

Minutes of the East Greenwich School Committee

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Archie R. Cole Middle School Library

100 Cedar Avenue

East Greenwich, RI 02818

6:04 p.m. Executive Session, Mr. Fain 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) (2) Teacher Negotiations. Mrs. Winters seconded the motion, which passed 7-0.

Those in attendance were Ms. Carolyn Mark, Chair; Dr. Deidre Gifford, Vice-Chair; Mrs. Mary Ellen Winters; Mr. David Osborne; Mr. Matt Plain; Mr. Michael Fain, and Dr. Yan Sun. 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 7:09 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

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

III. Recognition-Dr. Deidre Gifford, Vice-Chair, School Committee

Dr. Mercurio and the Committee recognized and thanked Dr. Gifford for her

7.5 years of service on the Committee. Dr. Gifford has served as the Chair and Vice-Chair and has chaired and served on various committees during her tenure. The district presented her with a clock in appreciation of her service and dedication to the district.

IV. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

V. Approval of Minutes

a. Regular and executive for February 2, 2016

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

b. Budget workshop for February 9, 2016

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

VI. Superintendent's Report

Cole and EGHS students completed the sleep time study prior to the February break. A draft of the FY2016-17 school calendar will be discussed at the March 1st meeting. There is potential legislation pending that may give districts' latitude in the calendar.

Several recognitions for athletics will be made next week. The girls' swim team will be recognized as Division II champions. Next month is Art Education Month. Additional details will follow next month along with recognitions. Mrs. Wayles was thanked for her efforts in scheduling/coordinating the digital learning days. Community members were also thanked for their participation. The Building

Committee meeting that was cancelled due to inclement weather needs to be rescheduled.

VII. School Committee Concerns

There were no concerns.

VIII. Action Items

a. Parental leave-Jillian Ayala, Teacher, EGHS

On a motion by Mrs. Winters, which was seconded by Dr. Sun, the Committee voted 7-0 to approve the parental leave.

b. Parental leave-Lindsey Kelly-Speech Pathologist, Meadowbrook

On a motion by Mrs. Winters, which was seconded by Mr. Plain, the Committee voted

7-0 to approve the parental leave.

c. Retirement-Nancy Gage, Speech Pathologist, Hanaford/Cole

On a motion by Mr. Plain, which was seconded by Mrs. Winters, the Committee voted

7-0 to accept the retirement.

d. Safe Stop

A total of 104 responses were received. 71 respondents were not interested in the program and 33 were interested. Dr. Mercurio recommended that the Committee not move forward with this parent-funded program. Mr. Plain made a motion to accept the Superintendent's recommendation not to move forward at this time. Mr. Fain seconded the motion, which passed 7-0. The Committee agreed to possibly survey the community closer to the start of school in the fall. This item will be discussed at a July meeting.

e. WB Community Health Update

Dr. Mercurio asked the Committee for the right to use the fund balance for budget purposes. He recommended that the Committee empower him and Mrs. Wilcox to craft a letter to WB to reserve the right to use fund balance dollars. This needs to be done on or before March 1st. On a motion by Mr. Fain, which was seconded by Mr. Osborne, the Committee voted 7-0 to accept the Superintendent's recommendation to craft a letter to WB to reserve the right to use fund balance dollars.

IX. Discussion

a. School Committee Subcommittee Membership Update

With Dr. Gifford's departure, there are open seats on the Policy and Personnel Committees. Mr. Plain has interest and expertise in policy and agreed to serve on that committee. The open spot on the Personnel Committee spot will be deferred until the Town Council appoints a new School Committee member. A vote for a new vice-chair will take place at the March 1st meeting.

b. Budget FY2017

The public hearing on the budget is scheduled for March 1st. The FY2017 is still in draft form and is a work in progress. The Committee discussed three revenue scenarios-each with a different assumption for fund balance withdrawal. None of the federal grants are listed in the revenue (Title I, IDEA, etc.). Each assumption has a different local revenue ask (2.45% to 4.20%). By statute, the district cannot ask for more than 4% for local share.

Dr. Mercurio and Mrs. Wilcox explained the all day kindergarten

financial impact, which provides 3 scenarios for expenditures based on the hiring step (Masters 3, 1, or Bachelors 1). Dr. Gifford asked if the kindergarten teachers could teach physical education and art. Mr. Wilson said there are parameters for paraprofessionals covering a class (approximately 15 minutes). Mrs. Winters asked if two paraprofessionals could be hired instead of four. The two paras could be shared with the current kindergarten paras and rotated throughout the classrooms. The Committee would like to keep the hiring step at Masters 3 for teachers, but asked for details on recent hires at the elementary level.

Mrs. Wilcox explained the current budget proposal is \$41,200 higher than what the School Committee previously received due to web based instruction and funding for textbooks for dual/concurrent enrollment. An additional teacher for grade 2 is not needed at Meadowbrook next year. If enrollment increases substantially and there is overflow, students will be transported to Frenchtown.

Dr. Mercurio explained the drop in state aid, which is directly related to the increase in median home prices in East Greenwich and the increase in median income. The state funding formula is based on the district's ability to pay and figures show that East Greenwich has more money to pay.

The FY2017 budget hearing will take place next week. Updated budget sheets noting the increase of \$41,200, along with the

reduction in two paras for kindergarten will be provided. A revised revenue scenario using one-third from fund balance (plus \$75,000) will be provided, along with a list of potential budget cuts.

X. Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. Osborne, which was seconded by Mrs. Winters, the Committee voted 7-0 to adjourn at 8:45 p.m.

CHRISTINE DIMEGLIO

SECRETARY