

TOWN OF NORWOOD  
School Committee Meeting  
James R. Savage Educational Center  
Wednesday, March 23, 2016

A meeting of the Norwood School Committee was held on Wednesday, March 23, 2016. The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m.

**Committee Members Present:** Mr. James Gormley, Chairman, Mrs. Courtney Rau-Rogers, Mr. John Badger, Ms. Lisa Igoe and Mr. Patrick McDonough.

**Administrators Present:** Mr. James Hayden, Superintendent of Schools; Dr. Alec Wyeth, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, Curriculum and Assessment; and Ms. Ann Marie Ellis, Director of Finance and Operations.

**Minutes:** Mrs. Rau-Rogers made a motion to approve the minutes of March 9, 2016, which was seconded by Mr. McDonough. The Committee voted in favor 5-0.

**Correspondence:** Chairman Gormley acknowledged receipt of the following correspondence:

- Response to Open Meeting Complaint;
- A letter dated March 21, 2016 that was faxed by Mr. Roger Ferris that will be discussed during *Late Agenda*.

Mrs. Rau-Rogers made a motion to accept the correspondence, which was seconded by Mr. Badger. The Committee voted unanimously in favor 5-0.

**Warrants:** Chairman Gormley informed that there were warrants to be signed.

**Public Forum:** None.

**Announcements:** None.

**Appearances: InvenTeam: Project Update:** Janelle Kelleher, student at Norwood High School and part of the InvenTeam, was here this evening to update the Committee regarding the status of the InvenTeam's Snow Removal Invention. Janelle informed that the awning activated three times in February and it worked quite well. She said that there are sensor pressures that will tell the microprocessor when it's time to move. She said that the awning is run by a repurposed car battery that continued to run even when the power went out during a recent storm.

Janelle said now that the building of the invention is done and it works, the students will go to Eureka Fest at MIT for three days and they will meet with other inventors and also give a short presentation to the crowd. She said in order to get to

Eureka Fest, the students need to raise \$400 each. They need \$4,400 total. Janelle said they are all going to raise funds and a Go-Fund Me Page has been started.

Mrs. Rau-Rogers made a motion to move *New Business: College & Career Preparations for NHS Seniors* up in the agenda, which was seconded by Mr. McDonough. The Committee voted unanimously in favor 5-0.

College & Career Preparations for NHS Seniors: Ms. Rory Cartland, from the Norwood High School Guidance Department, was here this evening to share with the Committee different ways the Guidance Department helps seniors with college and career preparations, including how to use Naviance (a web-based resource); Career Counseling; Junior and Senior Seminar; Career Interest Fair; Post-Secondary Fair; Evening Presentations; and Post-Secondary Planning for Students with Learning Differences (A breakfast that is scheduled on April 12<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 a.m. for parents of Students with different learning styles).

Ms. Cartland informed that in the class of 2015, 75% of the students went to a 4-year college; 13% went to a 2-Year College/Vocational Program; 5 students joined one of the US Military Branches and have been deployed; and 2% of the graduates sought employment.

The Members had an opportunity for questions and comments.

Ms. Cartland also updated the Committee that the Guidance Councilors also spend much of their day dealing with the social/emotional needs of the entire student body and are on hand to work with and assist parents with their questions and concerns.

Mr. Hayden thanked Ms. Cartland for a great presentation this evening and for representing the Guidance Department so well.

**Reports:** None.

**Superintendent's Report and/or Late Agenda:** Mr. Hayden read the Committee a letter dated March 21, 2016 from Mr. Roger Ferris, which was received by fax.

Mrs. Rau-Rogers made a motion to file this letter, which was seconded by Mr. Badger. The Committee voted in favor 5-0.

Mr. Badger asked if we need to do anything regarding Mr. Ferris' dissatisfaction with our previous response.

Mr. Hayden said our council has had an opportunity to review this letter and has a drafted a response. Mr. Hayden gave each Member a copy of council's drafted response to review.

Mr. Badger made a motion to send this letter along as our response to Mr. Ferris' letter, which was seconded by Mrs. Rau-Rogers for discussion.

Mr. McDonough would have liked more time to read the draft response instead of receiving it at this evening's meeting.

The Committee had an opportunity for questions and comments. Chairman Gormley said he believed the response provided the remedy that was asked for, but it appears Mr. Ferris is not happy with the way we were planning to resolve the matter. (Mr. Ferris wants the Committee to have in-person training on Open Meeting Laws, not on-line training as was included in the response.) The in-person training sessions are currently planned for Auburn or Martha's Vineyard.

Mr. Hayden reviewed the procedures that should be followed when receiving a complaint of a violation of open meeting laws.

Mr. Hayden read the draft letter from Counsel for the Members and asked for the Members thoughts and/or a vote to send the response.

Mr. Hayden said that we had discussed, at the last meeting, getting together as a group after the elections to discuss strategic plans, building a team and reviewing the rules of Open Meetings. He said if he can find a facilitator who could work with the Committee on these items it could work out well.

Regarding the motion on the table, the Committee voted 4-1 (Mr. McDonough voted against).

Mr. Hayden said Chairman Gormley requested the Committee consider moving the start time of the April 6<sup>th</sup> School Committee Meeting up to 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Badger made a motion to move the April 6, 2016 meeting up to 7:00 p.m., which was seconded by Mrs. Rau-Rogers. The Committee voted in favor 4-0-1 (Mr. Badger abstained).

**Policy:** None.

**Budget:** FY16 Budget Projections: Ms. Ellis reviewed anticipated projections. She informed that there are a number of positive and negative balances, but added it's still only February and there is still plenty of time left in the school year.

Mr. Hayden added that we would be asking the town for an offset of \$77,235.00

Ms. Ellis said at this point in the year, it looks as if we need \$1.3 million, but reminded that we haven't seen all the budget transfers, which happen at the very

end of the year. She added that there is one more circuit breaker payment at the end of the year as well.

**Old Business:** None.

**New Business:** Special Town Meeting Warrant Articles: Long Range Building Study and Snow & Ice Account: Mr. Hayden read the two proposed 2016 Special Town Meeting Articles:

**ARTICLE** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, or otherwise provide \$150,000 to be used to commission a Long Range Building Study from qualified bidders for the future needs of the Norwood Public Schools,

**OR TAKE ANY OTHER ACTION RELATIVE THERETO.**

Mr. Hayden updated the Committee on the ages and sizes of all the school buildings:

- High School – 5 years old;
- Middle School - 41 years old / 128,000 square feet;
- Prescott Elementary – 57 years old / 36,000 square feet;
- Oldham Elementary - 39 years old / 39,000 square feet;
- Cleveland Elementary – 50 years old / 49,000 square feet;
- Callahan Elementary – 85 years old / 33, 000 square feet;
- Balch Elementary – 102 years old / 51,000 square feet;
- Willet Early Childhood Center – 47 years old / 38,000 square feet; and
- Savage Center – 46 years old / 122, 000 square feet.

Mrs. Rau-Rogers reminded that the funding for this study was from the \$500,000 that the Town found in savings through lower than expected GIC rates. The consensus of the Budget Balancing was all three Boards would approve this study.

The Members had an opportunity for questions and comments.

Mr. McDonough made a motion to bring forth this article to see if the Town will provide \$150,000 for a qualified building study of the Norwood Public Schools, which was seconded by Mrs. Rau-Rogers.

Chairmen Gormley and Mr. McDonough both agreed that \$150,000 is money well spent given the ages of the schools.

Mrs. Rau-Rogers said the last study of the schools was over 16 years ago (Mount Vernon Study) and we have utilized many of the recommendations, including a new High School. Since that study, enrollment projections are different, our housing projections are really different and the growth of the Town has really changed as we have used up most of the available space. She added that this money

was originally offered to the School Committee to tie into the Committee of 21's recommendations.

With regard to the motion on the table, the Committee voted unanimously in favor 5-0.

**ARTICLE** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, or otherwise provide \$77,325 to the School Department for winter storm related costs, which exceed the FY16 budget due to winter conditions that exceeded the Snow & Ice budget. Said costs included overtime payroll, contractor plowing, sand/salt, deicers, snow blower repair, shovels, and other equipment used to address snow and ice conditions,

**OR TAKE ANY OTHER ACTION RELATIVE THERETO.**

Mr. Hayden reminded that there was a flood at the Cleveland over February vacation and one bill alone was \$11,000 to Service Pro. Mr. Hayden said Mr. Riccardi's crew and all the custodians from all the schools pitched in to do a great job.

Mrs. Rau-Rogers made a motion to add this warrant in the amount of \$77,325.00, which was seconded by Mr. Badger. The Committee voted unanimously in favor 5-0.

Mr. McDonough said that at the last Budget Balancing Meeting there was a question regarding union reserves. He wanted to know if we had to go to a Town Meeting to get that money.

Mr. Hayden said that we need to negotiate first, and treat our budget carefully and then we will be able to answer that. He added that negotiations sometimes go quickly or they could go longer.

Food Service Bid Open March 17-April 19, 2016: Ms. Ellis said the Food Service Bid will be published in Goods and Services Bulletin for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the local papers after that. There will be a mandatory Pre-Bid Conference on Tuesday, April 5<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m., which will include a tour of all the kitchens, including St. Catherine's. Final Proposals will be due by Wednesday, April 20<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 a.m.

Mr. Hayden said the goal is to weigh all our options to get the best food program for our students at an economical cost. He added that if we do not like any of the bids, then we can accept bids for a Food Service Manager.

Review of the 2016-2017 Proposed TEC Budget: Mr. Hayden said the Members received a packet with the power point information for 2016-2017 TEC Cooperative Budget. Mr. Hayden said he and Chairman Gormley attended the meeting and can answer any of the Members' questions. Mr. Hayden said we have teachers that take professional development courses through TEC, we participate in the buying program through TEC, and there are students who are in many of the programs at a

savings to our budget. Mr. Hayden explained that Norwood's assessment for this year is \$22,042.00, and their overall budget is \$7,639,135.00, which is \$167,068.00 more than the year before.

Mr. Badger made a motion that the Members have reviewed this Budget.

Mr. Badger amended his motion that the Member have reviewed and filed this Budget, which was seconded by Mrs. Rau-Rogers. The Committee voted unanimously in favor 5-0.

Out-of-State Field Trip Request: Mr. Hayden said there is an out-of-state field trip request from Ms. Jackie Mann, Principal of the Middle School. This request is for the 8<sup>th</sup> graders to visit Canobie Lake Park in Salem, New Hampshire on Monday, June 20, 2016.

Mrs. Rau-Rogers made a motion to approve this request, which was seconded by Mr. McDonough. The Committee voted unanimously in favor 5-0.

**Consent Agenda: Acceptance of One Donation:** Mr. Hayden recommended accepting the following donation:

-HPHC Community Grant for the Willett Early Childhood Center in the amount of \$500.00.

Mr. McDonough made a motion to accept the donation, which was seconded by Mrs. Rau-Rogers. The Committee voted unanimously in favor 5-0.

**Personnel:** None.

**School Committee Addenda:** Mr. McDonough wondered why he wasn't given a copy of the first response for the Open Meeting Law complaint before it was sent out.

Mr. Hayden said it was agreed that the Chair would send a response. He added that there were deadlines for our response and another meeting would have had to have been added if the whole Committee were to review the letter for approval prior to sending it out.

Mr. McDonough was concerned that in the March 8<sup>th</sup> minutes, the motion was worded incorrectly, and he had a right to see what the response was before it was sent.

Mr. Hayden said that during the meeting, it was discussed what would be written and sent. He said a motion should have been made saying not to send the letter until the full Committee had a chance to review the letter prior to sending.

Mr. McDonough referred to the motion that was made in the March 9<sup>th</sup> minutes that read:

“Mr. Badger made a motion for the Superintendent to send a response to the complainant and the Attorney General outlining the plan, which was seconded by Mrs. Rau-Rogers. The Committee voted in favor 5-0.”

Mr. McDonough said in the letter that was sent, it said that the School Committee voted Chairman James Gormley to send a response.

Mr. Hayden said that the Committee handled the response correctly.

Mr. Badger said we are going to be very delayed in responses if we have to meet to review them every time we need to send out letters.

Mr. McDonough said the minutes were recorded accurately.

Mrs. Rau-Rogers said that the error was in the motion made, but the response was handled correctly.

Mr. McDonough made a motion directing the Chair to respond to all correspondence regarding this complaint, as set forth by law, instead of the Superintendent who was identified in the motion made on March 9, 2016 in error, but in good faith, which was seconded by Mrs. Rau-Rogers. The Committee voted in favor 4-0-1 (Mr. Badger abstained).

Mr. McDonough said he recently received a thank you note from Ms. Uppenkamp’s Civics’ Class, signed by each student, for his attendance at the recent debate.

Mr. McDonough said Norwood High School has been steeped in tradition for 50 + years. Mr. McDonough said students should be proud of their next step in life and they should be proud of what they are doing and let it be announced at graduation.

Chairman Gormley had none.

Mrs. Rau-Rogers reminded everyone to go out and vote on April 4<sup>th</sup>. Mrs. Rau-Rogers then thanked Mike Lyons the very best as he moves on to the next phase of his life. She then thanked Mr. Badger very much for of his hard work on the Board and for all she has learned from him as a School Committee Member and a professional. She said if she is re-elected, she will really miss his presence on the Board.

Ms. Igoe also thanked Mr. Badger for his service, adding it was a pleasure to work with him.

Chairman Gormley also thanked Mr. Badger for his service and wished him the best.

Mr. McDonough also thanked Mr. Badger for his service.

Mr. Badger said he is leaving this Board and feels that we are better off now than when he first started. Mr. Badger said when Mr. Curran asked him on election night what he thought the most pressing issue was, Mr. Badger said to find a strong Superintendent and stay out of his way. Mr. Badger said he does believe we have a strong Superintendent and a very good Assistant Superintendent as well a good Administration Team. He truly believes things are better than they were 6 years ago.

**Executive Session:** Chairman Gormley informed that there would be an Executive Session for the following item:

-Unit A Negotiation.

Mrs. Rau-Rogers made a motion for Executive Session at 9:25 p.m. which was seconded by Mr. Badger. The Committee was polled and voted in favor 5-0.

Chairman Gormley said the Committee will come back into Open Session only for the purpose of Adjournment.

**Adjournment:** Mr. Badger made a motion for adjournment at 9:40 p.m., which was seconded by Mr. McDonough. The Committee voted unanimously in favor 5-0.

Respectfully Submitted:

Donna G. Doliner, Clerk  
Norwood School Committee