

ACTON PUBLIC SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Minutes (approved 8/1/12)

Library
R.J. Grey Junior High School

June 21, 2012
7:00 p.m.

Members Present: Dennis Bruce, Michael Coppolino, Xuan Kong, Kim McOsker, Paul Murphy, Deanne O’Sullivan
Members Absent: none
Others: Don Aicardi, Marie Altieri, Deborah Bookis, Liza Huber, Steve Mills, Beth Petr

The Acton Public School Committee was called to order at 7:01 p.m. by Chairperson, Kim McOsker.

STATEMENT OF WARRANT

Warrant #201223 dated 5/15/12 in the amount of \$315,185.60 and #201225 dated 6/12/12 in the amount of \$457,614.36 were signed by the Chair and circulated to the Committee for signatures. (Warrant #201224 was signed at the 6/7/12 meeting.)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of May 17, 2012 were approved as amended.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - none

APS SCHOOL COMMITTEE BUSINESS

6.1 Math Curriculum Update

Deborah Bookis introduced Jean Oviatt Rothman, K-6 Math Specialist/Coach who reported on the progress of the first year of this new position. It was agreed that it will be valuable to track students’ success over time in relation to assistance provided by the math assistants. A movie was shown highlighting students’ and the staff’s appreciation for the new math support. The elementary principals spoke enthusiastically about how valuable Jean and the assistants have been this year. Next steps include:

- Continue teacher support around new MA Mathematics Frameworks implementation
- Parent education around new frameworks and best ways to support math instruction
- Increased collaboration with specialists (PE, Music, Art, ELL)

6.2 Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SpED PAC) Spring Presentation

Nancy Sherburne presented on the 2011-12 SpED PAC deliverables: parent handbook, parent/guardian survey analysis, launch of new website, and analysis of 2011 MCAS performance. Concern was expressed over the decline in spending for APS special education services. Bill Guthlein is doing some research on how much APS is spending on special education compared to other districts.

Dr. Mills thanked Nancy and Bill for their dedication and hard work. He cautioned everyone about the difficulties of grouping students and comparing them to other groups. Principals Ed Kaufman from Merriam, David Krane from McCarthy-Towne and Damian Sugrue from Conant spoke in support of what Dr. Mills said. He also emphasized that MCAS is only one datapoint for a student, and more pieces of data are needed for a complete picture, particularly at the elementary level. The Gates and Douglas Schools are not included in this discussion because the number of special education students that they have is too small to be significant, not that they are doing so better than the other schools.

Ed Kaufman explained that teams of teachers look over the individual student data when MCAS results come in. They determine which students need more support. They also look at subgroups to determine who needs more attention. Some of these efforts make a difference more quickly than others. Merriam students will be creating professional notebooks that will show growth in specific language arts skills over the year. Damian Sugrue emphasized that MCAS is only a snapshot of a child. Because the MCAS results do not give timely results for a student, Conant uses many other assessment tools as well. David Krane said one thing all schools are doing is to think of continual improvement for each child. Assessment efforts go on continually and on a continuum.

Dennis Bruce stated that in the last year every time Student Growth Percentile (SGP) comes up it seems to be discounted, he asked what is being used as an internal measurement that might refute this or support this. Liza Huber stated that the schools' top priority for our special education students is achievement. All scores are analyzed very carefully to see where needs exist.

Xuan asked if the Administration would, in a future meeting, present the tools that are being used to measure students' progress as suggested by the Principals. It is also important for the District to understand the reasons behind poor MCAS scores of any student subgroups. For example, DESE website shows a much lower percentage of APS students with IEPs requested special accommodations during the MCAS tests (APS 30% versus state average of 15%). Deb Bookis said Xuan's point was excellent. One reason APS has implemented the benchmarks assessments is because MCAS results come too late. Next year will be the first time that all the schools will have this benchmark data so it will be exciting.

Paul Murphy said that the decrease in spending has been highlighted, but asked if it makes sense that the population has dropped so it is not an issue. Does the trend match the population? Nancy replied that Bill is looking into that question and will be reporting on it. Nancy is encouraged to hear that teams in the schools are looking at the MCAS data. She said that the PAC would like to know from the principals what their sense is of the trends and drops when they see them.

6.3 Acton Health Insurance Trust Report

Kim McOsker reported that the next meeting will be on June 29th.

6.4 FY12 and FY13 Budget

6.4.1 ALG Report

Xuan Kong reported on the meeting on 6/20/12 which was mostly organizational due to the new members. Over the summer, a task force will be formed to look into OPEB. Funding for future years is not resolved so ALG would like to address this outside of the budget process. Kim McOsker and Janet Adachi are the two new ALG members. Meetings will be the second Thursday of the month and during the budget season it will also be fourth Thursday morning. In the winter, meetings will be in the evening.

6.4.2 Acton BOS/Finance Committee Reports – *no report*

6.4.3 APS FY12 Year End Review and Expenditure Initiative

Dr. Mills began by saying that the schools are constantly being told they spend too much of reserves, but at the end of the year, they always put money back. Don Aicardi stated that most of the things on this list have been talked about at SC meetings several times before, but not included in the investment budgets. While no votes are necessary, the Committee was asked to give input and affirm the Administration's proposals for year end spending.

Moving forward with the investment budgets, the Administration is being very fiscally conservative:

Current FY12 Year End Estimate: \$361k
Proposed Year End Spending: (\$86k)
\$275 k

The year end balance as a percentage is 1.4% of the \$26.1m budget.

Proposed spending includes:

1. Conant School basketball court/parking lot expansion	\$40,000
2. Gates School abatement/floor replacement	\$18,000
3. Lexia Reading Hardward & Licenses	\$13,000
4. Parker Damon Building storage space & balcony work	<u>\$15,000</u>
	\$86,000

6.4.4 APS FY13 Budget: Non-resident Tuition Rates – **VOTE**

Mike Coppolino moved, Xuan Kong seconded and it was unanimously,

VOTED: to set the APS tuition rate for non-resident students at \$11,480 for the 2012-2013 school year.

6.5 Recommendation to Accept Gift from All Day Kindergarten Program to APS - **VOTE**

Xuan Kong moved, Paul Murphy seconded, and it was unanimously,

VOTED: to accept this gift of \$123,500 with gratitude

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

7.1 Pupil Services

7.1.2 Memo re ELL Trends – *Liza Huber*

Mike Coppolino thanked Liza for this valuable memo showing trends over time.

NEXT MEETINGS:

June 28, 6:00 p.m. JT/AB/APS SC workshop at Blanchard School Library, Boxborough

August 1 (Wednesday), 7:30 p.m. JT/AB/APS SC meeting at RJGJHS Library

The meeting was adjourned at 8:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Petr

List of documents used: agenda attached

ACTON PUBLIC SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Library
R.J. Grey Junior High School

June 21, 2012
7:00 p.m.

AGENDA

- 1.0 CALL TO ORDER (7:00)
- 2.0 CHAIRPERSON'S INTRODUCTION
- 3.0 STATEMENT OF WARRANT
- 4.0 APPROVAL OF MINUTES
 - 4.1 APS SC May 17, 2012
- 5.0 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (7:05)
- 6.0 APS SCHOOL COMMITTEE BUSINESS
 - 6.1 Math Curriculum Update – *Jean Oviatt-Rothman* (7:10)
 - 6.2 Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SpED PAC) Presentation – *Nancy Sherburne, Bill Guthlein* (7:25)
 - 6.3 Acton Health Insurance Trust Report – *Kim McOsker* (oral) (7:45)
 - 6.4 FY12 and FY13 Budget – *Steve Mills, Don Aicardi* (7:50)
 - 6.4.1 ALG Report – *Xuan Kong* (oral)
 - 6.4.2 Acton BOS/Finance Committee Reports – *Xuan Kong* (oral)
 - 6.4.3 APS FY12 Year End Review and Expenditure Initiative (8:00)
 - 6.4.4 APS FY13 Budget: Non-resident Tuition Rates – **VOTE** – *Steve Mills* (8:15)
 - 6.5 Recommendation to Accept Gift from All Day Kindergarten Program to APS – **VOTE** – *Steve Mills* (8:20)
- 7.0 FOR YOUR INFORMATION
 - 7.1 Pupil Services
 - 7.1.1 ELL Student Enrollment Reports – June 1
 - 7.1.2 Memo re ELL Trends – *Liza Huber*
 - 7.2 Monthly APS Financial Reports
 - 7.3 Student Enrollment Numbers/Class Size Info – June 1
 - 7.4 School Newsletters
 - Conant Crier: <http://conant.ab.mec.edu/pto/newsletter.html>
 - Douglas Digest: <http://douglas.ab.mec.edu/pto/digest.html>
 - Gates Gazette: <http://gatesschoolpto.org/gazette>
 - McCarthy-Towne Bulletin: <http://www.mctptso.org/bulletin/>
 - Merriam Comm News: <http://www.merriampto.org/Merriam>
 - Acton Public School Preschool: <http://ab.mec.edu/Preschool/index.htm>
- 8.0 NEXT MEETINGS:
 - June 28, 6:00 p.m. JT/AB/APS SC workshop at Blanchard School Library, Boxborough
 - August 1 (Wednesday), 7:30 p.m. JT/AB/APS SC meeting at RJGJHS Library
- 9.0 ADJOURN (8:30)