

# **EAST PROVIDENCE SCHOOL DEPARTMENT**

**East Providence City Hall**

**145 Taunton Avenue**

**East Providence, Rhode Island 02914**

## **School Committee Special Meeting**

**August 29, 2006**

### **Open Session**

**Chairman Gouveia called the meeting to order at 7:00PM. Three members were present: David Medeiros, Mildred Morris and Antone Gouveia. Also present: Dr. Jacqueline Forbes, Superintendent of Schools and Andrew Thomas, Esq. A motion was made by Mrs. Morris, seconded by Mr. Medeiros to move to Executive Session in accordance with RI General Laws, Section 42-46-5 (a) (1) Personnel, (a) (2) Litigation, Vote 3-0.**

**Public Session reconvened at 7:30PM. The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and Moment of Silence were observed.**

### **Report of Superintendent and Staff**

**Personnel Recommendations were presented by Diane Rodericks,**

**Acting Human Resource Director, as follows:**

**APPOINTMENTS**

**Michael J. Almeida    Teacher, Physical Education**

**(1 year only)**

**Marcia Goggin    Teacher, Grade 3, Oldham**

**(1 year only)**

**Anibal Raposo    Asst. Coach, Boys' Soccer,**

**Motion: Medeiros/Second: Morris. Vote 3-0.**

**RETIREMENT**

**Aguinaldo Cabral    Multi-Lingual Support            Coordinator**

**Effective July 28, 2006**

**Motion: Morris/Second: Medeiros. Vote 3-0.**

**RESIGNATION**

**Derek Stienstra    Teacher, Automotive Technology, CTC**

**Effective August 22, 2006**

**Helen Clancy    Teacher Assistant (Bus)**

**Effective June 21, 2006**

**Motion: Morris/Second: Medeiros. Vote 3-0.**

**TERMINATION**

**Manuel Costa      Custodian, MMS**

**Effective August 18, 2006**

**Motion: Morris/Second: Medeiros. Vote 3-0.**

## **FAMILY & MEDICAL LEAVE (MATERNITY)**

**Yira Polanco      Spanish Teacher, RMS**

**Effective September 5, 2006**

**Motion: Morris/Second: Medeiros. Vote 3-0.**

## **2006-2007 Budget Work Session**

**Mr. Gouveia requested that the final passage of the budget be extended to 9/5/06 in light of the fact that two members of the School Committee were not able to be present at this meeting. He requested input from the School Department Attorney regarding this matter.**

**Attorney Thomas stated that finalizing the budget by the end of August is not a mandatory requirement of the City. Since the School Committee's policies are directory and not mandatory, the School Committee may suspend the policy; however, the budget should be finalized in a timely manner. Mr. Medeiros moved to suspend the policy and complete the budget by September 5, 2006, seconded by**

**Mrs. Morris. Roll call vote: Mr. Medeiros, aye; Mrs. Morris, aye; Mr. Gouveia, aye. Vote 3-0.**

**Mr. Gouveia requested that Mr. Faria and Mrs. Lovett receive a copy of the tape for tonight's meeting in order to hear the input and audience comments. Mr. Gouveia was concerned that the numbers seem to be inflated or deflated depending on one's point of view. In a recent interview, the Mayor mentioned a 3.5% increase in the budget; Mr. Gouveia does not know where that number came from, as the School Department is asking for an increase of \$2.9 million dollars. Mr. Gouveia asked Dr. Forbes if the City Manager has a timeline for healthcare bids, which could provide substantial savings. Dr. Forbes related that she has a meeting this week with the City Manager and the health consultant. Mr. Gouveia felt it was taking too long to get the process off the ground, since it was talked about at last year's meetings; at the last joint meeting of the City Council and School Committee, the Mayor indicated a willingness to meet again prior to finalizing the budget. Mr. Gouveia asked Dr. Forbes to arrange a meeting, even with the budget subcommittee, if it is not convenient for the entire School Committee to meet. Dr. Forbes indicated that the new City Manager and new Superintendent be included in the process.**

**Mr. Gouveia asked about the Athletic Fields/Track Replacement/Repairs item. The Athletic Director, Paul Amaral, felt the track will be safe enough if we do some patch work for now, but**

**we still need to address this. Mr. Gouveia asked to explore in-house work to do aeration, etc. Mr. Amaral related that the City has outsourced this work. Dr. Forbes said she personally inspected the track and weeds, etc. need to be cut along with debris removal. Mr. Mutter will talk to the nearby property owner. Dr. Forbes felt it would be safe for students to practice and run on for the upcoming year.**

**Mr. Gouveia asked if we could get through another year without a Curriculum Director and be just as good as last year. Dr. Forbes said that curriculum initiatives would continue, but she needs an Assistant Superintendent to continue for this year and would need a Curriculum Director after that. Mr. Gouveia asked if there would be any major impact on overtime, if the four custodial positions were left unfilled for the third year in a row. Dr. Forbes said we can keep the buildings clean and maintained as best we can. Mr. Gouveia said he probably could not support filling those positions this year.**

**Mr. Gouveia requested a breakdown for the increase in health benefits and asked if the increase is due to usage or administrative fees?**

**Mrs. Morris asked about Watters School students moving to the High School to save money on utilities, etc. and if the Boys Club pays to use that building. She requested a copy of the agreement we have with them and the time period of the contract.**

**Mrs. Morris asked if any reductions could be made in the line item for repairs of equipment (\$66,000) and Rental/Lease of copiers (\$81,000). In response to Mrs. Morris request regarding a technology increase (\$55,000), Dr. Forbes explained this amount represents 1/3 of the salary for the City's Director of Technology. The outside support we receive is for different responsibilities. Once we train our in-house personnel, we may be able to bring this cost down. Mrs. Morris asked for the per diem cost of the technicians. Mrs. Morris asked if we could cut down on the request for computers. Dr. Forbes will look at grants. Mrs. Morris asked about special education and the district share of private school students. Mrs. Waterman, Special Services Director, explained that this is only a best estimate. We are the LEA and East Providence has a significant number of private and parochial schools, which we are responsible for nursing within those schools.**

**Mr. Medeiros commented on the electricity for the Vocational School, which dropped but Martin's increased. He asked about an increase for rubbish removal and telephone increases.**

**Mr. Gouveia asked about a \$15,000 capital outlay, which is for replacement of a jeep and snow plow equipment.**

**Mrs. Morris asked about a non-public school transportation increase. Mr. Linneman, Director of Transportation related that this is based on how many private schools we transport students to. Mrs. Morris**

asked about non public school textbooks at \$25,000, which we are required to provide according to Dr. Forbes. Mrs. Morris expressed a concern about lack of health books at Hennessey School.

### **Question & Answer Period**

Mrs. Patti Streit asked that money not be taken away from technology, as this would directly affect the students and this amount is only about 1/3 of what we really need.

Lewis Ganites, 35 Jenckes Street, commented that the School Committee is cutting small items, but has not addressed the salaries and benefits issue. The Superintendent's salary and pensions are going up more than 10% increase, and he asked if there was a 3% increase also. He commented that we cannot attract business to the state with these pension increases. Mr. Gouveia said this is statewide and not just in East Providence. Mr. Ganites asked about custodians pay raises at more than 10%.

Shawn Cook, 1825 Pawtucket Avenue, asked when the budget will be finalized. He questioned \$17,430 for car expenses, which Mr. Gouveia explained is a contractual amount for nurses, itinerants, etc. who travel between schools during the day for school business. He asked for department heads to forego increases in salary; he feels that if we are asking one group to work with us, we should ask the same for management. He asked everyone to step up, but hopes the City and

**schools will not argue again like last year. He asked about the Superintendent contract negotiations, increases in trash pickup, bus transportation contracts, fuel, and snow removal costs. He asked if bargaining unit contracts were all up at one time and suggested that better contracts should be negotiated as they come up.**

**Joe Tavares commented on the four custodial positions, which have not been filled. As the night foreman, it has been a struggle to maintain buildings and he has been embarrassed by the corners we have to cut. Mrs. Morris asked for the overtime for Saturday, Sunday, Labor Day weekends, etc.**

**Lewis Ganites asked about the Assistant Superintendent position listed in the budget and the school psychologists. He asked about declining enrollment vs. budget increases. Dr. Forbes explained that we have lost approximately 200 students per year and decreased staff about 64 positions; however, the costs of salaries and benefits have increased along with energy costs, etc. and we are continually trying to keep costs down.**

**Mrs. Morris realizes the importance of technology, but hopes to get more money from grants; she does not have a problem asking state legislators for additional money.**

**Mr. Gouveia related that the next meeting would be held on 9/5/06 at 7:00PM at Martin Middle School; the only item on the agenda will be**

**budget discussions and deliberations.**

**Mr. Gouveia asked the Superintendent to review the budget again and make about \$200,000 more cuts. He has some questions about revenues and the number projected for healthcare, which he is hopeful the health care bids will have an impact on the budget. Mr. Gouveia assured everyone that the School Committee is doing everything to consolidate and bring the budget number down; however, it is difficult to project state funding and we need to have a formula for funding. Mr. Medeiros also asked the Superintendent to meet with department heads to find more cuts.**

**Mr. Rodericks commented that the bus schedule is now online and the community is invited to a welcome reception for the Superintendent on September 7, 2006 between 3:00 and 5:00PM at the high school.**

**A motion was made to seal the minutes of the Executive Session by Mr. Medeiros, seconded by Mrs. Morris. Vote 3-0. A motion was made to adjourn by Mr. Medeiros, seconded by Mrs. Morris. Vote 3-0.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**David A. Medeiros, Clerk of the Committee**

**Patricia A. Iannelli, Executive Secretary**