

NORTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Norton, Massachusetts

MEETING MINUTES

Date of School Committee Meeting: March 24, 2008

Location: Library, Norton Middle School

Attending: Committee Members: Chairman Kevin O'Neil, Vice-Chairman Thomas Golota, Mr. Andrew Mackie, Mrs. Margaret Werner and Student Representative Emily Carmichael. Mrs. Beth McManus was absent with prior notice.

Call to Order: Chairman O'Neil called the meeting to order at 6:35 pm.

Pledge of Allegiance

Review and Approval of Minutes of Prior Meeting:

A motion was made by Mr. Mackie, seconded by Mrs. Werner, to approve the Minutes of the prior meeting on March 10th. The Minutes were unanimously approved on a 4-0 vote.

Approval of Budget Transfers (3):

a) Dr. Ansay requested that funds from the high school teachers' salary line be transferred to the middle school for the purchase of Social Studies textbooks which have been previously approved by the committee. She explained that these funds have become available due to a teacher retirement at the high school.

b/c) Dr. Ansay explained that funds in the bus driver salary line are available as a result of a retirement of one of our four bus drivers, and the inability to hire a replacement for another bus driver that was let go. According to Dr. Ansay, these funds are needed for instructional hardware and computer supplies not funded originally/adequately in the FY '08 current budget.

On a motion by Mr. Golota, seconded by Mrs. Werner, the committee unanimously approved the budget transfers on a 4-0 vote.

Report on High School Athletic Leagues:

Dr. Ansay reported on high school athletic leagues and the research her office has recently conducted. According to the research, transportation costs seem to be equivalent between the Tri-Valley League and the South Coast League. Mr. O'Neil thanked Dr. Ansay for her report, and concluded that there does not seem to be a cost savings involved with switching leagues.

Mrs. Werner asked if further action should be taken to determine if Norton should switch athletic leagues. Both Mr. O'Neil and Dr. Ansay agreed with Mrs. Werner. Dr. Ansay suggested that the

coaches should meet with Mr. Dewar and have some dialog about the issue. Dr. Ansay explained that she would inquire further with the other leagues to find out if and when they might be accepting new members. Mr. O'Neil thanked Dr. Ansay for her report and efforts on this issue.

L.G. Nourse Sewer Extension:

Dr. Ansay explained that in February she requested a meeting with Duane Knapp from the Town's Water and Sewer Department to explain the septic system situation at the school. According to Dr. Ansay, we have been experiencing additional tank pumping needs which are indicative of system failure. On occasion, there are also occurrences of wastewater on the ground draining into open ground. This system has a Title V failure as well. Dr. Ansay explained that Mr. Knapp arranged for a meeting with an engineer from Weston & Sampson for a walk-thru. The engineer, Mr. Von Reis, then prepared a report which she shared with the committee tonight.

Upon the recommendation of Mr. Knapp, Dr. Ansay said she has applied for permits. She explained that the permit applications take a long time to process. Therefore, she has applied for them now so we will not be held back if the sewer project moves forward. She has also commissioned an initial design report at a cost of approximately \$4,800 from the Nourse's building maintenance line. As soon as this preliminary design report is completed, a meeting will be held with town officials to discuss options. Dr. Ansay reminded the committee that design work is a state law requirement for projects over \$100,000. She said the urgency of this initiative is fueled by not only safety concerns, but by the convenience of the Mansfield interceptor and the fact that the septic system at the high school is also experiencing failure issues. She explained that we are attempting to avoid two system failures at the same time.

A discussion ensued. Dr. Ansay explained that at this point she believes the L.G. Nourse Sewer Extension project may be approved by the Town as a capital improvement. She emphasized the need to plan ahead and be ready in case this project gets approved. Mr. Mackie asked if the state has a special fund, such as an "extraordinary relief" fund for projects like this. Dr. Ansay said that is a good idea which must be explored further. Mr. O'Neil summarized the issue for the committee. Dr. Ansay requested permission to put a place holder Article on the Special Town Meeting warrant for the L.G. Nourse Sewer Tie-In Project. The committee agreed that an article should be written just in case it is needed.

On a motion by Mr. Mackie, seconded by Mr. Golota, the committee unanimously approved the drafting of a special Town Meeting Article on a 4-0 vote.

Approval of Policies:

a. Student Records Regulations

Dr. Ansay explained that the district is proposing a change in their records policy to reflect changes that have occurred since the authorization of IDEIA 2004, 603 CMR.28.00 (state special education law), Family Educational Records Privacy Act (FERPA) and an update related to non-custodial parents rights (August 2006). She said we are now obligated to notify parents and

students eighteen years or older of FERPA regulations on an annual basis. She explained that we will do this via our handbooks and school websites. She said these actions reflect compliance with state and federal regulations.

On a motion by Mr. Golota, seconded by Mrs. Werner, the committee unanimously approved the Student Records Regulations on a 4-0 vote.

b. Safe Schools Policy

Dr. Ansay explained that previously, we created a policy that addressed Sexual Harassment only. However, since then, the school department has realized that there are many other types of harassment, and that bullying is an area that needs to be addressed via a policy. Therefore, she said a new Safe Schools Policy has been created. A discussion ensued. The committee agreed that more language should be added to the new policy to address what students should do if they feel they have been harassed. The vote on the Safe Schools Policy was deferred. Dr. Ansay agreed to make adjustments to the policy as discussed. The adjusted policy will be reviewed again at the next meeting.

FY '09 Budget Discussion:

Mr. O'Neil had asked for a continued discussion on the FY '09 budget. A brief discussion ensued. Mr. O'Neil reminded the committee that votes will not be taken on the budget on April 7th. According to Mr. O'Neil, this meeting will provide a public forum for our budget discussion which is required annually by law.

Personnel:

Retirement:

a. Ms. Joan Cardoza, Physical Education Supervisor/Teacher, after 35 years of service, effective June 30, 2008.

b. Mr. David Mollica, Physical Education Teacher, Intramural Coach and Varsity Baseball Coach, effective June 30, 2008, after 34 years of service.

Mr. Mackie commented that these educators have provided service to Norton schools for a very long time. He said it is nice to say thank you and recognize their service. Dr. Ansay assured the committee that the school department would do so.

Resignation:

Mrs. Michele Baeta, NMS Adjustment Counselor, effective June, 2008.

Appointment:

Ms. Joan Cardoza, Assistant Softball Coach, for the 2008 season.

Adjournment:

On a motion by Mrs. Werner, seconded by Mr. Golota, on a roll call vote, the committee unanimously voted to enter Executive Session at 7:40 pm.

NEXT MEETING DATE:

Monday, April 7, 2008, 6:30 P.M., Norton High School Auditorium.

Respectfully Submitted,
Patricia H. Ansay, Ed.D.
Secretary pro tem
