

TOWN OF NORWOOD
School Committee Meeting
James R. Savage Educational Center
Wednesday, November 4, 2015

A meeting of the Norwood School Committee was held on Wednesday, November 4, 2015. The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m.

Committee Members Present: Mr. James Gormley, Chairman, Mrs. Courtney Rau-Rogers, Ms. Lisa Igoe, Mr. Patrick McDonough and Mr. John Badger (arrived at 7:45 p.m.).

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 October 21, 2015, which was seconded by Mr. McDonough. The Committee voted in favor 4-0-1 (Mr. Badger abstained).

Correspondence: Chairman Gormley acknowledged receipt of the following correspondence:

- Special Town Meeting Warrant Articles; and
- Foundation Budget Review Commission Final Report that was recently presented in the Globe and given to the Members.

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

Public Forum: None.

Announcements:

Appearances: High School Students Present 4 A's: Molly Dittmeier, Brian King, Joey Sweeney, and Fania Auguste were here this evening to update the Committee with regard to Academics, Athletics, Arts and Activities at Norwood High School. The students gave a different perspective on the 4 A's this month, explaining how the 4A's have personally affected them in their High School careers.

Fania Auguste was the first to update. She explained to the Members that she came here after the earthquake in Haiti. She publicly thanked her ESL Teacher, Ms. Gonzalez, for helping her learn English and excel in academics s after arriving at Norwood High School. She compared Ms. Gonzalez to her mother who passed away when she was a young girl. She will always look back on her High School years with fond memories and will continue to cheer on Norwood High School.

Joey Sweeney is very involved in the Arts and participates on the Yearbook Committee. He volunteers for all fundraisers and is involved in all the choral groups, as well as many other activities. He feels all the activities should continue to be funded so other students can be as involved as he is.

Brian King was very involved in baseball and football and will always remember the wonderful memories and friends made while participating in these sports. Brian congratulated the football team, field hockey team, and swim team, as well as the cheerleaders and golfers for going on to the post season.

Molly Dittmeier updated that with all the demands expected this year as a junior, she said marching band, drama and chorus give her reasons to get up in the morning.

At this point in the meeting, Mr. Hayden welcomed Mr. Steve Conant, Marching Band Director and Ms. Connor-Moen to share the successes of the Marching Band this year. They celebrated a gold medal in the MICCA Festival this year, and a championship at NESBA. for Division III. This is the equivalent in winning a High School Super Bowl. He said he has 7 great staff members who work with him and that helps a lot. The show was entitled *Masquerade*. Mr. Hayden showed a clip of the winning performance to the Committee. The students explained how the arts and other activities have been a huge part of their lives, helping to shape what they want to do with their lives going forward.

Mr. Bourn thanked the Committee for inviting the Marching Band and the Student Representatives here this evening, adding that the Marching Band success is a perfect example of what happens when you invest in the students' interests.

Reports: Middle School Big Idea's Math Presentation: Mr. John Casali was here this evening with Mr. Mike McCarthy, teacher at the Coakley Middle School, to update the Committee on *Big Ideas Math Program*. Mr. Casali said teachers began using the program this past September. There was professional development for teachers in September and October (and coming up again in February 2016). The teachers feel that it is a relief to have great material to work with that is aligned to the Common Core.

Mr. Casali and Mr. McCarthy were able to do a presentation to the Committee of how the on-line tools were easily accessed. Mr. Casali said he believes this new program will enhance the learning experience of the students, adding that these are exciting times at the Middle School.

Superintendent's Report and/or Late Agenda: None.

Policy: Sub-Committee Meeting Date: Mr. Hayden passed out the updated Sub-Committee list. He said that there is one more sub-committee that needs Members to volunteer for, which is the Long Range Building Study Committee.

The RFP has been put together and there will be a meeting will be next Thursday at 11:00. Mr. McDonough volunteer as did Chairman Gormley.

Mr. Badger made a motion for Mr. McDonough and Chairman Gormley to represent the School Committee at the Long Range Building Study Committee Meeting next Thursday, which was seconded by Mrs. Rau-Rogers. The Committee voted in favor 5-0.

Mr. Badger made a motion to accept the Committees as outline on the hand-out given to the Members this evening, was seconded by Mrs. Rau-Rogers. The Committee voted unanimously in favor 5-0.

Budget: FY 16 Budget: Mr. Hayden said things are going well so far. He said Ms. Ellis could not be here this evening due to the death of a close friend.

Old Business: Town Meeting Articles Prioritization: Mr. Hayden updated that there was indefinite postponements on many of the Town Meeting Articles at this point. Mr. Hayden said he does not believe the Town will agree to take from free cash, which is about \$840,000. All three of the School's Articles are still current and will be addressed at Town Meeting. Ms. Igoe said she feels strongly that new books should be put into the High School. It would be wrong to have these kids get new books in Middle School and then transition to the High School to begin using old books. Mrs. Rau-Rogers said she is in agreement that textbooks are a priority. She also believes that the student information system is a priority so that everyone can stay updated and communicate to each other more easily.

Mr. McDonough asked if the Special Town Meeting is the place to ask for these items since free-cash is limited.

Mr. Hayden said the new books might be able to wait for the spring Annual Town Meeting. He also reminded that we will not be SIF compliant very soon. Changing over this information will be very time consuming and is not something that anyone wants to do on the first day of school.

There was much discussion regarding the priorities.

Mr. McDonough made a motion to withdraw all of the Articles, which was seconded by Mr. Badger, for discussion.

Mr. McDonough withdrew the motion, which was seconded by Mrs. Rau-Rogers. The Committee voted in favor 5-0.

Mr. McDonough made a motion to postpone the Articles until Annual Town Meeting in the spring, which was seconded by Mrs. Rau-Rogers for discussion.

Dr. Wyeth said by keeping the Articles on the Warrant, we will be conveying a very important need to the Town that will not be able to be added to our budget. If they vote these Articles down, then we can bring them back again at a future Town Meeting.

With regard to the motion on the table, the Committee voted against 4-1 (Mr. McDonough voted in favor).

Ms. Igoe made a motion to withdraw Article 5 (Long Range Building Study); and bring forward Article 6 (Student Information System) and Article 7 (High School Textbooks), which was seconded by Mr. Badger.

Mr. McDonough made a motion to vote Article by Article, which was seconded by Mrs. Rau-Rogers for discussion. The Committee voted against 3-2.

With regard to Ms. Igoe's motion, the Committee voted in favor 4-1 (Mr. McDonough opposed).

Mr. Hayden encouraged the Committee Members to come to Town Meeting and sit with him in the front. Mr. Kidd will present the information system and Mr. Bourn will present the need for the textbooks.

New Business: Out of State Field Trip Mar 9-13, 2016 Student TV National Convention: Mr. Hayden recommended approving this field trip.

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

Personnel: None.

School Committee Addenda: Mr. McDonough said that due to the fact that he takes the train from Boston before getting to the meetings, he stores his notes and personal items in this room and would like access to the School Committee Room or have another place in the building to be able to store items safely.

Mr. Hayden said the building is open frequently and custodians can let Members in.

Mr. Badger: None.

Ms. Igoe congratulated the students that were here this evening on a great job. She then congratulated the football team on a great season, the Band on a great season, and wished all the sport teams heading into playoffs good luck. She said she just got word that the cheerleaders have qualified for Regionals, which will be on November 15th.

Mrs. Rau-Rogers agreed that the students here this evening did a wonderful job. She loved seeing the Band's trophies here as well.. Mrs. Rau-Rogers reminded that Town Meeting will be on November 16th and 19th.

Chairman Gormley referenced a recent article in *Education Week*, which talked about unequal access to advanced classes and has been an issue that schools wrestle with. Chairman Gormley reminded that Dr. Wyeth recently gave an update on test scores and touched upon this subject.

Executive Session: None.

Adjournment: Mr. Badger made a motion for adjournment at 10:10 p.m., which was seconded by Mrs. Rau-Rogers. The Committee voted unanimously in favor 5-0.

Respectfully Submitted:

Donna G. Doliner, Clerk
Norwood School Committee