

Minutes of Barrington School Committee with Barrington Committee on Appropriations

Thursday, April 16, 2015

7:00 p.m.

A joint meeting of the Barrington School Committee with the Barrington Committee on Appropriations was held on Thursday, April 16, 2015 in the Administration Building. School Committee Chair Mrs. Kate Brody called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. Present were Mr. John Alessandro and Dr. Robert Shea. Absent were Dr. Paula Dominguez and Mr. Patrick Guida.

Committee on Appropriations Chair Mr. Geoffrey Grove called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. Present were Mr. Peter Dennehy, Ms. Melissa Horne and Mr. Chad Mollica. Absent was Mr. Peter Clifford.

Mr. Grove reviewed the counter proposal made by the School Committee in response to the recommendations made by the Committee on Appropriations relative to the FY 16 budget. The Committee on Appropriations had included the following recommendations for the FY 16 budget: a reduction of the operating budget by \$400,000 and a transfer of \$200,000 from the School Capital Reserve Account. The Committee on Appropriations approved funding support for the proposed capital technology budget of \$275,000. The Administration, after careful additional review of all accounts in the proposed school budget, and with the approval of the School Committee, had made the following recommendations as a counter proposal: additional reductions of (\$114,000) in Medical

Insurance, and increase of \$12,300 for workers compensation and property liability insurance, (\$5,000) in Professional Development and of (\$20,000) in General Supplies/Education Equipment to include a total reduction in the proposed operating budget of \$126,700. The Administration will provide funding for the Primrose Hill Playground Project cost of \$100,000 in FY 16 from the School Improvement Capital Reserve Fund and the \$150,000 cost of the remaining elementary playgrounds in the next 2-3 years; the Administration would monitor the projects to ensure that any items identified in planned immediate Health and Safety needs would be addressed during the timeline. The School Committee could not support the recommendation of the Committee on Appropriations to transfer \$200,000 from the School Capital Reserve Account, as there are multiple projects that are currently underway to address Immediate Health and Safety needs and the transfer of funds would delay necessary improvements.

The Committee on Appropriations and School Committee engaged in a lengthy discussion relative to FY 16 initiatives including the 1:1 Technology Initiative, the technology fellowship, and operating budget fixed costs including salaries and benefits. Mr. Dennehy moved and Ms. Horne seconded the motion that the Committee on Appropriations accept the counterproposal recommendations of the School Committee. Mr. Grove, Mr. Dennehy and Ms. Horne voted in the affirmative for the motion and Mr. Mollica voted in opposition to the motion.

Mr. Tarro will provide the Committee on Appropriations with the

revised budget to reflect the adopted recommendations as a result of this evening's meeting.

Dr. Shea moved and Mr. Alessandro seconded the motion to adjourn the School Committee meeting at 7:39 p.m. Mrs. Brody, Mr. Alessandro and Dr. Shea voted in the affirmative for the motion.

Mr. Mollica moved and Mr. Dennehy seconded the motion to adjourn the Committee on Appropriations meeting at 7:40 p.m. Mr. Grove, Mr. Dennehy, Ms. Horne and Mr. Mollica voted in the affirmative for the motion.

A regular meeting of the Barrington School Committee was held on Thursday, April 16, 2015 in the Administration Building following a meeting with the Committee on Appropriations at 7:00 p.m. School Committee Chair Kate Brody called the meeting to order at 7:47 p.m. Present were Mrs. Brody, Dr. Dominguez, Mr. Alessandro, Dr. Shea, Mr. Messore, Mrs. Dillon, and Mr. Tarro. Absent were Mr. Guida and Ms. Schwartz.

Mrs. Brody introduced School Committee members present at the meeting: Dr. Robert Shea, Dr. Paula Dominguez, and Mr. Alessandro. Mr. Patrick Guida and Ms. Lucina Schwartz were absent. Mrs. Brody also introduced the Administration and Central Office Staff present: Superintendent Michael Messore, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction Paula Dillon, Director of Administration

and Finance Ronald Tarro, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent Elizabeth Levesque, and Computer/Network Technician Michael Fallgren.

Pledge of Allegiance

Dr. Scott Douglas led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Achievement Recognition

Mr. Messore presented each School Committee member with a book titled Norwegian by Night as a gift from Dr. Suzanne Costa, K-12 Barrington Library Department Head and Barrington High School Library Media Specialist, as part of the 2015 Reading Across Rhode Island initiative and the district's Reading Week.

Mr. Messore also announced the following achievements across the district:

The Barrington High School Math Team placed first in the University of Rhode Island's 9th Annual Calculus Bowl. Team members include Teddy Ni, Matthew Lamontagne, Adam Kelly, Kieran Mc Gartoll, and William Yao, led by Coach and Barrington High School Mathematics Department Head Robert Marley.

Director of Technology Katie Miller has earned the national

designation of Certified Education Technology Leader from the Consortium for School Networking

Information and Proposals

Mrs. Dillon provided information on the district's continued Assessment evaluation process with research based changes including recommendations for consideration from the recent student forum focused on student stress. Mrs. Dillon noted the change in testing structure for district assessments, decreasing the frequency of STAR assessment for Barrington High School students who have demonstrated proficiency. Mrs. Dillon also provided information on the partnership to develop and share best practice strategies with nine other Rhode Island districts through Solution Tree and announced plans for a collaborative publication with the Bristol Warren Regional School District and the Middletown Public Schools to be featured in the JSD Learning Forward Journal. The Committee expressed its appreciation for the thoughtful approach to assessment strategies, and asked how students will receive communication on assessment changes.

Mrs. Dillon presented an overview of the district's Summer Learning Program, including information on curriculum based activities for each grade level K-12 and Barrington High School summer school. Mrs. Dillon also provided information on the district's comprehensive summer learning website that will be updated in May, 2015. Mrs.

Brody shared comments relative to the topic on behalf of Ms. Lucina Schwartz, Student Representative to the School Committee, who had provided an electronic document for Administration and School Committee reference due to her absence at the meeting. Questions from the Committee included resources available to Barrington High School students for both credit recovery and those seeking advanced opportunities, summer reading assignments for students taking Advanced Placement courses, content area proficiency as well as consistency and clear expectations of students relative to the use of summer work particularly at the high school level.

General Public Discussion and Information

No issues were raised at this time.

Old Business from Superintendent and Staff

Mr. Messore provided an update relative to the district Strategic Communication Plan, reporting that he and Mr. Tarro held a Budget Information Session for the K-12 PTOs on April 13, 2015. Mr. Messore and Mr. Tarro also presented the same budget message at faculty meetings at every district school. Communication on the budget update with a link to the 2014-2015 District Report and information on the Barrington Middle School building project bid award was sent out this week to parents and staff.

Mr. Tarro reported that Mrs. Brody, Mr. Alessandro, and Dr. Shea met with four members of the Committee on Appropriations (COA) at 7:00 p.m, immediately preceding the regular meeting. By a 3-1 vote, the COA approved funding support for the proposed capital technology budget of \$275,000 and support of reductions in the amount of \$126,700 to the proposed operating budget as authorized by the School Committee at its April 9, 2015 meeting. Mrs. Brody noted that the revised proposed operating budget represents an increase of 1.71% with a net impact to taxpayers of 0.91%. This proposed budget will be presented by the COA for approval at the Financial Town Meeting on May 27, 2015. A brief discussion ensued on possible staffing changes, current Kindergarten enrollment data and possible enrollment changes that take place each summer, and whether the Committee should prepare a budget narrative for the Financial Town Meeting as was done last year; the consensus of the Committee was to continue the budget narrative initiative for 2015.

The Committee agreed to hear the New Business School Committee Field Trip Approval agenda item out of order.

Mr. Messore introduced Mr. Mario Correia, Barrington High School Mathematics teacher, who requested approval for an overnight field trip on May 22-25, 2015 to Orlando, Florida for three students to participate in the American Computer Science League All Star Competition. Mr. Correia provided an overview of the trip logistics.

Dr. Dominguez moved and Dr. Shea seconded to approve the overnight field trip on May 22-25, 2015 to Orlando, Florida for three Barrington High School students to participate in the American Computer Science League All Star Competition. The motion passed 4-0 with Mrs. Brody, Dr. Dominguez, Mr. Alessandro, and Dr. Shea voting in the affirmative for the motion.

Old Business from School Committee

No issues were raised at this time.

New Business from Superintendent and Staff

Mr. Messore announced the retirement for Mrs. Claudia Couto, Hampden Meadows School Grade 5 Teacher. Mr. Messore and School Committee members expressed their appreciation for Mrs. Couto's 25 years of service, her passion for teaching, and her strong advocacy for teachers.

Dr. Dominguez moved and Dr. Shea seconded to approve the monthly expenditures for March in the amount of \$3,705,001.33.

Mr. Tarro noted that the budget is within 1% plus or minus of its target.

The motion passed 4-0 with Mrs. Brody, Dr. Dominguez, Mr.

Alessandro, and Dr. Shea voting in the affirmative for the motion.

New Business from School Committee

Mrs. Brody reported on the April 8, 2015 organizational meeting of the Budget Forecast Committee. The Committee reconvened after a period of suspended activity since 2012 and was created to provide a collaborative municipal/public schools approach to understanding financial liabilities with an outlook on capital expenditures. Mr. Geoffrey Grove was appointed Chair, and Mrs. Ann Strong was appointed recording secretary; the Committee will meet next in July, 2015.

Mrs. Brody led the discussion on School Committee participation on the Ad Hoc Committee on the Artificial Turf Field. Mr. Michael Carroll, Town Council Liaison to the School Committee, presented information on the Ad Hoc Committee on April 9, 2015 to the School Committee, including its goal to make a recommendation to the Town Council and School Committee by October, 2015. Following discussion and questions, the Committee agreed to share with Mr. Carroll questions to clarify the charge, format, and frequency of meetings of the Ad Hoc Committee, as well as a request that Mr. Messoro and Mr. Tarro be included as members of the Ad Hoc Committee, prior to final determination of School Committee member representation.

The School Committee adopted the Resolution on Gun Free Schools at its April 9, 2015 meeting and agreed to review its current Weapons and Assault policy at this meeting. Following discussion on the policy that incorporates student centered language, the Committee agreed to have the Policy Subcommittee and legal counsel review the policy and provide recommendations for revision to the School Committee for consideration and approval.

Decision Items

No decision items were presented for approval at this time.

Discussion Future Agenda Items

Mr. Messore reported that the next regular School Committee meeting scheduled for April 30, 2015 will feature updates on the Strategic Plan Smartsheet, the BAY Team, and Barrington High School Student Assistance Program. Mr. Messore noted that the April 30 School Committee meeting will include a Spotlight on Teaching and Learning, as there will be only one regular School Committee meeting in May due to the meeting schedule for the Budget Hearing and the Financial Town Meeting. A possible addition to the May 21, 2015 meeting may include a presentation from the Barrington High School Senior Project Coordinators.

Mrs. Brody requested a future agenda item to include information

from the Town Planner relative to the impact that new housing developments, approved as part of the 2015 Comprehensive Community Plan, may have on future district enrollment.

Mrs. Brody requested a future agenda item to include the scheduling of the next Governance Workshop.

Announcements

Mrs. Brody noted that the Building Committee will meet on April 27, 2015, the Ad Hoc Committee on the Artificial Turf Field will meet on April 29, 2015, and the Rhode Island Association of School Committees will hold its annual meeting on May 2, 2015.

General Public Discussion and Information

Dr. Scott Douglas, of 25 Rumstick Road, who was in the audience for the meeting with the Committee on Appropriations, offered his perspective on areas that can be drawn attention to for the benefit of the community including looking at the system and goals stated in the Strategic Plan and not a focus on managing financial liabilities, district return on investment, external benchmarks, and the fellowship position to support the 1:1 technology initiative.

Dr. Dominguez moved and Dr. Shea seconded to adjourn the regular

meeting at 9:34 p.m. and go in to Executive Session pursuant to Rhode Island General Laws Section 42-46-5(a)(3) for discussion regarding the matter of security including but not limited to the deployment of security personnel or devices. The motion passed 4-0 with Mrs. Brody, Dr. Dominguez, Mr. Alessandro, and Dr. Shea voting in the affirmative for the motion.

Dr. Dominguez moved and Dr. Shea seconded to adjourn the Executive Session at 10:09 p.m. and to seal the minutes. The motion passed 4-0 with Mrs. Brody, Dr. Dominguez, Mr. Alessandro, and Dr. Shea voting in the affirmative for the motion.

Mrs. Brody noted that no votes were taken in Executive Session.

Dr. Dominguez moved and Dr. Shea seconded to adjourn the regular meeting at 10:10 p.m. The motion passed 4-0 with Mrs. Brody, Dr. Dominguez, Mr. Alessandro, and Dr. Shea voting in the affirmative for the motion.