

EAST PROVIDENCE SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

East Providence School Committee

East Providence City Hall Council Chamber

145 Taunton Avenue

East Providence, Rhode Island 02914

November 12, 2013

Open Session

Chairman, Mr. Monteiro, called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

Members present: Elizabeth Clupny, Timothy Conley, Anthony Ferreira, Richard Pimentel, Joel Monteiro. Also present: Kim Mercer, Superintendent, Robert Silva, Esq. and Andrew Thomas, Esq.

Motion by Ms. Clupny to convene in Executive session for purposes of discussing: Personnel ¶ R.I. Gen. Laws 42-46-5(a) (1); Collective Bargaining R.I. Gen. Laws 42-46-5 (a)(2); Litigation/Pending Litigation-R.I. Gen Laws 42-46-5 (a) (2) seconded by Mr. Ferreira. Vote 5-0.

Motion by Ms. Clupny to return to Public Session and to seal the minutes of the Executive Session, seconded by Mr. Conley. Vote 5-0.

Report Executive Session Votes ¶ None

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

Community/Staff Recognition

Assistant Superintendent, Julie Motta, congratulated Principal Nadine Lima who was recently quoted in Principal Magazine.

Julie Motta acknowledged and thanked Principal Fatima Avila and members of the Kent Heights Elementary School PTA for their fundraising efforts and support of programs for East Providence students, most recently, new playground areas and fence at the school.

Student Liaison Report ıV Joshua Conception reported on high school activities and events.

Public Comment I ıV Agenda Items

Fred Rybka, 9 Cousins Ave, Riverside, requested information regarding the new math program in order for parents to be able to help students with homework.

Superintendent, Kim Mercer, explained that a series of parent workshops have been scheduled at the schools; this new math program adopted in East Providence is aligned with the common core; the language is different and is new to learn for all, but we have to do this if we want our students to be successful. Feedback from teachers is that the students understand and are showing growth, but

we need to give it more time.

Julie Motta explained that parent university night was held at Hennessey School initially with just those parents; Silver Spring and Kent Heights scheduled for November 10.th. In December, will get to next grades; information will be available on the website and a ConnectEd will be done regarding upcoming events at the other schools; a PARCC presentation will be held at the high school. Mr. Ferreira would like to be informed about all the programs and would like to get the list in order to attend at any school.

Samantha Branco spoke about an issue at the high school whereby there are not enough books for the students; although her problem was solved by the Assistant Superintendent, she knows that other students still do not have books; kids need current information and parents need information to be able to help with homework. Superintendent will look into it; teachers should inform the students regarding access to textbook information.

Mr. Ferreira commented that the City Council passed the school budget; there may be some funds available; if city having problems we need to know; this City Council and School Committee are working together. The Superintendent is responsible; we need more people coming forward; ideas from public help School Committee members to know about problems. Ms. Clupny believes it is up to teachers and parents to let kids know about access to books and

other information; the principal said teachers should have informed students. Ms. Clupny commented that teachers should report any needs to the principal.

Superintendent's Report

Kim Mercer presented the Five Year Plan Facilities Plan, which will be available on the School Department website. Mr. Monteiro noted the plan was to be part of a discussion to include City Council; but all may ask questions.

Discussion and Comments:

Superintendent Mercer explained that the work is ongoing.

Mr. Conley: we need far in excess of this five year capital plan.

Councilwoman Chrissy Rossi asked if this will get us accredited; Superintendent responded that she has to wait for NEASC response, but this is bare minimum

Ms. Rossi asked about fire safety items; Supt. Mercer stated that systems need upgrading; SMMA reported on health/safety items; we will not know the numbers until items go out to bid

Ms. Rossi asked if the work identified for 2013-14 year was put in for NEASC; Ms. Mercer stated that the work will be prioritized as soon as we get the balance available from the bond; at that point will go out to bid for fire, doors, and other items at end of the year

Ms. Rossi asked about prioritizing items and the pool; Supt. Mercer is

waiting for engineers; report on the pool to make a determination

Mrs. Rossi asked how long can we go with asbestos in place;

Mr. Ferreira commented about more asbestos from the pool area; he wants to put to an end to it

Mr. Conley said the plan was to shore up the pool (Envious) but it did not meet building inspection

The Superintendent explained this is a one to two year fix; the Building Inspector was not comfortable with it at all; asbestos had to be taken out to see the pipes in order to make a decision

Mr. Ferreira commented that the report every month goes on and on; he does not want to continue to prolong this and keep spending more money; he does not want to get another bill six months from now; we keep going back month after month; being pushed by the Building Inspector

Superintendent explained that we want to be comfortable to open the pool and be able to go forward for more than a couple of years; this last report will determine whether the pool can be opened or not; we owe this to the people of East Providence to determine whether it is good or not.

Ms. Rossi asked: can we use tables which are at the old Oldham School at the new Oldham building; could the HVAC system at the old Burnside building be used at the CTC; if that building ripped down for single family homes, can the system be salvaged; has anyone looked at grants??

Kim Mercer stated that money has been put into capital account

Ms. Rossi asked if we have anyone who can write grants for schools

Mr. Monteiro thanked all who have been involved

Mr. Conley stated that he was disappointed that he was not included on the last email regarding the City Council attendance at this meeting and hoped it was an oversight.

Jessica Beauchaine, parent, asked if this would be considered a joint meeting of the School Committee and City Council. Mr. Conley explained that the City council members were invited as guests to attend this meeting.

Mr. Monteiro explained that they were informed on Friday that the meeting needed to be rescheduled; School Committee chose not to put off providing information to the public and City Council; it was decided that City Council would be attending as guests; he thought they would be able to ask questions.

Mr. Ferreira wanted to clarify that Mr. Chapman, Solicitor, informed the City Council they could not get involved with this meeting because the City Manager position is vacant. Mr. Monteiro told only that City Council could not ask questions at the meeting.

Assistant Mayor Rose stated that he received an email late this evening from Tim Chapman that this was not a posted meeting for the City Council and members should not engage in any discussions; any meeting involving three or more members may be in violation of the spirit of the open meeting law; City Council could view the

presentation, but anything beyond that could be a violation. Mr. Chapman advised that the City Council only has so much jurisdiction without a City Manager to help out further; a meeting can be set up in a few weeks. Mr. Conley disagreed. Mr. Monteiro suggested moving forward. Discussion regarding the fact that an official meeting had not been posted.

Mayor Briden stated that if the object of the meeting was to have a draft of a Five year plan, then that has been accomplished; Mr. Moore and Mr. Luba will try to reconcile the budget and five year plan and then a joint meeting can be scheduled soon. In the meantime, they can work with the Superintendent and Finance Department; this is the second step to move forward.

Mr. Monteiro stated that the only benefit is the public; Superintendent put this plan together to have a discussion and School Committee expected to have that discussion; will set up a meeting. Mr. Conley noted that if a new City Manager is that important, perhaps should wait for that.

Facilities Update by Mr. Feola: Intercom at Waddington has been completed; speakers are being installed at Martin Middle School and the high school; five doors left at the high school to fix- finishing locks; Meadowcrest building work done; science lab will be completed after December; benches ordered with science department input.

Mr. Ferreira asked who came up with the December completion date; he would like a copy of the contract; what are the drop dead dates; we are supposed to have two meetings per month during construction. (Ed Catelli said it would be done in 30 days; then a walk through). Mr. Ferreira does not like not knowing. Mr. Feola stated that December is the end date, but it may not go that long; the phone system will be tied to the intercom.

Mr. Ferreira would like a copy of the detailed punch list from the owner or legal; all should be done December 15th or earlier with exception of the chemistry lab and punch list; what is the penalty; we have spent millions of taxpayer dollars; he wants do a walk through with a punch list; if missed, they should pay. Mr. Pimentel stated that contractor is owed two checks and will not get last payment until the walk through is completed.

Mr. Monteiro asked to change the order of the agenda in order to move to the policies listed on the agenda. Motion by Ms. Clupny to change the order of the agenda, seconded by Mr. Ferreira. Vote 5-0.

Amended Policies ;V First Passage:

Superintendent, Kim Mercer, explained that the policy book is in the process of being updated and policies amended; she reviewed the following policy titles and recommended first passage of the

amended policies:

II.A.1. Superintendent's Responsibilities

II.A.3. Numbers in Class (Enrollments)

V.A.1. Statement of Nondiscrimination and Affirmative Action

IV.F. Family Involvement Policy

II.D.5. Building Use Policy

New Policy - Waiver for the State Assessment Graduation Requirement

Discussion took place regarding the Building Use Policy. Diana Clarkin, Operations Director, explained that because of the confusion about the \$150 non-refundable deposit, the policy was reviewed and the deposit eliminated for Category 1 and 2 local youth sports; these groups will continue with the \$2 and \$5 roster fees specified in the policy. Mr. Monteiro explained that these changes will be effective immediately and added to any existing agreements with groups in place even though the policy changes require two passages.

Ms. Clarkin confirmed that these are the major changes; there is now one Central Office calendar on how applications are decided to outline who has access and applications are sent to her attention; once applications are received, she will meet with organizations on availability of buildings; no longer on first come, first serve basis; all organizations will be treated fairly which should address all the

concerns which have been presented. If the policy amendments are approved, applications will be reviewed to see what the needs are, and meetings with organizations will be held.

Discussion: School Committee members expressed concerns about having food and beverage rules enforced as listed in the policy under Item #17 and asked who is deemed responsible to enforce the rule.

Diana Clarkin explained that any problems caused by a group using one of our facilities, would suspend their privileges for using our buildings; custodians will be watching it; if large groups, should have crowd control to monitor it. We have now set a procedure in place; we could also eliminate backpacks in gym.

Mr. Monteiro suggested a motion regarding current users and applicants; deposits in place now; organizations who fit class 1 and 2 ;V in use refund/nonrefundable deposits; make those corrections and move forward from here. Motion to approve by Mr. Conley, seconded by Mr. Ferreira. Vote 5-0.

Clarification on deposits on the field or facility ;V fit class 1 or 2; will not keep deposit; fee will be roster only; first passage but right or wrong move forward. A member of the audience said that changes in policies were not given out to them; now only allowed 6:30PM time to use facilities because of after-school programs; discussion to make more workable for families; they need better communication.

Steve Souza thanked the Superintendent and Ms. Clarkin for building use requirements which are different from the past. Although making strides, we still have organizations which have to pay for city fields and others who do not; he cannot see organizations having to pay for fields since we already pay taxes for those same fields. Mr. Souza indicated that soccer groups have to pay to use fields at their expense and do not have the money to keep with some other organizations; as a result, Martin Middle School is the only field he can use.

Mr. Ferreira felt that money collected from organizations to use our fields should be directed to the maintenance of that particular field; how much money is each field bringing in. Mr. Souza asked if money can be given back to the fields. Mr. Conley responded that we do not have soccer complex in East Providence; ten years ago a bond did not pass; the \$5 player fee is not going to generate enough money to fix the fields.

Motion by Ms. Clupny for first passage of amended policies, seconded by Mr. Ferreira. Vote 5-0.

Personnel Report on Resignation/Leaves of Absence/Retirement

Leave of Absence

Robert Duarte Girls; Indoor Track Coach- High School

Robert Duarte Girls; Outdoor Track Coach ;V High School

Retirement

Raymond Harvey Auto Body Teacher ¡V CTC ¡V Effective 11/8/13

Resignation

Rachael Cassidy School Nurse-RMS ¡V Effective 10/25/13

Consent Agenda

Approval of Minutes ¡V¡V Motion by Ms. Clupny to approve the minutes of the meetings held on September 23, 2013, September 24, 2013, and October 8, 2013, seconded by Mr. Pimentel. Vote 5-0.

Finance Report ¡V Malcolm Moore, Finance Director, reported that at year end \$70,001,802 million had been expended; (approved budget \$71,060,251) \$1 million surplus; OPEB line ¡V an amount was budgeted; School Committee put away money for benefits; when budget was put together; state aid was low; July ¡V June 30th budget revenue numbers should be few hundred thousand higher; could be looking at \$1 million surplus; there may be some room to work on capital if every year in pretty good shape.

Mr. Paul Luba, Finance Advisor to the City of East Providence, echoed Mr. Moore's comments that it is a tribute to an administration which has run leanly, being careful what is being spent; for future 2013-14, there may be some capital money as a result of being conservative and running a lean administration.

Action Items

Approval of Strategic Plan 2013-2017 ;V Superintendent, Kim Mercer, provided an overview of the plan detailing the vision for East Providence Schools; action plans for 2010-15 cover: Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Technology, Response to Intervention, Leadership, Family and Community, Human Resources and Facilities. Motion by Ms. Clupny to approve, seconded by Mr. Pimentel. Vote 5-0 (plan available for review on the School Department website).

Approve Receptionist/Secretary Position ;V Superintendent, Kim Mercer, requested approval of a Human Resources position which has been budgeted and relocated to the Superintendent's office. Motion by Ms. Clupny to approve, seconded by Mr. Pimentel. Vote 5-0.

Personnel Appointments/Layoff

Tracy Andrews-Mellouise-Assistant Director of Pupil Personnel Services-Effective TBD

Kristen Pallotta/Sara Duarte-Freshman Advisors-Effective 2013/2014 School Year

Elizabeth Pacheco/Richard Silva-Student Council Advisors-Effective 2013/14 School Year

Karen Cardillo-Townie Newspaper Advisor-Effective 2013/2014 School Year

Noreen McVay-School Nurse-Riverside-Effective11/13/13

**Erin Stevenson-Social Studies Teacher-High School-Effective4
11/13/13**

Motion: Ms. Clupny, seconded by Mr. Conley. Vote 5-0

**Contracts ¡V Kim Mercer requested approval for following contracts:
Director of Operations***

***Combined department covering registration, attendance, building
use, special education duties**

**Motion by Ms. Clupny to approve, seconded by Mr. Pimentel. Vote
4-1; Mr. Conley, voted nay; he is opposed to contracts other than for
top positions in the department.**

**Chief Information Officer ¡V Motion by Ms. Clupny to approve,
seconded by Mr. Pimentel. Vote 4-1; Mr. Conley, voted nay.**

**Administrative Assistant to Superintendent ¡V Motion by Mr. Pimentel
to approve, seconded by Ms. Clupny. Vote 4-1; Mr. Conley voted nay.**

**Technology Coordinator ¡V Motion by Ms. Clupny to approve,
seconded by Mr. Ferreira. Vote 4-1; Mr. Conley, voted nay.**

**(Contracts to be signed for Julie Motta, Dawn August ¡V previously
approved, but never signed).**

Superintendent Mercer requested that contracts for the Night Supervisor, Security and Energy Manager, and School Committee Administrative Assistant be forwarded to the next meeting agenda.

Motion by Ms. Clupny to table and place these items on the next agenda, seconded by Mr. Ferreira.

Vote 5-0.

Requisitions iV Bill List

Warrant #

1338 10/21/13 \$ 728,407.59

1339 10/22/13 \$ 21,627.99

1341 11/4/13 \$ 7,135.05

1342 11/5/13 \$ 31,380.00

1343 11/8/13 \$1,654,433.30

1344 11/8/13 \$ 191,816.79

Discussion on bills for pest control, plumbing and heating; Mr. Ferreira had questions about the High School boiler; he wants to make sure one of the bills for \$11,000 was not part of the high school boiler project; subject to further investigation; Superintendent will provide information to School Committee. EC/AF Vote 5-0

Home School Request(s) iV Motion by Ms. Clupny, seconded by Mr. Conley. Vote 5-0.

Old Business

PTA Reports ;V Mr. Ferreira thanked all teachers involved with PTA groups; it is very impressive and he is proud to see it happening.

Public Comment II ;V Non Agenda Items ;V

Fred Rybka asked about the Family Involvement Policy. Kim Mercer advised that the policy is for the entire district; involves communication and school home connection.

Jess Beauchaine requested that the Middle School curriculum be reviewed to look at higher achievement at that level.

Mrs. Rossi stated that as the City Council liaison to the School Committee, she would like to reschedule the joint meeting and pass on information to the City Council; all should get together to talk about the problems; she will use her seat on City Council to work together as two elected bodies; requested that Pat work with the City Clerk on a schedule of available dates. Mr. Chapman added that a City Manager is to be appointed on Thursday.

Announcements ;V School Committee would like to receive information regarding school events in order to attend; Superintendent will request that information be forwarded in a more timely manner.

„X Craft Fair at Waddington on November 23rd,

**„X Winterfest at Riverside Middle School on December 7th,
„X City Winterfest coming up in December
„X Fundraiser at Brightridge on Friday night for cheerleaders group.**

**Motion to adjourn by Ms. Clupny, seconded by Mr. Pimentel. Vote
5-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia A. Iannelli, Administrative Assistant

Elizabeth Clupny, Clerk of the Committee