

Ward
I Ellen Gibson
II Margaret Albright
III Angela Pitter-Wright
IV Diana Fisher Gomberg
V Steven Siegel
VI Ruth Goldman, Vice-Chairperson
VII Matthew Hills, Chairperson
VIII Margie Ross Decter

Newton School Committee
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Mayor Setti Warren
Ex officio



Meeting Minutes

Date March 14, 2016
Location Education Center, 100 Walnut St., Rm 210, Newton, MA 02460
Meeting Called by Chairman Matt Hills @7:05 pm
Present Matt Hills, Ruth Goldman, Ellen Gibson, Margaret Albright, Diana Fisher Gomberg, Matt Hills, Steven Siegel, Margie Ross Decter

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent David Fleishman reported on what happened at a basketball game between Newton North and Catholic Memorial fans. Mark Aronson, Interim Principal, has been in touch with CM and they are working to address their students quickly and thoroughly. This morning, Mark spoke to NN students about how their words can be seen as insensitive and even if the intent was not to be hurtful—it's the impact of their words. Mark also spoke about other incidents from earlier in the year.

Fleishman said we have to look internally, specifically, behavior at games. Behavior at large events is a societal issue, not just a Newton issue. As we think about our response to last Friday night, it's not a one-shot talk to students rather it's work we should be doing throughout the year. Kids are going to make mistakes, sometimes serious, and it's our job to help them learn from these mistakes so they don't happen again. As we think about some of the language on the national level, it's more important than ever to help kids become sensitive, thoughtful and caring adults.

The superintendent then thanked the Newton Schools Foundation (NSF) for their donation, which included matching contributions from a generous donor during the month of March for the Calculus Project. He also reminded everyone about the Global Education Leadership Fund (GELF) dinner on April 2, 2016, which is always a good time. This program provides financial aid to students for travel abroad.

PUBLIC COMMENT

High School Buffer Zone

Document: [Buffer Zone Recommendations](#)

Assistant Superintendent Cynthia Paris Jeffries, Long Range Planning Manager and Julie Kirrane presented a recommendation to expand the Countryside/Mason-Rice/Memorial Spaulding buffer zones beginning October 2016 and to maintain all other current buffer zones. They explained that because we are a little ahead of ourselves in terms of not "needing" it immediately it will allow us ample time to notify families. Discussion and questions followed regarding transportation, after school providers and the number of students affected.

High School Start TimeDocument: [High School Start Time](#)

Assistant Superintendent Toby Romer, Long Range Planning Manager Julie Kirrane and Katy Hogue presented their fourth update. They emphasized that there would be no changes in September 2016. They reviewed the work done so far, scope; communication; data gathering; student survey; faculty/staff survey and parent survey. The goal is to understand the benefits impact and costs of different options. The group's next steps are to continue analysis of feedback and assessment of stakeholder impact; develop scenarios; hold a public forum; assess the impact of the scenarios developed and present a year-end report. Discussion and questions followed.

Career, Vocational and Technical Education UpdateDocument: [CVTE Presentation](#)

Dianna Robbins, Director of Career, Vocational and Technical Education (CVTE) provided an overview of how the program has changed dramatically over the years. Highlights are: an overall increase in post-secondary (in related field of study) education up from 88% to 94%; a new CVTE brochure intended to clarify collaboration across the district between Newton North and Newton South; a plan to purchase commercial equipment for NSHS and to continue to build partnerships, co-op workshops and shadowing internship opportunities. Future plans include purchasing commercial equipment for NSHS, building a school store at NNHS (not in the original building plans); renovate the TV studio at NNHS (also, TV studio was not in the original building plans and space being used was not designed for a TV studio and/or classroom); continued collaboration with Bob Kelly and NewTV. Dianna ended with highlights from some of the community work that CVTE has undertaken:

- Mass Nine for the 9th, this program in its seventh year, sends students, faculty and staff to the Lower 9th District of New Orleans to help rebuild homes in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. To date, their efforts have helped eight families return to their homes.
- Tiger's Loft Bistro serves lunch to senior citizens four times per year. At one luncheon the seniors were entertained with vignettes from "Into the Woods" by NNHS students!

Fiscal/Operational and Facilities Updates:Document: [Fiscal and Operational 3.14.16](#)
[Facilities Update 3.14.16](#)Fiscal and Operational

Sandy Guryan, Deputy Superintendent/Chief Administrative Officer reported that this report is similar to the last few months. Health insurance and utilities are improving, but have not led to a surplus yet. Student Services are managing well and are being tracked carefully.

Facilities Update

Sandy Guryan reported on the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony in February and was pleased at how it turned out. It was symbolic of what's to come in the future. She then reported on the remaining major facilities projects:

Zervas is well underway with site work and the demolition is complete and on schedule. Installation of the foundation is anticipated to begin in April 2016. W.T. Rich is holding weekly construction meetings and monthly Zervas construction update meetings with the Waban Area Council beginning on March 17, 2016.

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Cabot is in the Schematic Design (SD) phase. A public forum was held on March 2nd to share the additional options possible on the expanded site and to hear from the community. The Cabot School Building Committee will meet on March 17th and 31st. Members of the public are encouraged to attend. Also, the Design Review Committee will discuss the Cabot School project on March 23, 2016.

Aquinas' window replacement bid was awarded to J.J. Cardosi, Inc. and the date for completion of the main wing is August 2016. The plan is for the preschool to move to Aquinas in August 2016. Plans to locate a playground on the property are ongoing.

On February 25, 2016, the School Committee voted **Lincoln-Eliot** as the next priority after Cabot for renovation/addition in the MSBA FY16 SOI process and received the draft SOI for review. The School Committee is in the process of review and approval of the SOI submission. In order to receive City Council approval to complement the vote of the School Committee, the SOI was docketed for the agenda of the March 7, 2016 City Council meeting and was referred to Programs & Services and Public Facilities Committees for discussion and vote on March 23, 2016. A vote of the full City Council is scheduled on April 4, 2016, in advance of the submission deadline of April 8, 2016.

Short-term space: on-call architectural services will be used to create a site plan for the installation of two former Zervas modulars at Newton South for the stabilization program and to plan for instructional space for Central High School on the ground floor of the Ed Center. They will also evaluate the space for administrative needs and conference/meeting space for professional development.

Discussion and Vote: Statement of Interest (SOI) for MSBA

Document: [SOI Vote Request](#)

Sandy Guryan stated that Carol Chafetz and Julie Kirrane incorporated changes suggested at the last School Committee meeting to strengthen the SOI and that we have a solid proposal ready for School Committee vote and the Board of Alderman's next round of review.

Chairman Matt Hills called for a vote.

Motion: Diana Fisher Gomberg

Second: Ellen Gibson

Vote: 8-0 to authorize the superintendent to submit the Statement of Interest to the MSBA.

Resolved: Having convened in an open meeting on March 14, 2016 prior to the closing date, the School Committee of Newton, in accordance with its charter, by-laws, and ordinances, has voted to authorize the Superintendent to submit to the Massachusetts School Building Authority the Statement of Interest Form dated April 8, 2016 for the Lincoln-Eliot School located at 191 Pearl Street which describes and explains the following deficiencies and the priority category(s) for which an application may be submitted to the Massachusetts School Building Authority in the future for: the elimination of existing severe overcrowding; replacement, the renovation or modernization of school facility systems, such as roofs, windows, boilers, heating and ventilation systems, to increase energy conservation and decrease energy related costs in a school facility;

(cont.)

and the replacement of or addition to obsolete buildings in order to provide for a full range of programs consistent with state and approved local requirements; and hereby further specifically acknowledges that by submitting this Statement of Interest Form, the Massachusetts School Building Authority in no way guarantees the acceptance or the approval of an application, the awarding of a grant or any other funding commitment from the Massachusetts School Building Authority, or commits the Newton School District to filing an application for funding with the Massachusetts School Building Authority.

Future Topic Discussion: Special Education Update

Superintendent Fleishman gave an overview of Judy Levin-Charns' presentation. She will give a historic view of programming over the last few years illustrating how far programs have come; discuss SPED compliance with law vs. student outcomes; our goals; assessment; data; profile our out-of-district students and what's next on the frontier of special education. Some discussion and questions followed.

Communication:

Chairman Hills recognized that there have been a lot of internal things happening in the last few weeks causing media outlets to want to speak with someone and that's usually David. He also reminded everyone about the GELF Dinner, NSF, the Calculus Project and the METCO rally on the Hill. He acknowledged and thanked the senators and representatives that met with the School Committee.

Adjournment: 9:33 pm

Lisa A. Mazzola

4/8/16

Lisa A. Mazzola, Secretary School
Committee, Newton Public Schools

Date of
Approval

Matthew Hills

4/8/16

Matthew Hills, School Committee
Chairman, Newton Public Schools

Date of
Approval