

Sudbury Public Schools (SPS)
School Committee Meeting Minutes
August 30, 2017, 6:00 PM
Sudbury Senior Center

Members Present:

Christine Hogan, Chair
Richard Tinsley, Vice Chair
Margaret Helon
Lisa Kouchakdjian
Lucie St. George

Also Present:

Don Sawyer, Director of Business and Finance Dr.
Anne Wilson, Superintendent of Schools Kimberly
Swain, Assistant Superintendent of Schools Amie
Abdal-Khabir SEA

Open Session

Chair Christine Hogan opened the session at 6:00 P.M.

1. Final FY17 Budget Report

Don Sawyer discussed the closing of the FY17 Budget, including an End-of-Year Student Expenditure report, which is due by the September 30th meeting. Mr. Sawyer reported that the official closing balance of the School Department budget was \$2,919, based on the original appropriation of \$34,682,619

Handouts of the budget report were distributed.

2. FY19 Budget Update

Don Sawyer updated the Committee on the summer workshops that were held with the objective of outlining the goals for the F18 budget. One goal is the introduction of a multi-year budget with a forecast to 2022. It is a level service budget process in which the current budget is rolled over into FY19 and only year-to-year known increases are identified. This is a living document and only includes the General Fund Operating Budget for the School District.

Richard Tinsley would like to see additions, including the FY18 budget total and the actual growth rate to show weaknesses going forward, as well as the 2 percent teacher salary increase. Chair Christine Hogan noted that this is only a framework being set forth, it will require more discussion and suggested using same account numbers document-to-document for ease in reading.

3. Superintendent's Report

Recognitions

Superintendent Anne Wilson thanked teacher facilitators at the 2nd annual Google Camp, the Tech Team and also Davin Martin, a 9th grader at LSHS who facilitated two sessions at the Google Camp.

Superintendent Wilson noted it was a wonderful opening day for staff on Monday with an orchestral performance by many student participants, adding there was a wonderful feeling of enthusiasm.

Superintendent Wilson explained that there are some bus issues that need to be worked through, including overcrowding and late buses. They are working with the bus company and administration on resolving the issues. There were over 100 student registrations within the past week, and likely the reason for the overcrowding issue.

Superintendent Wilson explained that there was voluntary water testing done last year but will be conducted annually moving forward. Jim Kelly tested all five schools and replacements were made to some of the fixtures due to levels of lead or copper. All fixtures are now at non-actionable levels. This information will be sent home with students.

Don Sawyer noted including LS there were 2,700 registrations for bus riders, with 179 in the month of August. Assistant Superintendent Kim Swain encouraged parents to contact Annalisa Michielli and Don Sawyer and let them know of any problems so they can manage the issues. Chair Christine Hogan noted that whatever assurances we can give tonight is very important. Don Sawyer asked that they be informed if a student doesn't have a bus pass, this will help determine if there is a need to increase the bus fleet and funding.

Superintendent Wilson announced that she will be resigning as Superintendent of Sudbury Schools at the end of this school year, stating it has been an honor to serve the Sudbury community and the talented and dedicated group of teachers, support staff and administrators. Superintendent Wilson remarked on the many achievements that have been accomplished during her seven year tenure with Sudbury Public Schools, she is proud of the work of her team and the impact it has had on student learning.

Assistant Superintendent Kim Swain updated the Committee regarding Professional Learning of the District that occurred over the summer, some of which included website redesign, educators attending graduate studies, courses and workshops, the Odyssey Redesign Proposal and Google Camp.

4. School Committee Report (Liaison / Sub-Committee Reports)

Maggie Helon

- Announced that there will be a SEPAC Meeting on September 12, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. at the Police Station.

Lisa Kouchakdjian

- Reported that she had the pleasure of meeting the new METCO Director and looks forward to working with her over the course of the year.

Richard Tinsley

- Announced that we met with FinCom and we are working to put together a process to ensure we are ahead of curve this year, people see the value in this.

Chair Christine Hogan

- Reported that her takeaway from the FinCom meeting was that they did not find the Nixon option compelling.
- Mentioned that Susan Berry and Tammie Dufault of FinCom gave high praise to the new Business and Finance Director.
- Will send out a notice to the Start Time Committee next week.
- Reported that a Tri-District meeting is scheduled for October 23rd in Lincoln at 7:00 p.m., the topic is Diversity.

5. Open Forum

Bob Stein, 7 Thompson Drive, spoke about the \$5,000,000 addition to the Nixon School. He thinks additional studies should be done before allocating this money. Mr. Stein is also concerned of the cost burden of hiring 11 new employees as proposed by Superintendent Wilson in her space needs request.

Monica Rogan, 80 Goodnow Road is interested in the budget process and asked if the handouts are available. Chair Christine Hogan noted that if the document was discussed and used during open session of the meeting, legally it must be made available to the public. Ms. Rogan inquired if the budget forecast takes into account current moratoriums and also asked where class size information can be found.

Dan Carty, 50 Stone Brook Road, Board of Selectmen Liaison to this Committee, spoke on behalf of his wife, Maura Carty, regarding her memorable experience chaperoning the Odyssey program and the bonds created between the students during the experience. She would like to see Odyssey remain as a 3-day, 2-night program, not just a day event.

Kimo Sisay, 386 Maynard Road, stated he doesn't understand the \$0 increase extending out 5 years in the budget forecast. Superintendent Wilson responded that what was presented tonight was a format and categories, and over the next couple months, the Committee will delve into each part of the budget and potential increases.

13a. Design for SPS Admin Offices at Nixon

Jim Kelly spoke to the Committee about moving offices out of the Fairbanks Center, noting that the first phase is trying to understand the needed space, this Article would satisfy that Nixon is the right option. Chair Christine Hogan stated that Nixon could be an option, but is not the only option. Lisa Kouchakdjian expressed frustration with the process and will not support the Article. Jim Kelly noted that he will not submit the Article, based on what he has heard tonight.

Chair Christine Hogan moved to not move forward with a Nixon-only Article going to Town Meeting. Lucie St. George seconded.

- a. Vote: 5-0. Motion carried

Richard Tinsley believes the Committee should have significant role in the process.

6. Presentation on New Odyssey Program

Assistant Superintendent Kim Swain acknowledged the tremendous leadership shown by the educators and the Odyssey steering committee. Nicole Lamoureux began the slideshow presentation with a historical look back from its origination in 1971. Betsy Grams discussed the results of a parent survey which indicated 95% favorable response and current challenges. Carol Bradford spoke about the health and safety concerns when it comes to food allergies, limited diets and medications. Holly Estes spoke about the curriculum and noted they are working to ensure they meet the standards with regard to Science and Engineering. Assistant Superintendent Kim Swain agreed to keep the Committee informed.

Chair Christine Hogan noted that if cost is a factor in students not attending, the costs indicated in the new program should have been included. She added she finds the current Odyssey program to have a significant return on investment. Christine Hogan would like to wait to make significant changes to the Program until the new leadership team is in place.

Richard Tinsley pointed to the favorable results of the survey and the presentation does not support the data where there was a Top 2 favorable Box Score.

Lisa Kouchakdjian inquired if there has been any discussion of changing the grade level of when students attend to possibly 6th grade. Superintendent Anne Wilson noted that the Program matches curriculum of 4th graders.

7. School Committee Schedule

State of the School Night is January 8, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. at Curtis; Curriculum Night is Monday, Feb 26, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. at Curtis; and the METCO meeting is March 12, 2018 at 6:30 p.m. in Roslindale. Lisa Kouchakdjian will look into having the METCO meeting televised. Chair Christine Hogan moved to approve these dates. Lucie St. George seconded.

- a. Vote: 5-0. Motion carried

8. FY18 Goals

Superintendent Anne Wilson noted there is not much follow up at this point but they have put the five goals into two categories: Educational Goals and Managerial Goals which will be incorporated into the strategic plan. Lisa Kouchakdjian expressed the importance of addressing needs of all learners, which goes with one of our top goals, as well as makerspaces, these topics will be on a future agenda.

9. Enrollment/Staffing Updates

Superintendent Anne Wilson reported the enrollment data to the Committee, she will keep the Committee informed and will add Pre-K enrollment to the report, adding that they can not guarantee there will be three sections if we lose any students at Noyes.

10. Discussion of Clear Gov

Superintendent Anne Wilson explained that this platform pulls all information from the Department of Education to compare with other communities. The Town also uses this platform, and is a great way to see finances for staffing for the school system. Superintendent Wilson noted that if the Committee agrees, she will be able to be approved tomorrow and the \$1,200 start up fee will be waived, the cost is \$4,200 per year for 3 years. The Committee agreed this is a good platform.

11. Liaison Assignments

Lucie St. George suggested the Committee reach out to school principals, Chairs of PTOs, visit Open Houses and meetings, and get a calendar for school events. Maggie Helon suggested Members check in once a month with their school. Chair Christine Hogan noted that she was informed that the Division of Open Government recommended that there be only one liaison rather than two to FinCom and asked Committee to weigh in. Lisa Kouchakdjian stated she would like to remain liaison as she has forged positive relationships with members and the Committee. Richard Tinsley stated he has the business expertise to remain. No change was made.

Maggie Helon suggested using caution when on social media representing the Committee, Chair Christine Hogan agreed we should err on the side caution.

13b. BOS Warrant Article

Richard Tinsley expressed concern that a Town-wide committee may oversee the process of relocation of the administration offices, when ultimately, the Committee is who should drive this process. The Committee discussed whether it is beneficial to spend additional money on a needs assessment, when it has already been done. Chair Christine Hogan would prefer a ceiling limit of \$2.5Million on any project involving administrative office space, and noted that Jim thinks that Nixon is the best option.

14. Comparable School Districts

Richard Tinsley sent the Members an email with a draft comparative analysis report, showing where we spend more/less, stating this can optimize what we do and is a wonderful tool. He added that it can be posted and discussed on September 18th.

15. Acceptance of Donations

Superintendent Anne Wilson reported that there was an annual donation received from the Jack and May Rosenberg Trust of \$50,000, and asked that the Committee accept it. Lisa Kouchakdjian moved that we accept the donation from the Jack and May Rosenberg Trust of \$50,000 for the aspirations program, with gratitude. Lucie St. George seconded.

- a. Vote: 5-0. Motion carried.

16. Second Open Forum - None

17. Members Forum

Amie Abdal-Khabir reported that SEA held their first executive Board meeting and would like to see a formal SEA portion on the School Committee meeting agenda and would prefer it be placed earlier.. Chair Christine Hogan and Margaret Helon agreed and suggested an additional measure, the SEA send the Committee their report electronically prior to the meeting so that it may be included in the meeting documents. The Committee will allow 15 minutes for the District Reports, which includes the Superintendent's Report, the Assistant Superintendent's Report and the SEA's Report. In the future hope to invite PTO to also be on the agenda.

Lisa Kouchakdjian

- Wished well to all the students and families as we begin the new school year, we do this job with love in our hearts and want what is best for the community.

Maggie Helon

- Was surprised by the announcement of Anne's resignation and wished her the best: she looks forward to her first full year on the Committee.

Richard Tinsley

- Was pleased to see the excitement and enthusiasm of the teachers at the Opening Day and thinks it will be a great year.

Chair Christine Hogan

- Thanked Anne Wilson for her 6 years of service to the community.
- Thanked Miss AB (Aldrich-Bennett) from Noyes, who was highlighted in the newspaper as she is starting her 54th year of teaching.
- Welcomed Don Sawyer and noted the high praise he has received.

- Gave a shout out to Curtis Principal Jeff Mela who sent the LS Freshman a beautiful note wishing them well.

18. Minutes Approval, Future Items

Lisa Kouchakdjian noted a correction to page one of the July 19th minutes. Chair Christine Hogan moved to accept the minutes of July 19, 2017 as edited. Lisa Kouchakdjian seconded.

- a. Vote: 5-0. Motion carried.

Chair Christine Hogan moved to accept the minutes of July 24, 2017.

Lisa Kouchakdjian seconded.

- b. Vote: 5-0. Motion carried.

Chair Christine Hogan discussed future agenda items and noted there was a call earlier for possible redistricting and space utilization studies. Richard Tinsley said not this year. Lucie St. George does not feel this would be a good time with Anne Wilson's resignation this year. Lisa Kouchakdjian does not feel appropriate with the developments on the horizon. The Superintendent vacancy will be on the next agenda, as well as comparable school districts.

Richard Tinsley moved to go into Executive Session to discuss strategies with respect to negotiations with union and non-union personnel as to do so in open session may be detrimental to the negotiating position of the Committee and to review and approve Executive Session minutes, to not return to Open Session. Maggie Helon seconded.

- a. Vote: 5-0. Motion carried.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:12 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted, Laura Clifford