

NASHOBA REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

March 8, 2007

School Committee in Attendance: Don Adams, Ellen Sturgis, Brian Burke, Monica CampoBasso (6:05), Cathy Giunta, David Horne, Mel Govindan, Tricia Kelly, Laura O'Neil

Absent: N/A

Administration in Attendance: Michael Wood, Superintendent of Schools, George King, Assistant Superintendent for Finance

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Don Adams called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. in the Media Center at Nashoba Regional High School.

APPROVAL OF THE WARRANTS OF MARCH 9, 2007

<u>WARRANT NO.</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
2759	3/09/07	VENDOR	\$ 360,377.19
2760	3/09/07	BENEFIT	\$ 36,155.02
2761	3/09/07	PAYROLL	\$ 977,312.03

MOTION

Cathy Giunta made a motion to approve the warrants as detailed in the memo dated 3/08/07 and noted above. Seconded by Brian Burke **IN FAVOR:** Don Adams, Brian Burke, Ellen Sturgis, Tricia Kelly, Cathy Giunta, David Horne, Mel Govindan **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (7-0)**

APPROVAL OF THE February 8, 2007 MINUTES

MOTION

Cathy Giunta made a motion to approve the minutes of February 1, 2007as amended. Seconded by Ellen Sturgis. **IN FAVOR:** Don Adams, Brian Burke, Ellen Sturgis, Tricia Kelly, Cathy Giunta, David Horne, Mel Govindan **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (7-0)**

Cathy Giunta made a motion to approve the minutes of February 15, 2007as amended. Seconded by Ellen Sturgis. **IN FAVOR:** Don Adams, Ellen Sturgis, Brian Burke, Monica CampoBasso, Cathy Giunta, David Horne, Mel Govindan, Tricia Kelly **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (8-0)**

Cathy Giunta made a motion to approve the minutes of February 22, 2007as amended. Seconded by Ellen Sturgis. **IN FAVOR:** Don Adams, Ellen Sturgis, Brian Burke, Monica CampoBasso, Cathy Giunta, David Horne, Mel Govindan, Tricia Kelly **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (8-0)**

CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence for the School Committee.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT (This report is also available on the district website at www.nrsd.net)

Nurse Leader to take new position with Northeastern University

Mr. Wood told the committee that Ann Farrell, District Nurse Leader has accepted a position with Northeastern University and would be leaving the district. He thanked Ann for her service to the District.

NEASC Status Clarification

Mr. Wood shared with the committee that the high school is not fully off warning status. He said the high school is still on warning status for one remaining standard, and that is Leadership and Organization. He aid that Mr. Smith would be giving a full report to the committee at the March 22nd meeting.

Mr. Wood told the committee that Mr. Pacheco, Lancaster Town Administrator, has been actively addressing the concern outlined in the letter of February 16, 2007. and said that Schedule A has been submitted.

CASE Seeks New Executive Director

Mr. Wood told the committee that Ed Orenstein, the current CASE Director, is retiring. He said initial screening has been completed and the Board of directors will be conducting final screening of three candidates on March 7, 2007. Mr. Wood said it is hoped that a new Executive Director will be placed by July 1, 2007.

High School Principal Search – Parents’ Meeting / Student Meeting

Mr. Wood reported that he has invited all parents in the district to the regularly scheduled high school council meeting on March 13th at 6:00 p.m. where a discussion regarding leadership qualities of the next principal for the high schools will take place. He said there would be a table focus format for the meeting which meant that each table would have a conversation about certain areas of leadership and then report on that discussion. Mr. Wood also told the committee that the original meeting of February 24th with student representatives to discuss the next principal has been rescheduled to March 13th as well.

Capital Campaign Feasibility Meeting

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Ex-Officio Report by Ms. O’Neil

Ms. O’Neil gave the following report to the committee:

- ◆ Over February vacation, at the girls’ indoor track state meet, senior Courtney Baker placed 7th in the 300 meter dash, the 4x200 relay team placed 5th, the 4x400 relay team placed 8th, and senior Whitney Koch placed 3rd in long-jump. The girls’ varsity basketball team finished their season with a 10-6 overall record. Although their season ended in the first round of the district tournament, they started a new possible tradition: a fan bus. For only a few dollars each, Nashoba students were bussed to Algonquin Regional High School to cheer on the girls.
- ◆ The Wrestling team finished their season with an overall record of 21-3-1, one of the most impressive records in Nashoba’s history. Junior Frank DeMeo and senior captain Geoff Riccio were sectional champions. DeMeo was also a league all-star along with senior teammate Ben Adams.
- ◆ Last Friday, six seniors spent most of the school day at Center School in Stow being D.A.R.E. role models for fifth grade students. After talking about all of their accomplishments and activities, the seniors answered questions that ranged from “What’s your favorite dog?” to “Have you ever smoked or drank alcohol?”
- ◆ On Monday evening, the spring sports informational meeting was held. All sports will begin on Monday, March 19th.
- ◆ On Tuesday night, National Honor Society members took 8th grade parents on tours of Nashoba after an informational session.
- ◆ This week, the school is celebrating Foreign Language week. Each day has been devoted to a language taught at the school with trivia sessions and other activities. Today, each student taking a language brought in food for the “International Buffet,” that was held all day in the auditorium foyer. Students have also been preparing acts, such as Salsa Dancing and Irish-Step Dancing routines for tomorrow’s talent show. Today, members of the jazz band are competing in the IAJE Central District Jazz Festival and the choral groups have their winter concert tonight. Two senior members, Kirstin Richardson and Alicia Maloney, have been chosen to participate in the Massachusetts All-State Concert at Symphony All, Boston on March 24. Kirstin will be singing in the All-State Chorus and Alicia will be playing in the All-State Band.
- ◆ The volleyball tournament ended this afternoon with an astounding win by the senior team, Paper Bag, over the reigning champions, the Fighting Ducks.
- ◆ On Friday, March 9th Student council will be hosting a Red Cross Blood Drive in the lower gym. It is open to the public and will be open until 1:00pm.
- ◆ Beginning March 12th, the National Honor Society members will be helping the school nurses with Pennies for Patients, a fundraiser for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. After raising over \$1,317, the goal for this year is \$1500.

- ◆ Next Thursday evening, three of our seniors will be honored by the Clinton Exchange Club as Students of the Month. Also next Thursday, Team Trivia will be held in Nashoba's cafeteria from 6:30 to 8:30pm.

Facilities Subcommittee, by Ms. Kelly

Ms. Kelly reported that the Facilities Subcommittee met on March 6th with Bill Spratt. She said that Mr. Spratt talked about energy use and discussed further reductions to the Facilities budget in this and other areas. Ms. Kelly also told the committee that Mr. O'Brien discussed the track and told them of some of the companies they are looking at. She told the committee that both Mr. Spratt and Mr. O'Brien believed the window for having this project completed for the fall has likely passed. Ms. Kelly reported that the Feasibility Study meeting was also discussed and a strategy for that.

Finance Subcommittee, by Ms. Giunta

Nothing to report.

Personnel Subcommittee, by Mr. Adams

Nothing to report.

Policy Subcommittee, by Mr. Wood

Nothing to report.

SPED PAC, by Mr. Burke

Nothing to report.

NEW BUSINESS

Get the Word Out Grant

Mr. Wood called the committees attention to a letter from pat Fontes, NRHS Community Club Advisor, informing him of a mini-grant of approximately \$1000 received by the club from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. Mr. Wood said the focus of the grant is to raise awareness of teenagers to tobacco use in the entertainment industry.

MOTION

Ellen Sturgis made a motion to approve accept the *Get the Word Out* mini-grant of approximately \$1000 to be used by the NRHS Community Service Club. Seconded by Cathy Giunta. **IN FAVOR:** Don Adams, Ellen Sturgis, Brian Burke, Monica CampoBasso, Cathy Giunta, David Horne, Mel Govindan, Tricia Kelly **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (8-0)**

OLD BUSINESS

2007-2008 Calendar

Mr. Wood called the 2007-2008 calendar draft which was included in the evening's packet. He told the committee that he tried to address the concerns raised by Ms. Sturgis regarding Yom Kippur and noted the change made to that on the calendar, which had that observance beginning on Friday, September 21, 2007. Discussion ensued regarding this and it was decided to keep the date for Yom Kippur as originally printed, on Saturday, September 22, 2007 as this is the actual date and the concern regarding this holiday starting at sundown the evening before is already addressed in a notation on the bottom of the calendar. Discussion continued around early release and professional development days. Ms. CampoBasso said that in planning for the school calendar next year (2008-2009) she would like to request that the district look at separate calendars for the high school which include Wednesday early releases. She said that if it is a cost issue she would like to see the differentials. Mr. Govindan agreed with Ms. CampoBasso. Ms. Sturgis said she had made some recommendations regarding early release days which she did not see on the calendar. She said she would like to see the September 14th early release day moved to the 21st as that is close to the start of school and that would put it off for a week. She said it would also be beneficial for the students involved with the Bolton fair and those who observe Yom Kippur. Ms. Sturgis also commented on having a professional development day on August 30th for all non-high school staff (high school freshmen have orientation on August 30th so high school staff may be involved with that). Ms. Kelly asked if there were any planned changes in the high school schedule next year. Mr. Wood responded that he has not heard of any, but will check. Mr. Govindan stated that he was surprised to see the calendar on this week's agenda with no changes. Mr. Adams said that the committee saw this calendar one month ago and asked that it be put off. He said that the committee should probably vote to accept it or reject it. Mr. Burke said he agreed with Mr. School Committee Approved 3/22/07

Govindan. He also he has not heard many complaints since the superintendent met with principals and asked that they advise teachers that no important matters are to be covered or homework given on religious holidays. He asked that Mr. Wood continued that. Ms. Giunta asked if MCAS dates could be noted on the calendar. Mr. Wood said that the district does not have those dates yet but they can be inserted when we get them. Ms. Giunta also said that she has heard from parents regarding the early release days and that many parents use their older children to watch the younger ones so that having the high school early release on a different day that the elementary would not work for those families. Ms. Giunta also asked if the rotation days could be included in the calendar. Discussion continued.

MOTION

Motion moved by Brian Burke to accept the 2007-2008 school calendar as amended, the second draft dated 3/02/07 with the exception the early release day of September 14th be changed to September 21st.

Seconded by David Horne

Amendment to the motion offered by Ellen Sturgis that the June 6, 2007 early release day be taken out of the calendar. Seconded by Tricia Kelly

IN FAVOR: Don Adams, Ellen Sturgis, Brian Burke, Monica CampoBasso, Cathy Giunta, David Horne, Mel Govindan, Tricia Kelly **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (8-0)**

Motion moved by Brian Burke to accept the 2007-2008 school calendar as amended, the second draft dated 3/02/07 with the exception the early release day of September 14th be changed to September 21st and to include the amendment to take out the June 6, 2007 early release day. Seconded by David Horne **IN**

FAVOR: Don Adams, Ellen Sturgis, Brian Burke, Monica CampoBasso, Cathy Giunta, David Horne, Mel Govindan, Tricia Kelly **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (8-0)**

High School / Admin Space Study

Mr. Wood reviewed Appendix X-B included in the evening's packet, which contained information regarding enrollment and space at the high school.

Fiber Project ROI

Mr. Wood called the committee's attention to Appendix X-C which explained the return on investment of the Fiber Project. Mr. King gave an overview of potential cost savings of this project. Discussion ensued. . Mr. Horne inquired about recurring costs. Mr. King responded that current costs are \$75,000, and it would be \$125,000 for the fiber. He said that in years 2, 3, 4 and 5 the impact would be around \$100,000, and then drop off by year 6. Mr. Horne told the committee he is a huge supporter of this project. Ms. CampoBasso agreed with Mr. Horne but raised concern about people getting burned out. Mr. Burke asked for a utilization review to see that technology is being used. He also asked if a commitment was received from Comcast regarding use of equipment. Mr. Wood said they have not received that but that they would follow-up with them. Ms. Kelly asked if the district would be buying more capacity than they could use and inquired about other options. Mr. King said the current proposal was with Comcast. He said that Verizon did approach the district after the bid was closed and said that he did an analysis of potential cost savings over 5 yrs. with both options. Mr. King said that this analysis showed that although the district was looking at buying much more capacity than they may use now, it would be more costly to go with Comcast and we would not have the capacity to grow into that we would have with Comcast. He said the Comcast plan includes 100,000 GB, and Verizon was offering 10,000 GB.

The committee took a short break for 3 minutes.

2007-2008 District Budget

Mr. Wood gave an overview of the most recent budget adjustments included in Appendix X-D2, which was in the evening's packet. Mr. Wood told the committee the potential reductions totaled \$411,618. He told the committee the proposed budget is now at \$2,196,213, with an increase of 5.92%.

Mr. King said that this includes using \$100,000 from the Excess and Deficiency Fund that will help lower the assessment impact without reducing the services offered by the school district. Ms. CampoBasso asked to hear from Ms. Linenkemper, Mary Rowlandson Elementary School Principal, who was in the audience. Ms. Linenkemper said that she was satisfied with this budget and that it did not take teachers away from students. Ms. Sturgis said she is concerned that Center School will have to pay for new classes out of site based funds. Mr. Wood explained that this has always been the case and that the only exception is School Committee Approved 3/22/07

furniture, but this year Center will pay for all costs. Mr. Burke asked for an explanation of the differences in the New Salaries line item in Appendix X-D2 and the earlier version the committee had received. Mr. Wood said that enrollments in kindergarten are at 12 per class so they had to bump that line item up to account for another teacher. Mr. Burke raised concern about the district going to a 4 day work week for the summer. Mr. Wood clarified this saying that the same number of hours will be worked but that staff will work the same number of hours in a 4 day work week for the summer. He said that potential savings of this were estimated to be somewhere around \$10,000. Mr. Burke asked that the committee wait on this issue, Ms. Kelly said the Facilities Subcommittee had discussed this at their last meeting and that she did not think it needed to come before the whole committee. Mr. Adams asked how much would be in the E & D (Excess and Deficiency) Fund and Reserve Fund next year. Mr. King responded that the Reserve Fund is required to have \$1.5 million in it and this will, be complete next year. Mr. King also told the committee that the E & D fund had in excess of \$1.1 million as of June 30, 2006. Ms. Sturgis asked for the current amount in the E & D fund and Mr. King responded that it was \$1,177,113. Ms. Sturgis asked for the current amount of the Reserve fund and Mr. King responded that it was approximately \$370,000. Discussion continued around using the \$100,000 from the E & D fund for the proposed budget. Ms. Sturgis said that she is concerned about the use of these funds to balance the budget, as it may sound like a lot of money but represents less than 2 weeks' expenses for the District.

MOTION

Motion moved by Ellen Sturgis to continue business after 9:00 p.m. Seconded by Mel Govindan **IN FAVOR:** Don Adams, Cathy Giunta, Brian Burke, Ellen Sturgis, Monica CampoBasso, David Horne, Mel Govindan, Tricia Kelly **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (8-0)**

MOTION

Motion moved by Ellen Sturgis to approve the budget as presented in Appendix XD2, with the change that we reduce the Instructional Leader position of \$55,000 and reduce the amount being taken out of E&D by the same amount. Seconded by Brian Burke **IN FAVOR:** Brian Burke, Ellen Sturgis **OPPOSED:** Don Adams, Cathy Giunta, Monica CampoBasso, David Horne, Mel Govindan, Tricia Kelly

MOTION FAILED (2-6)

Mr. Wood told the committee that the District has worked very hard on professional development and also on parity between the three towns. He said it would be very difficult to continue on to the next stage of this without the added position. Mr. Govindan said he was in support of professional development. Ms. Sturgis told the committee she has not seen the value in more centralized Teaching & Learning staff. Ms. Kelly told the committee there was a time when she also felt that way. But Ms. Kelly said that after the presentation by Laura Friend who is a member of the Teaching & Learning team, she saw how much is involved and what they do. Ms. CampoBasso told the committee she spoke with Mr. Perkins, Luther Burbank principal, who raved about the program and told her how much his staff values this support.

MOTION

Motion moved by Brian Burke to approve the budget as presented by the Superintendent. Seconded by Monica CampoBasso **IN FAVOR:** Brian Burke, Don Adams, Cathy Giunta, Monica CampoBasso, David Horne, Mel Govindan, Tricia Kelly **OPPOSED:** Ellen Sturgis **VOTED AND PASSED (7-1)**

CITIZEN INPUT

Nothing to report.

ADJOURN

MOTION

Motion moved by Ellen Sturgis to adjourn the regular meeting of the School committee Seconded by Mel Govindan **IN FAVOR:** Don Adams, Cathy Giunta, Brian Burke, Ellen Sturgis, Monica CampoBasso, David Horne, Mel Govindan, Tricia Kelly **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (8-0)**

The meeting adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Linda DeStasi
Executive Assistant