

EAST PROVIDENCE SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

East Providence School Committee

East Providence City Hall

145 Taunton Avenue

East Providence, Rhode Island 02914

April 10, 2012

Open Session

Mr. Tsonos called the meeting to order at 6:30PM. School Committee Members present: Luisa Abatecola, Stephen Furtado, Ryan Tellier, Chrissy Rossi and Charles Tsonos. Also present: Mr. Edward M. Daft, Interim Superintendent, Mr. Robert Silva, Esq. and Andrew Thomas, Esq.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag & Moment of Silence were observed.

Student/Teacher Recognition ¡V Mr. Daft and High School Principal, Janet Sheehan, congratulated high school students who produced a winning television commercial for the ¡§Your View, Your Voice Contest¡¨ sponsored by Day One, an agency that deals with issues of sexual assault as a community concern.

Student Liaison Report ¡V Andrew Butler presented a report on high school activities and events

Report on City of East Providence Budget Commission ¶V Mr. Daft reported that weekly meetings are being held on Thursdays; consolidation efforts are moving forward between the school and city positions, IT and Facilities have been completed; now working on Finance, Legal and Human Resources. Department meetings have been held to find additional savings; a shortfall of \$40 million still needs to be addressed as part of a five year plan; looking at transportation cost savings, changes in school start times, and increasing the walking distance to schools, as presented by the Budget Commission Chair; Mr. Daft will present to the School Committee at later date.

Public Comment I

Ms. Izilda Teves provided an update on the Orlo Ave School Playground Project to be completed in three phases.

Welcome East Providence - Informational Presentation by Debra Gonsalves Chair of the Committee, Michelle DePlante and Kate; this organization promotes a welcoming atmosphere in communities for immigrants.

Report: Interim Superintendent's Report

Building Committee Report ¶V Mr. Daft ¶V SMMA to go through the buildings; Budget Commission is trying to secure bonds; time is of the essence and the Budget Commission remains positive about moving the project along.

Finance Report ¶V Finance Director, Mary King, presented the report:

Five months into the revenue report (11/1 to 3/31); housing and state aid received earlier than planned; expenses are on target with a few timing issues on pay outs. Discussion: In response to a question about how bills are being paid this year compared to last, Ms. King explained that the situation is much better now; we have been able to make a substantial payment to one vendor; now on 60 terms; paying vendors current; last year we were running out of cash at this time; we have worked through FY12. There have been internal problems for many years; changes being made on the city side regarding cash flow.

**Personnel Report on Retirements/Resignations/Leaves of Absence jV
Mary King, Finance Director presented the personnel items:**

RETIREMENT

**Gina Loiselle (24 years) Physical Education Teacher - MMS
Effective 03/14/2012**

RESIGNATION

Mary King Director of Finance - Effective 5/4/2012

**Stacy Simmons Math Department Head jV RMS
Effective end of 2011/2012 school year**

EXTENDED PERSONAL OF ABSENCE

Kevin Monagle Math Department Head/Teacher - EPHS

Effective 2012/2013 School Year

Gretchen Lopez Reading Specialist - RMS

Effective 2012/2013 School Year

PARENTAL LEAVE

Yira Polanco Spanish Teacher - RMS

Effective 03/26/12-until end of school year

Michelle Chamberlin Resource Teacher - Kent Heights

Effective 04/09/12- until end of school year

FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE

Sarah Yassine Reading Specialist - Silver Spring School

Approximately 05/24/12 until end of school year

Consent Agenda

Approval of Minutes ¡V Motion by Mr. Tellier to approve the minutes of the School Committee Meeting held on March 13, 2012, and

Superintendent Search Sub-Committee Meetings held on December 12, 2011, January 4, 2012 and January 18, 2012, seconded by Mrs. Rossi. Vote 5-0.

Action Items

Requisitions ;V Bill List

Warrant #

1198 3/20/12 \$ 174.18

1199 3/29/12 \$ 1,736,193.00

1200 4/4/12 \$ 12,262.01

1201 4/4/12 \$ 41,496.00

1202 4/4/12 \$ 232,456.81

1203 4/5/12 \$ 76,997.34

Requisitions ;V Bill List

Warrant #

1204 4/5/12 \$ 643,283.75

1205 4/5/12 \$ 224,762.40

1206 4/5/12 \$ 121,389.66

1207 4/5/12 \$ 1,139,412.84

A motion was made by Mr. Tellier to approve the warrants, seconded by Mr. Furtado. Vote 5-0.

In response to a question from Mrs. Rossi regarding the duties of the

Finance Director, Mr. Daft explained that Ms. King will continue in the department until May 4th at which time, the School Department Controller and city finance personnel will oversee the school department finances along with an individual assigned by the Budget Commission; nothing is in place yet.

Approval of School Calendar 2012-2013 ;V A motion was made by Mr. Tellier to approve the calendar, seconded by Mrs. Abatecola. Vote 5-0.

Old Business

Construction Bond Update (Mr. Tsonos) (already covered above)

New Business

Recycling-Spring Cleaning - Mr. Furtado asked everyone to keep recycling in mind when throwing things out; no papers in the trash; check the RI Resource Recovery website for information; Celebrate Earth Day by cleaning up outside schools.

Public Comment II

Fred Rypka requested information regarding the teachers' contract: when did the School Committee discuss it, how and when the contract was signed without negotiations; were step increases included.

Legal Counsel, Mr. Andrew Thomas, explained that the contract was negotiated and an agreement reached by a prior School Committee, but the contract was not signed until later.

Mr. Daft stated that the contract was one year into the last School Committee and signing was just a formality; a Tentative Agreement had been signed and this was an extension of the other contract by the last School Committee and Superintendent.

Mr. Rypka asked that if the School Committee had not signed it, would it have been null and void and up for negotiations. Legal Counsel, Mr. Robert Silva, explained that Interim Superintendent Daft's explanation was correct; negotiations took place with the former School Committee and were approved by the City Council; signing was just a ministerial act of the union and the new School Committee. While it should have been done by the prior School Committee, that did not affect the validity or agreement reached by both sides. Through collective bargaining, two sides reached an agreement approved by an official vote of the School Committee and City Council; whether reduced to writing is not critical to its validity; the Tentative Agreement was the final document which spanned two administrations.

Mr. Rypka stated that he believed that a contract is not a contract until it is signed. He is thankful for the financial oversight by the Budget Commission.

Anthony Ferrara questioned why elected officials could not accomplish what has been done by the Budget Commission over the last four months; no one likes it, but it has been a great benefit to the city.

Mrs. Rossi explained that through state law, the Budget Commission can make decisions quickly bypassing the time it would take for approval of School Committee and City Council members.

Mr. Ferrara stated that this always falls back on the residents; there were reasons why this happened; Homestead exemption; rating agency followed us; next Thursday public meeting on water rates through the roof; rating agencies would not have dropped us; the city still needs to come up with \$40 million; he has a problem where the money is coming from; if unions do not want to meet, we need \$40 million and have zero ways to get it; it is the duty of elected officials to inform citizens and he felt that all should get involved.

State Champions - High School Hockey Team members and coaches were recognized and congratulated for their accomplishments.

Announcements:

Mrs. Abatecola

„X Wellness Committee meeting tomorrow at Kent Heights at 3:15PM

Mrs. Rossi:

„X Advertising sales have earned \$2600 to date; would like to see more advertising

„X Oldham Project iV Pepsi Community give back- volunteers needed for May 19th

„X Project 106 iV 5013C organization to maintain Middle School and varsity sports iV call Mrs. Rossi for specifics

„X Waddington pasta event on April 27th with proceeds toward purchasing technology for Waddington

„X Kindergarten Registration for next school year ongoing

„X Alj's Wheels iV H/S student fundraiser on April 14th from 6-8PM

Mr. Furtado

„X RIPIN Walk to stop bullying in RI on May 5th

A motion was made by Mr. Furtado to convene in Executive Session for purposes of discussing: Personnel - R.I. Gen. Laws i±42-46-5(a) (1)]; Collective Bargaining R.I. Gen. Laws i±42-46-5(a) (2); Litigation/Pending Litigation -R.I. Gen. Laws i±42-46-5(a) (2), seconded by Mrs. Rossi. Vote 5-0.

A motion was made by Mr. Furtado to return to Public Session and to seal the minutes of the Executive Session, seconded by Mr. Tellier. Vote 5-0.

Report Executive Session Votes ;V No Votes taken.

A motion was made by Mr. Furtado to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Tellier. Vote 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia A. Iannelli, Administrative Assistant

Stephen Furtado, Clerk of the Committee