

TOWN OF NORWOOD
School Committee Meeting
James R. Savage Educational Center
Wednesday, April 9, 2014

A meeting of the Norwood School Committee was held on Wednesday, April 9, 2014. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Committee Members Present: Ms. Courtney Rau, Chairwoman, Mr. John Badger, Mr. James Gormley, Mr. Paul Samargedlis and Mr. Joseph Montesano

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.

Appearances: Student Government Day: The following students participated in Student Government Day and a Student School Committee Meeting:

- Ryan Kelly, Superintendent; (Gr. 11);
- Aloonee Adhikari, School Committee (Gr. 10);
- Saloone Adhikari, School Committee (Gr. 11);
- Viktorija Barone, School Committee (Gr. 11);
- Hannah Doherty, School Committee (Gr. 10); and
- Elizabeth Wagner, School Committee (Gr. 9).

The students chose two items for discussion. The first topic was whether to leave the name of Winter Recess (formerly know as Christmas Break) as it is or revert the name back to Christmas Break.

The next topic of discussion was about the homework policy.

The students were able to share their thoughts and concerns about these items and were able to practice making motions and voting on the motions.

When the Student Government portion of the evening was over, Mr. Samargedlis made a motion for a two-minutes recess, which was seconded by Mr. Badger. The Committee voted unanimously in favor 5-0.

Minutes: Mr. Gormley made a motion to approve the minutes of March 27, 2014, which was seconded by Mr. Samargedlis. The Committee voted in favor 5-0

Correspondence: Chairwoman Rau acknowledged receipt of many letters, e-mails and phone calls regarding the School Calendar, adding that they are still being sorted through.

Warrants: Chairwoman Rau informed that there were warrants to be signed.

Public Forum: Chairwoman Rau informed that this was the time during the meeting when a member of the public could come before the School Committee to talk about an item they would like to see on a future agenda.

Nora Zaldivar was here this evening to share her thoughts regarding the recent non-binding referendum question that was on the ballot on April 7, 2014. Ms. Zaldivar was here to support the School Committee on their decision to keep *Winter Break* on the calendar as it is. She said that keeping the more inclusive term is the right thing to do.

Lou Kruger has lived in Norwood for 25 years. He is also in support of the more inclusive term. He is not a Christian and has felt like an outsider at times. He is very disappointed that it was all over the news. He said this is very painful and discomfoting to be here this evening, adding that others may not want to speak out because of fear.

Janet Ruboy has lived in Norwood for 56 years. She was here this evening to lend her support to the School Committee. Diversity was unknown when she moved in. She feels very strongly about holiday vacations. She has researched all the surrounding towns and found that they all call their vacations *Winter Break* or *Holiday Recess*. Ms. Ruboy said Norwood has come a long way since she moved here and she would not want to see it go backwards.

Mary Appleyard, a Member of SEPAC, was here to discuss the proposed elimination of a 3rd third grade class for next year. She is worried that with larger class sizes, her daughter who has learning difficulties, as well as many of the other students who struggle, will fall behind.

Announcements: Chairwoman Rau was happy to share some good news from the History Department Chair, Ms. Jen Orlinsky. Two of our High School history students have placed at the State History Competitions and will be moving on to the National Competition. Ms. Delia Bartucca received a 1st place award and Ms. Julia Kiley received a 2nd place award. The Committee wishes these two students well as they move on.

Reports: None.

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

Policy: None.

Budget: FY14 Budget: - Town-Wide Budget Balancing Committee Report and Agreement: Chairwoman Rau updated regarding the Town Wide Budget Balancing Committee, saying that the group worked very hard this year and was able to think outside the box. Chairwoman Rau thanked everyone for their cooperation and for the idea of putting a Committee of 21 together to take a look at school spending.

Chairwoman Rau is in favor of looking at town spending, as it is not just a school problem.

Mr. Samargedlis said the Budget Balancing Committee cooperated very well with the other Town Boards to resolve the issues for the FY15 Budget. Mr. Samargedlis was thrilled with the group effort, adding that the Boards are going into Town Meeting all on the same page. Mr. Samargedlis informed that we are still waiting on Circuit Breaker information, which at 70% should be around \$1.4 million. Mr. Samargedlis mentioned his concern for music and athletic fees. He shared his desire to start an Educational Foundation where the Norwood School Department could partner up with corporate sponsors to generate more funds. Mr. Samargedlis hopes this could take the burden off of the fees that families incur.

Mr. Hayden said there were still two large issues that should be addressed. One issue was the fees for Fine Arts and Athletics Fees, and the other was the elimination of buses for grades 7-12 which would be very disruptive to our schools. He said that the Finance Commission, Mr. Thornton and the Selectmen agreed to back the Circuit Breaker estimate of \$1.4 million, which will allow us to use \$200,000 towards reinstating buses. Mr. Hayden said that he still needed to find \$49,000.

<u>Proposal to Reinstate Grade 7-12 Buses</u>			<u>Line 26 Inc. Circuit Breaker Estimate</u> <u>\$200,000 & reduce \$49,840:</u>	
714	1.0 Paraprof. Oldham 1 to 1	\$22,287	Student moved	\$22,287
927	Tuition Reimbursement	\$10,000		\$10,000
1341	High School Dues	\$ 3,000	NEASC covered	\$ 3,000
1602	High School Vandalism	\$ 3,000	Reduce Account	\$ 3,000
7880	Replace Maint. Equip.	\$ 1,000	Red. Account to \$5,000	\$ 1,000
	Revise Sch. Bus Fee Contrib.	\$10,553	Rev. Sch. Bus Fee contrib.	\$10,553
			From \$200,000 to \$210,553	
Total 13.9 FTE's Reduced				
FY15 FTE = 472.2 - 13.9 =458.3 \$3,358,380				

<u>Town Analysis</u>		
C	Revise Out-of-District Tuition Est.	\$300,000
G	6 th Pass Dept. Receipts Increase	\$205,736
D	Special Town Mtg. FY13	\$162,223
E	Special Town Mtg. FY09	\$ 12,984
F	Special Town Mtg. FY14 Surplus Int.	\$ 80,000
	TM for SPED Increased Costs	\$255,207
	Total Change	\$760,943

After some discussion, Mr. Gormley made a motion to approve reductions in the amount of \$49,840.00 to reinstate busing for grades 7-12, which was seconded by Mr. Samargedlis. The Committee voted unanimously in favor 5-0

Ms. Ellis updated regarding the FY14 Budget. She updated regarding outstanding purchase orders, legal settlements and unpredictable accounts such as the substitute account that are ever changing.

Mr. Samargedlis made a motion to file, which was seconded by Mr. Badger. The Committee voted unanimously in favor 5-0.

Approval of FY15 Budget: Mr. Samargedlis made a motion to approve the bottom line budget figure for FY15 of \$38,464,632, which was seconded by Mr. Badger. The Committee voted in favor 5-0.

Approval of Special Town Meeting Warrant Articles: Chairwoman Rau informed that Town Meeting begins on Monday, May 12th. Mr. Hayden said the snow and ice removal will be tacked onto the Town Warrant.

Mr. Hayden informed of a \$37,500 special needs settlement, which is allowed to go before Town Meeting.

Mr. Gormley made a motion for the following Articles, which were seconded by Mr. Samargedlis.

ARTICLE To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, or otherwise provide funds to pay Special Education legal expenses in the amount of \$37,500.00, OR TAKE ANY OTHER ACTION RELATIVE THERETO.

ARTICLE To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, or otherwise provide a placeholder of funds to pay for any unexpected Regular Education/Operational Expenses/Special expenses that may arise, OR TAKE ANY OTHER ACTION RELATIVE THERETO.

With regard to these warrants, the Committee voted unanimously in favor 5-0.

Mr. Gormley was excused from the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

Old Business: Mr. Samargedlis made a motion for reconsideration of the vote to change the language on the school calendar to change *Winter Recess* to *Christmas Break / Winter Recess*, which was seconded by Mr. Montesano.

The Members had an opportunity to share their thoughts and opinions.

Mr. Samargedlis said he feels that changing the wording will be a good compromise motion.

With regard to the vote on the table, the Committee voted 2-2 (Chairwoman Rau and Mr. Badger voted against). The vote failed.

New Business: Acceptance of Two Donations: Mr. Hayden recommended accepting a donation of 8 – 9” LCD Monitors, cables and 1 – inkjet printer from Wiedenbach Brown.

Mr. Hayden recommended accepting a donation from the Cleveland PTA in the amount of \$1,000. The PTA would like to use \$727.36 to purchase a laptop computer to be used for several purposes: assemblies, lessons by the reading specialist, lessons by the ELL teacher, and for some lessons in the library.

Mr. Samargedlis made a motion to approve both donations, which was seconded by Mr. Montesano. The Committee voted in favor 4-0.

Personnel: Mr. Hayden said a Search Committee is still being put together for the Athletic Director position.

School Committee Addenda: Mr. Montesano said none.

Mr. Badger had none.

Mr. Samargedlis asked if the calendar would be on the next agenda.

Mr. Hayden said it would be.

Mr. Samargedlis said he would expect the courtesy of being allowed to finish his thoughts before discussions are closed going forward.

Chairwoman Rau had none.

Adjournment: Mr. Samargedlis made a motion for adjournment at 9:10 p.m., which was seconded by Mr. Badger. The Committee voted unanimously in favor 4-0.

Respectfully Submitted:

Donna G. Doliner, Clerk
Norwood School Committee