

CRANSTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE

SPECIAL MEETING

OCTOBER 25, 2011

WILLIAM A. BRIGGS BUILDING (REED CONFERENCE ROOM)

845 PARK AVENUE

EXECUTIVE SESSION: 5:00 P.M.

PUBLIC SESSION IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING EXECUTIVE SESSION

MINUTES

A Special meeting of the Cranston School Committee was held on the evening of the above date at the William A. Briggs Building with the following members present: Ms. Iannazzi, Mrs. Ruggieri, Mrs. Culhane, Mr. Bloom, and Mrs. McFarland. Mr. Lombardi and Mr. Traficante were absent with cause.

The meeting was called to order at 5:07 p.m. It was moved by Mrs. Culhane and seconded by Mrs. Ruggieri and unanimously carried that the members convene to Executive Session Pursuant to RI State Laws PL 42-46-5(a)(1) Personnel, PL 42-46-5(a)(2) Collective Bargaining and Litigation (Contract Negotiations' Update-Custodians), (Consideration of legal options regarding status of aid to education appropriation and legal advice relating to the same).

Call to Order – Public Session was called to order at 5:45 p.m. The

roll was called and a quorum was present. It was reported by Chairperson Iannazzi that no votes were taken in Executive Session.

Executive Session Minutes Sealed – October 25, 2011 – Moved by Mrs. Ruggieri, seconded by Mr. Bloom and unanimously carried to seal the minutes of Executive Session.

Public Hearing

- a. Students (agenda/non-agenda matters) – There were none.**
- b. Members of the Public (agenda matters only) – There were none.**

Moved by Mrs. McFarland, seconded by Mrs. Ruggieri to bring up Resolution No. 11-10-21 for discussion:

Mrs. Culhane:

On the fourth Whereas, according to audit performance by Mayor Fung, should we be calling it an audit or is that just semantics. Mr. Nero answered that the original letter from the Mayor described it as a Performance Audit. The original March letter called it a performance audit. Mr. Bloom added that it would be better to word it “Performance Audit” because there is a huge difference between performance audit and an audit. A discussion ensued.

It was decided to word that as: “according to a Performance Audit performed in March 2011 at the request of Mayor Fung…….”

A motion was made by Mr. Bloom to amend the resolution. Seconded by Mrs. Culhane. The vote was taken:

Mr. Bloom – Yes Mrs. McFarland - Yes

Mrs. Culhane - Yes Mrs. Ruggieri – Yes Ms. Iannazzi – Yes

Mr. Lombardi and Mr. Traficante – both were absent for the vote.

Mr. Bloom spoke on an article in the paper today on the pension issue. There were comments from Senator Flag in Warren regarding turn over allowances regarding the costs and the impacts of teacher retirements. At this time, Mr. Bloom read the article to the committee:

If a teacher is forced to go from 62 to 67 to retire and would have been replaced by someone on September 1st then it's an additional \$130,000 for one teacher over that five year period. Has anyone thought about this and figured it into the actuarial studies? I'm assuming unless State aid increases by a drastic amount, this cost will go directly to the City's accounts.

Mr. Bloom noted that we do make allowances for retirements so he has requested of Mr. Balducci to prepare some estimates of what our retirements have been over the years to help quantify this for this particular issue and he feels that they should send this on to the members of the State House so that they are aware of this. A discussion ensued. Mr. Nero pointed out that there is going to have to be an entirely different way of looking when you do the negotiation process in the future because people are not going to be retiring.

A motion was made on a friendly amendment to also send the resolution to Mayor Fung and to Council President Lupino, by Mrs. Culhane. Mrs. Ruggieri seconded the amendment and the vote was taken:

Mr. Bloom – Yes Mrs. McFarland – Yes

Mrs. Ruggieri – Yes Mrs. Culhane – Yes

Ms. Iannazzi – Yes

There being no further discussion, the roll was taken on the motion as amended:

Mr. Bloom – Yes Mrs. Ruggieri – Yes

Mrs. Culhane – Yes Mrs. McFarland – Yes

Ms. Iannazzi - Yes

Sponsored by Chairperson Iannazzi

NO. 11-10-21 – WHEREAS, Rhode Island's state employee and teacher retirement system is underfunded by over \$6 Billion; and

WHEREAS, the employer share of retirement costs will increase to 20% of payroll in FY 2013, a 60% increase over the FY 2012 contribution; and

WHEREAS, the total cost to school districts and cities and towns for Rhode Island's teacher retirement and municipal employee retirement

systems will exceed \$92 million in FY 2013; and

WHEREAS, the Cranston Public Schools' contribution to state and municipal employee retirement systems will result in a \$7,060,656 increase in FY 2013; and

WHEREAS, according to an audit performed at the request of Mayor Fung, the Cranston Public Schools are currently operating \$3.9 million dollars below the Basic Education Plan (BEP); and

WHEREAS, the Cranston Public Schools cannot raise revenue or cut any additional programs to fund an increased contribution to the state and municipal employee retirement systems;

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Cranston School Committee respectfully requests that the Rhode Island General Assembly enact reforms to the state and municipal employees systems that mitigate the cost to school districts; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the Cranston legislative delegation, Governor Lincoln Chafee, and General Treasurer Gina Raimondo.

Announcement of Future Meetings – November 16 and November 22, 2011.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Frank S. Lombardi

School Committee Clerk