

EAST PROVIDENCE SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

East Providence School Committee

East Providence City Hall - Council Chamber

145 Taunton Avenue

East Providence, Rhode Island 02914

October 27, 2015

Open Session

Chairman called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM. Present at open call: Nathan Cahoon, Anthony Ferreira, Joel Monteiro, Charles Tsonos. (Jessica Beauchaine arrived after open call) Also present: Kim Mercer, Superintendent of Schools and Andrew Thomas, Esq.

Motion by Mr. Cahoon that the Committee 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); and Litigation//Pending Litigation-R.I. Gen. Laws §42-46-5(a) (2), seconded by Mr. Monteiro. Vote 4-0.

School Committee returned to Public Session- Motion by Mr. Cahoon to seal the minutes of the Executive Session, seconded by Ms. Beauchaine. Vote 5-0.

Report Executive Session Votes - None

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

Motion to Set a Curfew for School Committee Meetings – Motion by Mr. Cahoon to adjourn no later than 10:30PM, seconded by Mr. Monteiro. Vote 3-2; Mr. Cahoon, Mr. Monteiro and Mr. Tsonos voted aye; Ms. Beauchaine and Mr. Ferreira voted nay;

PTO/PTA Reports – None

Public Comment I – Agenda Items – None

Facilities Report – Mr. Feola reported: Update on Current Projects: Riverside Middle School- Phase I sidewalk 90% completed with exception of the railing; Phase II middle to end of next week; Phase 5 – most asphalt done at Martin Middle School; next meeting may request for additional work there;

Martin – three boilers on line; waiting for parts; hand rails are out for design build; radios in and most delivered with the rest this week; one dozen new cameras at the high school; door project-Phase I done, Burman took doors off and painted tops; Martin – gym doors replaced, storage, exit doors out of houses; painting doors at Martin.

Mr. Feola – walk through this time as soon as pocket of doors done, we will certify that it passed and once initiated, we own it; warranty when entire project done (not their fault if anything after)

Mr. Cahoon – next Facilities Meeting on November 4, 2015 at 5:00PM.

Window Shades for Classrooms – Mr. Feola had 27 work orders from schools not including additional 30 for the high school; can't see the boards because of sun coming in (technology); \$200-250 for each shade; (\$7,500) will review work orders; \$12,000 in budget for all shades; depends on quality and size; talked about quality of shades; purchase all together and bid it out. Mr. Feola will go out to look at all work orders and prioritize; shades have to be fire retardant; if we have a sprinkler, we may be able to use a different type of shade. Ms. Beauchaine has had quite a few complaints about this; kids, teachers cannot see the board; this is not the conditions we want.

Mr. Ferreira – architectural firm wants paper work on sprinklers; if we cannot use PVC sprinklers; needs that documented why we cannot use them; he wants in writing because it is six times more money.

Mr. Feola – code may be different; he will take look at that.

Technology Report – Kelly Ahrens, Chief Information Officer for East Providence, presented a report.

Ms. Beauchaine – refurbished computers being used; asked about the budget;

Kelly stated that the elementary schools started with four; goal is to replace four and teacher with six ChromeBooks and a computer for the teacher; Middle School teachers will receive a lap top.

Policy Sub-Committee Report-Ms. Beauchaine would like to develop a

policy on exit interviews; she would like to bring it up at next meeting; Mr. Cahoon would like to attend one policy meeting.

Superintendent's Report

Personnel Report on Resignation/Leaves of Absence/Retirement

Melissa Aniello-Speech Language Pathologist-ELP-Effective October 31, 2015

Kathy Dias – Girls Tennis Coach-High School-Effective October 15, 2015

Action Items

Final Approval of the 2015-16 School Department Budget – Linda Dykeman, Deputy Finance Director, at podium – Mr. Monteiro thanked Linda for her work, putting time into the budget, and for attending additional budget meetings.

Motion by Mr. Cahoon to approve, seconded by Mr. Ferreira. Roll Call vote: Ms. Beauchaine, aye; Mr. Cahoon, aye; Mr. Ferreira, aye; Mr. Monteiro, aye; Mr. Tsonos, aye.

Approval of Funds for the Whiteknact School Playground Project – Superintendent Mercer presented the request to support this volunteer project with a \$1500 contribution; this will add shapes, letters, games and face lift the playground maps. Motion by Mr. Monteiro to support the proposal, seconded by Ms. Beauchaine. Vote

5-0.

Awarding of Bids

Proposal for Engineering Services – Proposed Unit Ventilator Replacement H/S Science Wing

Proposal for Engineering Services – Proposed First Chiller Replacement – Waddington School

Mr. Cahoon questioned the drawings; for chiller; do we have a cost estimate for that yet? Is there a value in what we are getting?

Linda Dykeman responded yes

Mr. Ferreira –design drawings only, not the equipment

Ms. Beauchaine asked about timeline: how long after the bid process?

Mr. Ferreira – will be lucky to get unit ventilators up and running this year; cost \$24,300; \$17,450 just to design; a maintenance program is needed.

Motion to approve by Mr. Ferreira, seconded by Mr. Cahoon. Vote 5-0.

Replacement of the Softball Backstop at High School – Mr. Duarte, Athletic Director reported that the poles were cracking and unsafe; they are proposing larger one; enlarged to protect tennis courts

Ms. Beauchaine asked if prices are still in effect

Mr. Duarte – low bid; has done work before

Mr. Ferreira– when did they look at it; ask for an update for this quote, it is ten months old; discussion about old bids.

Mr. Cahoon will conditionally approve through the Superintendent.

Mr. Ferreira – we have to get out of “time sensitive” since it is not a good way to do business; School Committee should have had updated quotes for voting tonight; not happy with old quotes.

Motion by Mr. Cahoon, pending updated quote information at or below, to conditionally accept the bid, seconded by Ms. Beauchaine; School Committee should be notified. Roll Call Vote: Ms. Beauchaine, aye; Mr. Cahoon, aye; Mr. Ferreira, nay; Mr. Monteiro, aye; Mr. Tsonos, aye.

Approval of Minutes - Motion by Mr. Ferreira to approve the minutes of School Committee Meetings 9/8/15, 9/22/15 and Facilities Sub-Committee Meeting 9/14/15, seconded by Ms. Beauchaine. Vote 5-0.

Personnel Appointments

Richard Small – Dean of Students-Martin Middle School-Effective 10/28/15

Joseph Lydon-High School -Young Republicans Advisor-Effective 2015-2016School Year

Motion to approve by Mr. Monteiro, seconded by Mr. Cahoon. Vote 5-0. Mr. Monteiro checked on process with Cheryl Sylvia – all good.

Approval of Increase in Substitute Teacher Pay

Mr. Monteiro— defer to Superintendent if increase; can we afford and will we gain results; need to improve our situation with increase; can we make an impact;

Ms. Beauchaine –(95 days) \$17,000 per year; reason why hard to get subs; can use building subs or ask subs to accept every position; we are not the only school district with problems; we need to make ourselves a little more marketable; our absences are pretty good.

Mr. Cahoon – we need to get a sense of what we are trying to do; in the data he has, missing about 1/3 of our subs; can we move that needle; he thinks part of a larger issue; look and see if pay makes a difference; raise \$5 day for 6 months to see where we are; if it does not help, move it back; quoted \$46,747 increase in budget; \$75,000 would pay to work that plan; discussion about possibilities; he would like to know if \$5 a day will make a difference or not.

Mr. Monteiro – parents not happy; can we set for six months

Ms. Beauchaine – do we have the money for this?

Kim Mercer -have to discuss with Linda Dykeman; if significant amount not in budget, we will have to revisit the budget.

Ms. Beauchaine – sure everyone is doing what they can, but if we do not have the money for it?

Mr. Ferreira – this is the third time this came up with no answers; educating 5600 kids; we have to find a solution without money or put a plan together which is itemized; start cutting things from the budget; third year we discussed this; if Mr. Cahoon has an idea, we need to keep digging.

Mr. Monteiro – three times it came up, no action taken because

largest factor is our teacher compensation package; lions share is what makes us unattractive; we have not been in a position to address that

Mr. Ferreira – need data to go to the podium

Mr. Monteiro City Council had the information. Ms. Beauchaine asked for a joint meeting.

Motion by Mr. Cahoon to table Item #6 pending discussion of #7 seconded by Mr. Monteiro, Vote 5-0.

Approval of Subcommittee to negotiate Collective Bargaining Agreements – Mr. Cahoon just read an article; much more onerous career field than 20 years ago; districts will be dying to get teachers in; we need to get a good understanding of that market for when we start negotiations; need money to bring them here and benefits to become an attractive place to educators; we need to work on that; put together a subcommittee on what details are in the contract, what we need, and a recommended budget next year; School Committee can consider reopening that contract; he does not think we can wait, it will get worse

Motion by Mr. Cahoon to appoint a subcommittee with two School Committee members, Joel Monteiro and Nathan Cahoon as members as a working group and Mr. Shattuck (EPEA President); then provide regular reports to the School Committee in order to provide a proactive response, seconded by Mr. Monteiro.

Mr. Ferreira– will not support – teaching profession is from the heart; open the contract and have to find a way to give more; we need to see what teachers and nurses do.

Mr. Cahoon – knows contracts; if he can help to get it started; that would be the best thing to do; Phase I Mr. Cahoon will communicate between School Committee and union; -do due diligence.

Ms. Beauchaine – 42% not adequate, but a starting point; she asked to be part of the discussion.

Mr. Monteiro – his expectation is that information would come before this body for discussion and input; all five should have same information. Mr. Tsonos – not first time we have had a negotiating committee doing the homework. Vote 5-0.

Back to Item #6 on substitute pay – Mr. Cahoon – table pending findings from negotiations subcommittee, seconded by Mr. Monteiro.

Discussion about sub pay. Mr. Cahoon- no data about how \$5 a day increase would have impact on getting subs.

Mr. Ferreira– would spend \$50,000; what teachers are going through to get it in the right direction; sitting at the red light; public does not see what they do.

Mr. Monteiro –where will we get the \$50,000; took from students and failed at it; problem is doing more harm than good how do we take from something else.

Ms. Beauchaine, nay; Mr. Cahoon, aye; Mr. Ferreira, nay; Mr. Monteiro, aye; Mr. Tsonos, aye.

Mr. Cahoon amended the motion on the table indefinitely, seconded by Mr. Monteiro; Mr. Cahoon, Mr. Ferreira, Mr. Monteiro, Mr. Tsonos voted aye indefinitely; Ms. Beauchaine voted nay.

Adoption of the Whole Child Resolution – Mr. Tsonos stated that we are already doing what is included in their resolution to support this; Mr. Cahoon – template resolution; complete and bring it back?

Mr. Tsonos - Superintendent to complete it.

Motion by Mr. Cahoon to adopt pending completion of our information, seconded by Mr. Ferreira.

Vote 5-0.

Reconsideration of request by Chartwell's Food Service for Reduction of the 2015 Contract Guarantee – Ms. Beauchaine stated that when motion was made to reimburse, she was for it and supported motion for \$10,000; her assumption was that it had to be \$10,000 only; she would like to reconsider \$15,000 reimbursement. Mr. Cahoon asked if any new information coming to light since the last vote.

Ms. Beauchaine said she supported it but she voted for \$10,000; she agreed with everything, but missed a step;

Mr. Monteiro – he did not support because it was based on speculation; equal participation at other schools; competitive process; three vendors; all guaranteed profits on bid; should be relying on participation to make your count if they had in contract but there was no talk of that; put \$11,000 to help; we invested in a plan

but they did not put in parameters; that was their offer; they came back; he does not support this.

Motion by Ms. Beauchaine to approve \$15,000, seconded by Mr. Ferreira.

Mr. Cahoon – clarify vote to add \$5,000 more to the \$10,000 already approved.

Roll call vote: Ms. Beauchaine, aye; Mr. Cahoon, nay; Mr. Ferreira, aye; Mr. Monteiro, nay; Mr. Tsonos, aye.

Consolidation of the Tolman and East Providence Hockey Teams – Mr. Robert Duarte, Athletic Director, stated that he had been contacted by Tolman about taking three of their players; Superintendent said we could make it work as our program is down; this is not really a consolidation; we are still in control; wants kids to have the ability to play; discussion regarding anyone being booted off the team; Mr. Duarte –we are entering into a co-op.

Motion to approve by Mr. Monteiro, seconded by Mr. Cahoon. Vote 5-0.

Approval of Increase in Coaching Stipends – Mr. Monteiro put this on the agenda but not in a position to raise stipends; extracurricular does not have impact on students; Budget Commission cut our coaches stipends; as a School Committee took back on turnover we have had; if stipends had been where they were; approximately \$44,000 to get them back up.

Mr. Monteiro - table indefinitely until we can restore.

Mr. Cahoon – great information but advisors and others lost piece of stipend and we should remember them as well. Mr. Monteiro - table indefinitely and include all other affected stipends, seconded by Mr. Cahoon. Vote 5-0.

Mr. Tsonos – Linda Dykeman will take direction from the priorities we will give her. Vote 5-0.

Mr. Monteiro – our budget is fixed; Mr. Kirby reminded they can change budget during year.

Approval of Concussion Protocol – Mr. Cahoon read thoroughly; section on returning to class; would it be possible to add: can return to team or field once schedule is in place, etc.

Mr. Duarte – once a concussion; take baseline before season; would have to be tested; not cleared until doctor, then trainer. Mr. Cahoon took back his question.

Mr. Duarte – all aligns with Interscholastic League.

Motion to approve by Mr. Cahoon, seconded by Mr. Monteiro. Vote 5-0.

Approval of the Athletic Code of Conduct

Mr. Duarte – revised; discussion about failing in school.

Ms. Beauchaine – indoor track not there; privilege to athletes about suspension “should be done”

Social probation – Homecoming; cannot go because of tardiness, but then 4 unexcused absences; she had a problem with this; would like

to discuss and make it a rule, if not on time, cannot play.

Mr. Monteiro – point of this obligation to wear jersey but do not hold for students; should be passed out to Middle School.

Ms. Beauchaine had a problem with a suspended student being allowed to come back and play; wants to look at social probation and add something about how parents act at games; “coming to the game is a right”

Discussion regarding travel to and from events. Mr. Duarte – we do not transport in the city.

Ms. Beauchaine – add it “within city or Pierce Field.”

Ms. Beauchaine and Mr. Duarte to discuss social probation piece; thought would go hand in hand with our policy on attendance.

Mr. Cahoon wants two failing, but he can live with one; Motion by Mr. Cahoon to defer approval pending update and further review, seconded by Ms. Beauchaine. Vote 5-0.

Public Comment II – Non Agenda Items

Tim Conley – unified sports adopted by Interscholastic League; asked School Committee to adopt unified basketball; model special needs students; partner with regular education; asked School Committee to give this consideration.

Ms. Beauchaine – will be on the agenda next month to talk about it

Mr. Conley – not in budget; will not burden budget; guidance on how to proceed

Mr. Duarte – started unified basketball; we would only pay for buses

Ms. Beauchaine– will support – through Project 106.

Old Business

Housing Aid Funds (Mr. Monteiro) Housing aid of \$15 million bond for school repairs with work of the School Department; \$226,000 of reimbursement of that bond money for those projects goes back to the city general fund; he asked Linda Dykeman to request City Council pending surplus; his intention if city gives us funds, we can apply those funds where voters approved; for school improvement is it a misappropriation to kick it back; cannot put in any other category; we to pay the bond or use for school improvements he would like to look into this.

Facilities Director Position, Assistant Facilities Director Position and Mechanic's Position

Discussion on Posting Positions: (Mr. Ferreira) look at positions; mechanic; fill in December; assistant never had before; move forward, post them or assign people to them; 35 days mechanic leaves

Ms. Beauchaine – job description; revise maintenance mechanic position; have at next meeting; date for job description.

Kim Mercer will get information out to School Committee.

Motion by Mr. Cahoon to extend the curfew to 10:45 PM, seconded by Mr. Monteiro. Vote 5-0.

Mr. Monteiro – could approve once School Committee sees job description before posting November 10.

Mr. Ferreira – would come before School Committee on December 8th

Mr. Cahoon – post mechanic position per written agreement of job description

Andrew Thomas, Legal Counsel – notice says discussion, cannot take action.

Kim Mercer – two open positions; she can send job description; might revise.

Mr. Monteiro – can approve at November 24th or December 8th meetings.

Mr. Ferreira – asked about Facilities Director position; Mr. Feola has been doing job for two months and proposed a plan to us; we have to work on it to determine how we go with an Assistant Facilities Person.

Mr. Cahoon– put Facilities Director in place first and then tell us what is needed; concerns about the plan and take another look at it; take up at Facilities Meeting on November 4th and bring back to the School Committee with recommendations.

Ms. Beauchaine– job description for Facilities Director from last time; would be interested in discussion of that job description to move forward with a plan for Director and Assistant if that's the route we

will take; she does not know if financed; look at the job description.

Discussion on the Hennessey School Roof – Mr. Ferreira requested the name of the company and when started and when finished; are they doing work in East Providence; concern about company roof at Hennessey; he requested information and never received it;

Mr. Feola can get the name;

Mr. Tsonos – also, was there a building permit.

Announcements

EPLAC Meeting Wednesday 6:30PM and 12/2/15

Students at Martin invited to play “Newsies” – hats off to the teachers.

Mr. Tsonos thanked all who attended joint meeting; School Department in audience, shows concern and drive.

Mr. Monteiro – Superintendent Interviews held yesterday; on November 10th, 11/10/15 will have interviews in public for final two candidates; Parent Groups asked to submit questions as representation from the public.

Homecoming Game on Friday, October 30th.

Motion by Mr. Cahoon to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Monteiro. Vote 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia A. Iannelli, Administrative Assistant

Nathan Cahoon, Clerk of the Committee