

LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Thursday, May 8, 2014
Cary Memorial Building, Battin Hall
1605 Massachusetts Avenue

PRESENT: Margaret Coppe, Chair; Mary Ellen Dunn, Assistant Superintendent Business and Finance; Alessandro Alessandrini, Jessie Steigerwald, Judy Crocker and Mary Ann Stewart

ABSENT: Dr. Paul B. Ash, Superintendent;

The Minutes were taken by Jean M. Curran, Recording Secretary

The Meeting convened at 7:30 p.m.

I. Call to Order and Welcome

Margaret Coppe announced that Dr. Ash would not be in attendance at meeting where the superintendent search will be discussed for two reasons (i) it might restrict what the Committee might say about the search, and (ii) it might appear that Dr. Ash is directing the search for his successor.

The Chair invited public comments. There were no public comments.

II. School Committee Member Announcements

Judy Crocker reported that 2,000 have signed up for bus registration. Registration for bus subsidiary ends on May 16, 2014, so please sign up early. Ms. Crocker thanked everyone involved with the Special Olympics last week. Ms. Crocker notified that K-12 art show is at Central Administration and everyone is welcome to stop by.

Jessie Steigerwald announced that the Youth Service Council met yesterday at Lexington High School and will meet at this location in the future. Students were invited to attend to provide comments on the Community Center and what types of programs they would like to see offered. Invitations are being sent to students to encourage them to add their comments on programs they would like to have offered. Ms. Steigerwald announced that the major topics at the last PTA/O President Council meeting were updates to the superintendent search; challenges around parking at school events; June Special Town Meeting and enrollment projections. The council is interested in how the Committee shares agendas. Others were interested in learning how the town shares information. Ms. Steigerwald will talk with Deb Mauger, Chair of the Board of Selectmen or Linda Vine and report back on that meeting. Ms. Steigerwald announced that it is National Teacher Week and thanked all the teachers.

Margaret Coppe stated that our agenda and meeting materials are on the LPS website.

Margaret Coppe announced that she and Alessandro Alessandrini met with a group of community members organized by Harvy Simkovits. What came out of this discussion was centered around communication, specifically (i) a monthly newsletter; (ii) School Committee office hours; and (iii) a more efficient way to contact school committee members and get a response. The Committee will be following up on these.

Alessandro Alessandrini shared that there will be a retreat to follow up on those ideas.

Theodora Martin, Liberty Ave., shared that the town email list where you opt in would be a great forum.

Judy Crocker mentioned that there was an incident at the Clarke Middle School in which Clarke hosted a Bowman Elementary School event complicated by the return of busses from the Clarke Washington trip and there was not enough parking. Some parked on Brookside Street to Steadman and they were ticketed. It turns out people blocked sidewalks, driveways and even parked in someone's driveway. The Police were concerned because emergency vehicles would not be able to get through. Ms. Crocker reminded everyone to follow posted parking signs.

An electronic sign has been posted about no parking and no queuing of cars at the Estabrook Elementary School.

Alessandro Alessandrini hopes we continue to keep the discussion going and hopes it will be done better in the future.

III. Agenda

1. Discussion of Superintendent Search

Margaret Coppe opened the discussion regarding the timeline and hiring the consultant by August 1. The actual work on the superintendent search will begin in September and a (i) search committee will be established; (ii) focus groups; (iii) submission of applicants; (iv) interviews by the search committee; (v) finalists will become the public part of the search. Tonight is the beginning of the plan and would like to open the discussion to the Committee about whether to issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a search consultant, or conduct the search ourselves. Each community decides whether they want to hire a consultant to perform the search or do it themselves.

The Committee engaged in discussion regarding (i) Glen Koocher of the Massachusetts Association of School Committee (MASC) shared the cost of a search would be between \$30,000 - \$60,000; (ii) what are the best practices in searching for a superintendent; (iii) we could do it ourselves, but there is a lot of work and it might be in our best interest to hire a consultant; (iv) other towns recommend having outside consultants; (v) having focus groups is a good idea and set a guideline of what ours would be; (vi) the Committee would decide what would go into the scope of work; (vii) it would be money well spent if we hire a consultant due to the time consuming nature of the search; (ix) it would be important to have consultant because none of the current committee have conducted a superintendent search; and (x) Lexington needs to get the best candidate .

Motion to issue an RFP for a Superintendent Search Consultant (Stewart, Alessandrini)

There was further discussion to clarify that the vote is only to issue an RFP.

Motion to issue an RFP for a superintendent search consultant (Stewart, Alessandrini) The Motion was Approved (5-0)

The Committee then engaged in discussion of the scope of the RFP. Mary Ellen Dunn, Assistant Superintendent Business and Finance provided RFPs from two different towns that were very different from each other. The discussion included (i) the broader scope was very helpful and the more narrow RFP was too restricting; (ii) compensation and benefits and negotiating terms would be done through having the consultant be a part of that process or not and have it done at a later date; (iii) the scope will

set the ground work for the consultant and should be careful about the specificity in the scope; (iv) has the Chair had any conversation with the Committee's attorney; (v) attorney would come in at the end to help negotiate the contract; (vi) the Committee reviewed with Ms. Dunn the criteria contained in the more narrow example provided in the Pittsfield RFP; (vii) scope of services from both Wayland and Pittsfield RFP; (viii) would it be possible to get a copy of the Pittsfield School Committee Policy ADM-5-F(I through vii); (ix) would like to be subject to School Committee review and approval; (x) composition of a search committee; (xi) search committee requirements; (xii) METCO and student representative; (xiii) send Ms. Dunn each Committee member notes for unified scope of work; (xiv) job description; (xv) process for RFP and timeline and take notes from Committee and assemble RFP and then Committee will review and get what the Committee included, possible vote of RFP; (xv) timeline for Committee; (xvi) method of advertising; (xvii) develop application package; (xviii) prescreening of applicants.; and (xix)add alternates.

The Chair will contact the committee attorney for question on wording of contract and compensation.

Ms. Dunn would like Committee comments by May 16, 2014.

Harvy Simkovits, Angier Road shared his thoughts on the phases of the search process and types of consultants.

Dawn McKenna, 9 Hancock Street, provided her thoughts on the collaborative consultant and urged to keep control of the search process and do it in a collaborative way with the consultant. Raised questions about documents from other communities and have you looked at Lexington's consultant searches and urged that you ask Lynne Pease, Executive Clerk Board of Selectmen Office for copies. There was a job description in 2005 and the Committee could work off of that for the superintendent job. Ms. McKenna also shared personal knowledge of a consultant search. Ms. McKenna shared her thoughts on the proposed Consultant Agreement and focus groups and interview process.

IV. Adjourn

Motion to Adjourn (Steigerwald, Stewart) The Motion was Approved (5-0)

The meeting adjourned at 9:23 p.m.

Meeting Materials: Meeting Agenda; Wayland School Committee and Pittsfield School Committee Scope of Work and Scope of Services

Voted by the School Committee June 10, 2014