

Minutes of the East Greenwich School Committee

Tuesday, April 7, 2015

Archie R. Cole Middle School Library

100 Cedar Avenue

East Greenwich, RI 02818

6:05 p.m. Executive Session, Mrs. Winters made a motion to go into executive session for discussion and/or action regarding those items of business exempt from open meetings under Rhode Island General Laws §42-46-4 and §42-46-5 (a) (a) (2) Litigation update: Lamendola v. Town of EG, et al.; Memorandum of Agreement- Librarian; EGEA Contract Appendix B. Mr. Osborne seconded the motion, which passed 6-0.

Those in attendance were, Ms. Carolyn Mark, Chair; Dr. Deidre Gifford (arrived at 6:06 p.m.), Vice-Chair; Mrs. Mary Ellen Winters; Mr. Clark Smith; Dr. Yan Sun; Mr. David Osborne; and Mr. Michael Fain. Dr. Victor Mercurio, Superintendent; Mrs. Gail Wilcox, Director of Administration; and Mr. Bradley Wilson, Director of Student Services were also in attendance.

7:00 p.m. Regular Meeting

I. Call to Order

Ms. Mark called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. and announced a vote was taken in executive session in regards to a Memorandum of

Agreement (MOA) for a librarian. The Committee voted 7-0 in support of the MOA.

II. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

The meeting commenced with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

III. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

IV. Approval of Minutes

a. Regular and Executive for March 10, 2015

On a motion by Mrs. Winters, which was seconded by Dr. Sun, the Committee voted 6-0 to approve the executive minutes. Dr. Gifford abstained. On a motion by Mrs. Winters, which was seconded by Mr. Fain, the Committee voted 7-0 to approve the regular minutes.

b. Regular and Executive for March 17, 2015

On a motion by Mr. Osborne, which was seconded by Mr. Fain, the Committee voted 6-0 to approve the regular and executive minutes. Mrs. Winters abstained.

V. Recognitions

a. EGHS Academic Decathlon Team

The Committee congratulated the students on their impressive achievements. Mr. Frank Lenox and Mr. Ben Revkin, team advisors, were also congratulated and thanked for their assistance.

VI. Superintendent's Report

A curriculum forum has been scheduled for Thursday, April 30, 2015 from

6:30-8:30 p.m. in the Cole library. Dr. Naspo, the curriculum coordinator, will be on hand to discuss updates on the common core

in English-Language Arts and Math. A question/answer period is planned. This forum will be advertised in the field memo, district list serv, and district website. EGHS student Jackson Cronin will be recognized at the April 28th School Committee meeting for winning first place in R.I. and fifth place nationally in the InvestWrite competition. Mrs. Patricia Page was thanked for her efforts planning/coordinating the Financial Frenzy that took place on April 1st at EGHS with state and local officials.

VII. School Committee Concerns

There were no concerns.

VIII. Action Item

a. Resignation- Bryce Jett, District Network Support Specialist

On a motion by Mrs. Winters, which was seconded by Mr. Osborne, the Committee voted 7-0 to accept the resignation.

b. Layoffs-One Year Only

The recommended layoffs are for one-year only positions. On a motion by Dr. Gifford, which was seconded by Mrs. Winters, the Committee voted 7-0 to approve the recommended layoffs.

c. School Committee Resolution- pending legislation on Concealed Weapons in Schools

This proposed resolution was sent to the Committee from RIASC. On a motion by Dr. Gifford, which was seconded by Dr. Sun, the Committee voted 7-0 to approve the resolution.

IX. Discussion-Advisory/Subcommittee Updates

a. Budget FY2015 YTD

Mrs. Wilcox provided a summary of the FY2015 YTD budget through

March 2015. Approximately 75% of the school year has elapsed and 73.06% of the FY2015 funds have been spent. All major expenditures are in line with the budget except “Other Purchased Services,” which shows a (\$62,000) negative balance due to out-of-district tuitions and charter school tuitions. The “Benefit” line for Hanaford shows a deficit because allocations for the other locations have not been posted to the general ledger. Once this has been completed, the “Benefit” line will be on target.

b. Budget FY2016

The budget will continue as a standing item until the FTM in June. Mrs. Wilcox provided a five-year comparison of town appropriations and budget surpluses. The average surplus for five years (as a % of budget) is 1.93% and the unrestricted fund balance (as a % of budget) averages 1.96% for five years. Mrs. Wilcox also discussed fund balance activity as of FY2014, projected fund balance FY2015-2017, and excess fund balance as of June 30, 2014. The excess fund balance as of June 30, 2014 is \$806,740 (2.27%), which is below 2.5% of the general fund operating budget. The topic of fund balance was discussed at the last Town Council/School Committee meeting and

the district was asked whether excess funds existed.

c. Strategic Planning

The Strategic Planning Committee reconvened on April 2nd to restart the planning process. The committee is planning to launch a community survey and plan a forum the end of April, with a second forum in May. The first forum will discuss academic metrics and the

second will review non-academic metrics. Mr. David Osborne and Mrs. Kristin Lehoullier were thanked for their assistance in conducting the meeting.

d. Ad Hoc Calendar Committee Report

Members of the committee were thanked for their time and effort in compiling the report. Dr. Mercurio summarized key points of the report and discussed the proposed calendar for FY2016. The Committee discussed state holidays and the opportunity to lobby for flexibility. Mr. Jeff Dronzek, a committee member, urged community members to read the section titled, “Guiding Principles and Recommendations.” EGHS teacher/committee member Mr. Chris Boie discussed concerns regarding re-teaching/re-testing work for students who are absent from school (vacation) if the February vacation is eliminated. He said the teachers’ want to hear the School Committee endorse the proposition that staff will not be responsible to re-teach/test for absent students. He noted that 62% of teachers are satisfied with the current school calendar. EGHS student Kate Williams discussed the need for a February break. Mrs. Cauley discussed how frequent breaks in the schedule have negative effects for various students. Several parents discussed the long stretch (16 weeks) without a weeklong break and the impact on EGHS students. The report will be discussed again at the April 28th School Committee meeting and a vote will be taken on the proposed FY2016 school calendar.

e. Ad Hoc Start Time Committee Report

Committee members were thanked for their time and effort in

compiling the report, which contains extensive research. Dr. Mercurio summarized key points of the report and discussed the four recommendations and the fiscal implications. Several members of the committee discussed the research included in the report and the benefits to students. Some community members expressed concerns/opinions regarding after school activities including athletics, bus route changes, and daylight savings time. Sharon High School's start time change was also discussed. This district moved to a later start time, but still holds study hall for high school students. They also mandate that athletic games/practice cannot start earlier than 3:30 p.m., which gives students' time to get help from teachers or attend club meetings. They also limited practice time to end by 6:00 p.m. This report will be discussed again at the April 28th School Committee meeting and a vote may be taken to accept one of the recommendations.

X. Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. Fain, which was seconded by Mr. Osborne, the Committee voted 7-0 to adjourn at 9:30 p.m.

**CHRISTINE DIMEGLIO
SECRETARY**