Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committees. Herman Kabakoff abstained from both votes because he was not a member on 6/3/10. Terry Lindgren was not in the room during both votes.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – none

4. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a. FY '10 and FY'11 Budget Updates – Steve Mills

Approximately \$225,000 from the region and \$225,000 from the local districts are expected to be turned back. This is better than expected.

b. Health Insurance Trust (HIT) Update – 6/23/10 meeting

See Attachment B. Next meeting is August 26, 2010

5. NEW BUSINESS

a. Recommendation to approve TEC Food and Related Products Bid

Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee VOTE:

It was moved, seconded and unanimously

VOTED: to approve the TEC Food and Related Products Bid

Acton Public School Committee VOTE:

It was moved, seconded and unanimously

VOTED: to approve the TEC Food and Related Products Bid

b. Recommendation to appoint Don Aicardi as Chief Procurement Officer for the Acton Public and Acton-Boxborough Regional School Districts (Chapter 30B, Section 2).

Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee VOTE:

It was moved, seconded and unanimously

VOTED: to appoint Don Aicardi as Chief Procurement Officer for the Acton Public and Acton-Boxborough Regional School Districts (Chapter 30B, Section 2).

Acton Public School Committee VOTE:

It was moved, seconded and unanimously

VOTED: to appoint Don Aicardi as Chief Procurement Officer for the Acton Public and Acton-Boxborough Regional School Districts (Chapter 30B, Section 2).

6. FYI – Items mentioned or referred to very briefly

- a. Appointments of Amy Bisiewicz (Director of Educational Technology) and Deborah Bookis (Director of Curriculum and Assessment)

Steve Mills welcomed Amy, who is new to our schools, and Deb who is in a new position for us. He acknowledged the strength of our new Administrative team.

- b. June 2010 Leadership Institute - Next Steps

Steve highlighted this event stating that “the product our company delivers is high quality teaching, to every child, in every classroom, every day.”

- c. Acton’s Open Meeting Law Posting Letter dated 7/1/10

- d. Lamplighter – June 2010 is posted at <http://ab.mec.edu/about/publications>

- e. Community Correspondence: Doherty

This was a request to control the cost of school employee pensions and health plans.

- f. Grant Allocations for 2011

- g. Student Enrollment Update

- h. Monthly Financial Reports: FY’10 AB and APS Object Summary and Sped Programs

- i. ABRHS – i. School Improvement Plan (FY10 and FY11), ii. Theft Report and iii. Discipline Report

- j. RJGJHS – i. School Improvement Plan (FY10 and FY11), ii. Discipline Report

- k. ABRSD R&Ds – RJGJHS, ABRHS, ELA Curriculum Review K-12

- l. ABSAF memo

- m. Gifts from Middlesex Savings Bank (Community Service Day), Mr. and Mrs. Robert Findlen (MAP program) and Mr. Gary Jenkins (ABRHS AV Department)
- n. Updated School Committee Members List
- o. Updated School Committee Meetings 2010-2011 – revised location of 9/16 and 11/18 APS SC meetings and changed 2/24 APS SC meeting to 2/17 due to vacation week.
- p. i. Approved Minutes of 7-12-10 APS SC Meeting with Acton Board of Selectmen,
ii. Email from Dennis Bruce, iii. Email from Jesse Liberty
- q. ELL Student Population

The Acton Public School Committee Meeting was suspended at 9:20.

ACTON PUBLIC SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Minutes (approved 9/17/10)

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Members present: Michael Coppolino, Herman Kabakoff, Terry Lindgren, Sharon Smith
McManus, John Petersen
Members absent: Xuan Kong
Others: Don Aicardi, Marie Altieri, Steve Mills, Beth Petr

The Acton Public School Committee Meeting resumed at 9:45.

1. STATEMENT OF WARRANT

The following warrants were signed by the Chair and circulated to the Committee for approval:

Warrant #201026 dated 6/29/10 in the amount of \$160,179.30
Warrant #201027 dated 6/30/10 in the amount of \$230,648.59
Warrant #201101A dated 7/2/10 in the amount of \$286,771.05
Warrant #201101 dated 7/13/10 in the amount of \$525,670.42
Warrant #201102 dated 7/27/10 in the amount of \$495,197.22

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The APS minutes of June 3, 2010 and June 17, 2010 were approved as written. Herman Kabakoff abstained from both of the votes because he was not a School Committee member until July 12, 2010. The minutes of July 12, 2010 were approved as written. Michael Coppolino abstained because he was not at the meeting.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – none

4. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a.. Fincom/ALG Update

At the FinCom on July 27th, discussion focused on how the Committee would structure their year. Terry Lindgren asked for the FinCom’s budget drivers.
The first ALG meeting will be August 17th.

b. Enrollment Update/Kindergarten status

Marie Altieri said that 71 new elementary students were placed last week. More will be placed in August. Total K-6 enrollment is 2499 students as of 7/28/10. We currently have 328 Kindergarteners, compared to 274 projected by NESDEC projections. The high was 325 students. An additional 1st grade section may be needed next year.

c. Staffing Update

The appointments of Priscilla. Kotyk (Assistant Principal, Conant & Gates) and Matthew McDowell (Assistant Principal, McT & Merriam) were announced. Each principal has introduced their assistant principal to their staff and students. Dr.Mills will provide an outline for the Committee of how the Assistant Principals are being used later in the fall. Only two classroom teachers have been hired at APS.

5. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Recommendation to accept gift from Community Education to Conant School

It was moved, seconded and unanimously

VOTED: to accept a gift of \$25,000 from Community Ed to Conant School, with gratitude. This represents the second disbursement of Conant's share of the surplus generated by AB Community Ed's Extended Day Program at Conant during FY10.

Terry Lindgren asked that a future agenda item be to discuss fully funding all assistants using Community Education money in a more directed and universal way. Several School Committee members said that dividing school resources relatively equally among the schools is important.

6. FYI

- a. School Improvement Plans (FY 10 and FY 11)

Steve Mills expects more accountability on these plans. Mike Coppolino agreed, and asked for regularly scheduled meetings to be held by the schools, not just a couple of times a year.

- b. DESE Letter re meeting the Highly Qualified Teacher Goal

Steve Mills said that this was a wonderful, and very unusual, letter for a school system to receive.

The APS SC meeting adjourned at 10:05 p.m.

NEXT MEETINGS: Sept 2 at 7:30 p.m. at the JHL - AB SC Meeting
 Sept 16 at 7:30 p.m. at DOUGLAS – APS SC Meeting

Respectfully submitted,
Beth Petr

ACTON PUBLIC SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

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- I. STATEMENT OF WARRANT
- II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES of 6/3/10 (*addendum*), 6/17/10 (*addendum*), 7/12/10
- III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
- IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS
 - 1.. Fincom Update
 - 2.. Enrollment Update/Kindergarten status
 - 3. Staffing Update
 - a.. Appointment of Priscilla. Kotyk (Assistant Principal, Conant & Gates)
 - b.. Appointment of Matthew McDowell (Assistant Principal, McT & Merriam),
 - c.. New staff hired
 - d.. Leaves/retirements/resignations
- V. NEW BUSINESS
 - 1. Recommendation to accept gift from Community Ed to Conant School – **VOTE** – S. Mills
- VI.. FYI
 - 1.. School Improvement Plans (FY 10 and FY 11)
 - 2.. Updated APS R&Ds,
 - 3.. DESE Letter re meeting the Highly Qualified Teacher Goal
- VII. ADJOURN

The listing of matters are those reasonably anticipated by the Chairs which may be discussed at the meeting. Not all items may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.

NEXT MEETINGS: Sept 2 at 7:30 p.m. at the JHL - AB Regional School Committee Meeting
 Sept 16 at 7:30 p.m. at DOUGLAS – Acton Public School Comm Meeting