

PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES
February 14, 2014

A meeting of the Swampscott School Committee was held in room B208 at Swampscott High School commencing at 5:45 p.m. with the following members present: Mr. Rick Kraft, Chairman; Ms. Carin Marshall and Ms. Amy OConnor. Also Present: Ms. Pamela Angelakis, Superintendent of Schools and Mr. Wayne White, School Business Administrator. Tristan Smith, Student Representative, was running the video equipment. Ms. Marianne Speranza-Hartmann, Mr. Ted Delano and Christopher Thomsen were absent.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was none.

COMMITTEE COMMENT

Ms. OConnor stated that her son, Finn, was thrilled to receive a thank you from Ms. Angelakis for attending the last School Committee meeting.

Ms. Marianne Speranza-Hartmann arrived at 5:50pm.

PUBLIC HEARING ON SCHOOL BUDGET 2014-2015

PUBLIC HEARING

MOTION:

It was moved by Ms. OConnor and seconded by Ms. Marshall to open the public hearing. The motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Kraft said he'd like to open with comments. Mr. Kraft would like detailed lines that were hidden to open in excel in future budgets to see changes. Example grouped, but detailed lines not showing. Ms. OConnor mentioned that if there was a major change, say \$20,000 increase, could they expand on why in the future. This would allow committee questions to be answered that way and sometimes it would be easy to identify the change. Perhaps even as an asterisk and separate page with backup/details. Mr. White commented there were comment bubbles available for him, but going forward he would make them able to see. Mr. Kraft suggested a district wide rollup of what's going into each different area. Ms. Angelakis said even after the vote this can be done for a future meeting.

Ms. OConnor asked if there was an error in the preschool 2/3/4 day option. Ms. OConnor had a 5 day student and Ms. Marshall did too. She thought maybe 4 day was a typo. Ms. OConnor was wondering without ruffling feathers, if we could see what the market rate is for other preschools in the area. She said Swampscott had an amazing program, but perhaps it was worth more than this cost. Mr. Kraft commented that although the price hadn't increased, it has been brought up before. Ms. OConnor mentioned that while our preschool is more for model students perhaps that was more the reason than the need to be a money maker, but she would like to see it make more. Ms. Marshall asked if the preschool pays for itself. Mr. White answered that yes, it does. He also stated that not that we won't look at increasing, but in talking, keeping it affordable for those that need it. Ms. OConnor suggested maybe making the fee by need or on a sliding scale. Ms. Speranza-Hartmann asked if there is a reimbursement, maybe thru Circuit Breaker. Mr. White did not remember seeing that, but he will look into it and will speak with Ms. Raymond, Preschool Director.

Mr. Kraft stated that he is aware there is a food price guideline, but we should look into if there is a federally mandated minimum to raise our prices coming up?

Mr. White mentioned that Page 8 was updated for easier reading. It contained revenue for school, grants, circuit breakers, revolving, etc. Athletics, building rental and self sufficient accounts that throw off a profit. Business Managers look this time of year to see what is deemed not needed or extra and put it in the regular budget. It was already included in Town funding.

Ms. Marshall asked about Extended Day. How does it run? Ms. Angelakis replied it was similar to the preschool. Self sustaining with additional monies that are available to the school. Ms. Speranza-Hartmann commented on Athletic Expenses Police Detail. She said we pay for athletic details, but other things like functions, and chorus programs, etc. also have police detail. Ms. Angelakis mentioned that she has been speaking with Ms. Cheever, Resource Officer, about the organization paying. Ms. Angelakis said she would rather have the police detail and figure out the equity of that. Ms. Speranza-Hartmann also commented, Mr. Delano was not present, but if he had been or another school committee member was from the police dept. they would have to remove the police detail line item before voting the bottom line of the budget.

Mr. Kraft mentioned that on page 10 he wanted to point out that year 2014 should say 0.7 not .07. Also on the bottom of that page it should say 0.5 not .05.

Ms. Angelakis commented that kindergarten is a full day grant. We have to have .5 ESP's and we have to reapply every year for the grant. We also had to have NAEYC accreditation as part of the process.

Ms. Speranza-Hartmann mentioned she has notes on a wish list. Mr. Kraft stated that as we refine the budget it won't affect the action today. He also noted that the M.S. 7th grade should include Nahant students.

Ms. Speranza-Hartmann didn't see her line item as M.S. school nurse, but it is there Ms. OConnor said. We will vote separately and Ms. Speranza-Hartmann will have to leave the room.

Ms. OConnor commented that she sees a big drop on page 12 for projected enrollment. What happens to teachers when we have a lower enrollment? Ms. Angelakis stated it depends on the year. Usually teachers will fit somewhere in the district due to retirements, leaves, etc. Next year we have a need in gr 5 on Mr. Murphy's wish list.

Mr. Kraft questioned on Clarke budget that there was a huge instruction aide increase, line item 2330. Mr. White stated there was a lot of moving people that didn't belong in other places and moving actuals in payroll and salaries. He tried to use actual, whereas maybe before it was not actual. Mr. Kraft's wish list is that if we do shuffle, have it all on a spreadsheet to show. Mr. White commented that with three business managers and many hands on that would be very hard to recreate.

Mr. Kraft asked what the regular ed increase is? Ms. Angelakis said they received an increase in step and lane and those were factored in. Ms. Speranza-Hartmann thanked Mr. White for this tedious work and Ms. Angelakis noted that he took on a lot. Ms. Speranza-Hartmann suggested they stay in order on the page and list items as they went down the page. She asked why is PE broken out. Was it broken out because of the split with teachers at more than one school? Ms. Angelakis believes it was broken out because the health teacher is split among 3 schools. Mr. Kraft suggested that perhaps they update the line item to say Health & PE.

Ms. OConnor said she was curious about substitute prices and why they were different between each elementary school. Ms. Angelakis added that maternity leaves and long term illnesses were factored in. Ms. OConnor questioned the increase in Instructional Aide Salaries. Ms. Angelakis commented they added 5 interventionalists. They are in the process of looking at the value of them and hard data. Mr. White mentioned that he has a breakout of who is in the line and there are a number of ESPs and Tutors. He re-categorized staff and put them where they belonged. There wasn't much emphasize on who was on what shelf previously it was more the bottom line. He said as he put it together he made tweaks and there may be a few more tweaks as they go along. A lot of these questions may be the same answer because of this.

Mr. Kraft commented that Instructional Tech. was increased to \$3000 at each school. Mr. White said the money was allocated for supplies and repairs. Mr. Kevin Kaczynski, Technology Director, said he was not sure what that line item is for. There is a line item for equipment repair. Perhaps it was more for bulbs and a small budget to repair/replace. He said the number is inadequate. Ms. Speranza-Hartmann commented that technology

maintenance was brought up last year. At some point, even in the new h.s. building there will be a need for repairs/new equipment. Ms. Angelakis suggested we put the two line items together. She applauded Mr. Kaczynski's hard work to get all the smart boards. Mr. Kraft commented that he likes it broken out.

Ms. O'Connor commented on the heating costs all across the schools. She commented that overall the schools are hot; heat is high and a huge waste of money. She stated that a lot of the windows are open and her children are in short sleeves consistently. Ms. Speranza-Hartmann mentioned that it is very hard to regulate. When the heat is on in her office the kids upstairs above her are too hot. Perhaps Mr. White can look into.

Mr. Kraft moved on to the Hadley School page. He asked why the Professional Salaries line went up and Regular Ed Salaries went down. Ms. Angelakis stated that Dr. Murphy adjusted the principal salaries due to inconsistencies with contracts this year. There were teacher's that moved and retirements. There were also less veteran teachers and actual amounts vs estimated. Salaries were set with consideration of level of experience. The newly hired teachers are placed on a lower step. Ms. O'Connor asked about the ELL line item. Ms. Angelakis stated that Stanley and Clarke are splitting one ELL teacher. The MS and Hadley have the largest case load and one ELL per school. Ms. O'Connor asked if it is possible to consolidate the kids. Ms. Angelakis stated she thought this was a possible legal issue, but there is an even split between Stanley/Clarke and teachers are being trained for support when the ELL teacher is not there.

Mr. Kraft moved on to the Stanley School page. Ms. O'Connor asked why the supplies and materials, line item 2200, are higher than others. If that is a per pupil calculation, she believes it shouldn't be such a discrepancy. Should be looked into. Ms. O'Connor asked why the Regular Ed was not consistent. Looks like more than a 10% increase. Mr. White commented that there are 21 people in that group. One of the things he looked at is a roster of every single person and lined them up. Again, it goes back to the same answer of moving personnel to their proper places. Those were similar questions and good to point out.

Ms. O'Connor pointed out that although the budget at Stanley has stayed relatively the same the school looks significantly better and the two custodians over there are doing a significantly better job and it speaks to not what you spend, but the job you do.

Mr. Kraft asked for a wish list from Mr. White of a district wide roll up and elementary roll up as well. They would like to see spreadsheet of electric, heat and other such breakouts and expenditures during the coming months.

Mr. Kraft moved on to the M.S page. Asking if there were salary adjustments to inconsistencies and they were re-categorized shouldn't a line be lower? Mr. White said FY14 was budgeted, FY15 was proposed and FY13 was actual, but he can't speak to FY13. Mr. White is confident that the numbers are accurate, but he wasn't here when this budget was adopted. Going forward there won't be this issue. If the bottom line is what was spent it has to be somewhere. He hopes to over time get some sense of that.

Ms. Speranza-Hartmann asked to speak about the M.S. wish list for guidance. She feels that guidance needs a full time secretary. She thinks they could use a new guidance person also, but it is not safe that there is not a secretary there available if the guidance counselors are in a meeting. There is no one to keep an eye on the kids as they are waiting for the guidance counselors to come out. She feels that it is a safety issue. Dr. Murphy said we could get a secretary, but she is not sure how. We can continue to adjust the bottom line that we are voting on or just add it to the bottom line. Ms. Speranza-Hartmann thinks it would be a savings on so many levels to have someone there. Ms. Angelakis commented that she would also support the need. Ms. O'Connor commented that Stanley is asking for volunteers not just from gr 4 leaders. She wondered why we aren't relying more on volunteers. This is a place where as a community we are missing out and not harnessing the good will of the community to get people involved so they can see what is going on. She asked if they could they do this at the M.S. Ms. Angelakis explained that we are limited by confidentiality issues. Also, when people are not getting paid they do not have to show up. Ms. Speranza-Hartmann mentioned that you can't put volunteers into a union position. She said she hoped there were some places where they can volunteer to help ease the budget,

but we don't have the answers. Maybe we should inquire with other districts and see how they go about it. Ms. O'Connor just volunteered herself for that. Ms. O'Connor said she hoped the team would back Marianne on the M.S. guidance position.

Mr. Kraft brought up the line item for Operations/Maintenance. Mr. White said he looked in Munis to pull a report to see if there was a one time spending or encumbrance. He said the heating is putting a hurt on us. We need to make sure we are being as efficient as possible. He believes the temperature is reduced at night. He will have to check to see the times they turn the heat down/up to see if there is a way to save costs.

Mr. Kraft moved on to the H.S. page questioning the Professional Salaries increase. Are salary adjustments to adjust inconsistencies? Also, how many department heads are there? Tristan Smith said there are 6 total. Ms. Angelakis said also Ms. Bowler is at the M.S., but she is the dept. head for K-12 for music and Mrs. Lavendar is the dept. head K-12 for Health/Wellness. She said the dept. heads are teaching 4 classes this year versus 3 last year.

Mr. Kraft asked about the substitute increase and was this because we went back to substitutes and not studies. Ms. Angelakis said yes, but also Guidance has had two maternities and monies were put under guidance and not under substitutes. Mr. Kraft thinks if it's guidance it should show in guidance or have more detail. Perhaps again in the future they could see comments listed to explain the increase.

Ms. O'Connor questioned the Activity Stipends. Mr. White said he looked at in Munis. There was roughly \$35,000 in December. Seems like what the budget was and what the spend rate is was increasing. In the past he is not sure they were held to the budget. He said he found in details that a salary was being paid from one of the stipend line item. He needs to create a journal entry to move that person out.

Mr. Kraft brought up the electricity increase. Tristan Smith said the lights are always on, on the weekend. Ms. Speranza-Hartmann commented that the lights have always been an issue. A lot of them are on sensors and there are certain amounts you have to keep on. Mr. White said it is on his radar because he feels we are going to spend more than the projected cost. Mr. Kraft asked Mr. White if this was another cost he came up with when looking at the years spending. Mr. White said yes and he had also had a conversation with Mr. Baker, Facilities Director. Ms. Speranza-Hartmann suggested that Mr. White get a usage and cost spreadsheet from past years.

Ms. O'Connor questioned the solar panels at the M.S. and Mr. White mentioned Mr. Baker has called the company many times to address the issue and they don't get back to him or give him the run around. Ms. O'Connor said she has a co-generator at home that saves her a lot over the winter. She just wants to make sure Mr. Baker has all the resources available to address the issue. Can this be addressed again?

Mr. Kraft moved on to the District Programs. What is Contingency, Census and Professional Services? When doing Policy21 Review how is that being paid? What line item do MASC dues and the stipend for the secretary come out of? They would like to see what was spent on these line items. Also for Line item 1410, we are not sure what Exp. & Pensions are, what R&D means in line item R&D/Audit and what Insurance H.S. pays for. Mr. White said he was told Insurance H.S. was for sports, but will see exactly what this covers. Mr. Kraft asked what is Medicare and also why is Bank Service Fees zero for FY 14 & FY15, but so high in FY13? They are also interested in knowing what Copier Supplies is. Mr. Kaczynski says we own some, rent some, lease some, etc. They are in the process of trying to figure these out. Mr. Kraft asked if line item Software Lic/Subscrip. is for the district. Mr. Kaczynski said there are other pieces that are not in this. Mr. Kraft said line item 2110 says Professional Salaries but it is really the Spec Ed Director. Mr. Kraft asked if they can change the wording to reflect that.

Mr. Kraft noted there was a large jump in Office Expenses-Sped. Mr. White commented that he relied on Spec Ed Director to give him these numbers. Mr. Kraft asked if ELL Prof Salaries is a repeat. If split out to the schools why is there a line item here? How many kids are being services?

Ms. O'Connor questioned what the Curr. & Staff Dev. Stipends were for. Ms. Angelakis explained that curriculum work goes all year round and when staff work after hours and over the summer they get \$40 per hour as stated in the teacher's contract. She also mentioned that Recert. Reimbursement is also in the teacher's contract and they are reimbursed \$100 per teacher for license renewal and they must recertify every 5 years. Mr. Kraft asked why is Sped Equipment Replacement under the district programs. Ms. Angelakis commented that the equipment moves with the student.

Mr. Kraft questioned the amount under Security System Maintenance. Mr. Kaczynski commented that we have 136 cameras and 30 are down. Ms. Angelakis stated we are working on this issue. Mr. Kraft asked what the Snow Plowing amount was for and Ms. Angelakis commented that we have contracts for the M.S. and H.S., but our Maintenance/Custodial Dept. takes care of the elementary schools themselves. Mr. Kraft commented about the amount for Hardware Acquisition and Ms. Angelakis mentioned that we need to plan for a sustainable point.

Mr. Kraft asked if we knew how many students are represented in the amount for Special Ed Tuitions. Ms. Angelakis said she did not have the information available, but again it speaks to keeping it in house. Some of it cannot be replicated, but some special needs can.

Ms. Speranza-Hartmann said we vote this budget and it's the go ahead budget, but she couldn't remember the next steps. Mr. Kraft said once School Committee votes on the bottom line, they will send it to the Town Administrator and he will look at and see if it fits in with the full town budgeting, but this is the number that will be included in the town wide budget at town meeting and voted on. The Town only votes on the bottom line, it is up to us to make any adjustments to allocations to the budget and refine it.

Mr. White asked that they look at page 8 on new packet he handed out. The FY15 proposed is the same numbers they showed them at the last meeting of \$27,945,583 which is the total budget for continuation of service. He stated that then we subtract other funding staff/expenses that are paid from circuit breaker, grants, etc. and we get \$24,835,170 at the district level to move forward. The Superintendent is then requesting \$25,582,645 to make additional changes. Ms. Angelakis asked that they go back because they did make a couple changes under the prepay carry forward. When looking again at the prepay carry forward they discovered they didn't have the \$650,000 from the revolving account. So instead of asking for the \$235,320 in unidentified reductions, they will be looking at \$299,132 in unidentified reductions. That's something they have to work on. That's what we meant when we said we went line by line making sure it's not over estimated.

To make changes for additional headcounts for regular education and add \$489,235 moves the total to \$25,324,405 and to add the Spec. Ed requests of \$258,240 that brings us to \$25,582,645. Ms. OConnor asked how to handle the \$20,000 for guidance. Ms. Angelakis said to then add the guidance support to the budget of \$20,000 which is fully supported by the committee. Ms. Angelakis said she feels very strongly about it and a little disappointed in herself that she didn't just include it in the budget and if she has to find cuts to make it happen she will.

MOTION: It was moved by Ms. Speranza-Hartmann and seconded by Ms. Marshall to close the public hearing. The motion passed 4-0.

Ms. OConnor asked if anyone received any concerns from Mr. Delano. Mr. Delano said he would send if he had any. No one had received any concerns. Mr. Kraft entertains a motion to approve a budget of \$25,582,645 adding the \$20,000 for guidance equaling \$25,602,645 and removing \$59,838 the amount for the M.S. nurse position and the total would be \$25,542,807.

MOTION: It was moved by Ms. Marshall and seconded by Ms. Speranza-Hartmann to approve the budget at \$25,542,807. The motion passed 4-0.

Ms. Speranza-Hartmann recused herself from the room.

Mr. Kraft entertained the motion to recommend an expenditure of \$59,838 for a combined total of \$25,602,645.

MOTION: It was moved by Ms. Marshall and seconded by Ms. OConnor to approve the budget of \$25,602,645. The motion passed 3-0.

Ms. Speranza-Hartmann returned to the room.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: At 8:50 p.m. it was moved by Ms. Speranza-Hartmann and seconded by Ms. Marshall to adjourn. The motion passed 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,



Pamela R.H. Angelakis, M.A., M.Ed.
Superintendent of Schools

/mbc