

**LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

Wednesday, September 17, 2014

Jonas Clarke Middle School, Auditorium

17 Stedman Road

**PRESENT: Dr. Paul B. Ash, Superintendent; Margaret Coppe, Chair; Alessandro Alessandrini, Judy Crocker, Jessie Steigerwald and Abigail Schwartz, Student Representative**

The Executive Minutes were taken by Margaret Coppe, Chair

The Public Session Minutes were taken by Jean Curran, Recording Secretary

The Meeting convened at 7:00 p.m.

**I. Call to order Open Session**

Motion to go into Executive Session

Ms. Coppe moved to go into Executive Session to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining pertaining to all Bargaining Units, to return to open session at the conclusion. Further, the chair declares that an executive session is necessary to protect the position of the School Committee. Ms. Steigerwald seconded the motion.

**Alessandrini AYE**

**Crocker AYE**

**Steigerwald AYE**

**Coppe AYE**

7:05 PM Executive Session Convenes

7:30 PM Executive Session Ends and Return to Open Session

**II. Public Session and Welcome**

The Chair opened the public portion of the meeting and invited public comment.

There were no public comments.

**III. Superintendent's Announcements**

Dr. Ash had no announcements.

**IV. School Committee Member Announcements**

Jessie Steigerwald shared that on September 23, at Clarke Middle School, the School Committee will be focusing on policies. Policies A and B will be discussed and approved in form and are on the Lexington Public School website.

A Program "Break the Silence", on dating violence will be held on Saturday, September 27, at 7:30 p.m. Reservations can be made at [www.monroecenter.org](http://www.monroecenter.org). This program is designed for middle and high school students.

Margaret Coppe reminded everyone that on Monday, September 22 at 7:00 p.m. and on Tuesday, September 23 from 10:00 a.m. to Noon the Superintendent Search community focus groups will meet. All members of the public are welcome to attend.

**V. Agenda**

1. Report from the Architectural Firm SMMA on School Capacity

Dr. Ash introduced Phil Poinelli of Symmes, Maini & McKee Associates (SMMA), the architectural firm hired to review school capacity. The intention is to determine what the options are for overcrowding, when they would be done and how much would it cost.

Phil Poinelli presented the Phase I Study which included (i) Phase I Scope (ii) School and School Administration Meetings; (iii) Evaluation of Existing Building (including MSBA Criteria) (a) current use floor plans, and (b) undersized spaces floor plans; (iv) Schools Administration Meetings; (v) Discussion of Elementary Sections; (vi) Capacity: Elementary Schools, Middle Schools and High School; (vii) Short Term possible reliefs for 2015-2016; and (viii) Next Steps, including Pre-K.

There were comments and questions from the Committee (i) there could be problems in the middle schools if the capacity issue is not addressed; (ii) what about the cafeteria space; (iii) when the cafeteria space is reviewed, include the shift schedule; (iv) concerned about not going far enough in the review; (v) in 2014-2015 the capacity in each school is manageable, but that the next school calendar year will be tight; (vi) redistricting and portables; (vii) is the negative number of 12 students for next year a typo; (viii) has consideration been given to adding bathrooms to the High School and Middle School due to increased enrollment; (ix) would the central administration be considered on Phase II; (x) was the number of SPED classrooms required by law and for general education taken into consideration; (xi) did the prediction of 300 additional students break down into need for general ed and SPED; (xii) if the Hastings Elementary School needs to be renovated or a new school be built, what would happen with those children because there are no temporary classrooms for those students; (xiii) were English Language Learners taken into consideration because they would need their own space; (xiv) middle schools have not been addressed as they approach nearly 1,000 students each; (xv) funding for modular's are some schools can take 10 months; (xvi) are there jumps in kindergarten enrollment; (xviii) if building extensions were to be done, would it take 2 years or 3 to 5 years; (xix) does each school have an art and music room; (xix) we need a new school and which would also create a swing space; (xx) Estabrook has a capacity of 596 and Hasting has 376 without modular and if a new school were to be built the size of Seabrook would a lot of new space; (xxi) not eager to bring a seventh school to the district but is more interested in adding a new wing onto schools; and (xxii) what is the sense of timing for Phase II.

Dr. Ash clarified Mr. Poinelli's remark regarding increases in enrollment that do not warrant a special town meeting. Dr. Ash spoke to pre-k and kindergarten enrollment.

Patrick Goddard, Director of Public Facilities, added that it took 18 months to design, construct and finish the modulars at the high school.

Meg Collela, Principal, Bridge Elementary School, shared that one kindergarten and four first grade classes use a space other than the dedicated art and music rooms for art and music instruction. Art and music classes for all other students are held in the art and music rooms.

Dr. Mary Anton, Principal, Bowman Elementary School shared that they have 6 sections of kindergarten and second grade that do not have an art and music classrooms.

Kate Colburn, Precinct 4, Town Meeting Member, spoke to additional students and space needs assumptions. She stated that parents do not believe this is fine for next year. Maybe place a temporary building for the next 2-3 years, or consider using other rooms for art and music. Hopes the School Committee will consider this for next year.

Tom Diaz, Precinct 3, Town Meeting Member, shared his thoughts on the possibility of a seventh school. He suggested that the quality of the future plan lies in the standard class size policy and strongly suggested the Committee revise those standards and consider smaller class sizes for future planning. Mr. Diaz asked Mr. Poinelli if Fiske and Bowman were built below MSBA standards. The standards have been revised since that time

Mark Andersen, Thoreau Road, shared his thoughts on the report. Mr. Andersen spoke about the arts in Lexington and he questioned how the master planning commission plans on approaching the value placed on arts in Lexington. Mr. Anderson urged the Committee to have its priorities ready when working with the MSBA.

Alice Stevens, 1373 Massachusetts Avenue, shared her thoughts on the caliber of analysis being done, enrollment projections from last night and tonight, and is there a plan to look at historical surges in enrollment in other towns. Ms. Stevens is also concerned about the high school projections. At what point is a school too large to be functional.

Elissa O'Shaunessey, parent at Fiske School and urged the Committee to do something at the November special town meeting. Ms. O'Shaunessey also spoke to teacher and student morale issues.

The Chair reminded everyone that they can request a special town meeting, but it is the Board of Selectmen decision to call a special town meeting. The Chair asked if the Committee would like to continue the discussion at the September 30 meeting.

Joe Pato, Board of Selectmen, told the Committee that they are near the deadline to request a Special Town Meeting this fall.

## 2. EPA Request for Updated PCB Information on Clarke Middle School

Patrick Goddard, Director of Public Facilities shared that he had been contacted by Kim Tisa of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to provide her with an update since the August 30, 2010 report for airborne PCB concentrations. Mr. Goddard presented a proposal from the Environmental Health & Engineering (EH&E) for \$41,500 to perform additional PCB testing, develop a mitigation plan and submit a PCB Operations and Maintenance Plans for PCB contaminated caulk for EPA approval. No test results will be back until the first week in October.

There were questions and comments from the Committee (i) did the testing begin in 2009 and were air sampling done at a variety of town buildings; (ii) confident that there is no immediate health risk for this age group; (iii) the level of 170 does not mean that it is all one type, but rather a mix of biphenyl's and it is a good number; and (iv) could the Committee get an update of the air quality at the Bridge Elementary School.

Geoffrey Alperin, 9 Dane Road, had question on PCB levels. What is the risk at 45 is that an acceptable risk for students.

Mr. Alessandrini and Mr. Goddard stated that they believe that the PCB levels are acceptable.

Abigail Schwartz left the meeting

### 3. Discussion of Criteria for Superintendent Search Committee

The Committee engaged in discussion of criteria for the Superintendent Search Committee. This Committee will be presented the semi-finalists for superintendent and will be interview them and then pass along three individuals to the Committee in mid-December The School Committee will make its choice for a preferred candidate. The Committee needs to decide on the size of the search committee. Mr. Connolly, search consultant has recommended that there be at least two school committee members and no more than ten total members.

The Committee discussed the following categories (i) union leader (perhaps the leader be a teacher); (ii) representative from the SPED community (parent or central office); (iii) should METCO be a representative; (iv) two school committee members; (v) central office administrator; (vi) municipal employee (finance, BOS, etc.); (vii) PTA president; (viii) where the list will be published; (ix) at the next meeting will vote on the total number of members; (x) anyone interested can apply; (xi) vote on the Sep 30, it will go into the newspaper until the following Thursday(October 2); and (xii) discussed the language in the letter.

## VI. Adjourn

**Motion to Adjourn** (Steigerwald, Alessandrini) **The Motion was Approved** (4-0)

**The meeting adjourned at 10:25 p.m.**

*Meeting Materials: Meeting Agenda; LSC Agenda Item #1 Report from the Architectural Firm SMMA on School Capacity dated September 17, 2014; Memorandum dated September 11, 2014 from Patrick Goddard, Director of Public Facilities to Dr. Ash, Superintendent re EPA Request for Additional PCB Information for Clarke Middle School; Environmental Health Engineering, Inc. PCB Caulking Evaluation and Mitigation Plan for Clarke Middle School dated September 8, 2014;*

Voted by the School Committee December 16, 2014