

**IPSWICH SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
JANUARY 22, 2009
MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL ENSEMBLE ROOM**

CALL TO ORDER

Mrs. J. Arsenault, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with the following members present: E. Traverso, B. Hopping, J. Loeb, D. Ross, and N. Sheppard. Richard Korb, Superintendent; Matthew Roberts, Student Representative; and Joanne Cuff, Finance Department, were also present.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mrs. Arsenault read the following announcements:

There will an Executive Session following Open Session for the purpose of collective bargaining after which the meeting will adjourn

School Committee, Finance Committee, and Board of Selectmen will meet on January 27, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall Meeting Room A

School Committee and Administrators' Budget Workshop will be held January 29, 7 p.m., Middle/High Ensemble Room

School Committee will meet on February 5, 2009, 7 p.m., Middle/High Ensemble Room

CITIZENS' QUESTIONS

Mrs. Arsenault announced that she would accept questions later pertaining to the Feoffees' discussion and asked if there were any other questions. There were none.

RULE OF NECESSITY

Mrs. Ross moved, seconded by Mr. Traverso, to invoke the Rule of Necessity so that five members of the School Committee would not be disqualified to discuss matters pertaining to collective bargaining. UNANIMOUS.

I. SCHOOL COMMITTEE PRESENTATIONS

A. IPSWICH APPOINTMENT TO WHITTIER VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Mrs. Arsenault announced that Ray Morley has submitted his resignation as representative to the Whittier Regional Vocational Technical School District for Ipswich which expires on March 31, 2009. She asked for a process. Mr. Korb suggested putting an ad in the Chronicle for two weeks, and posting it in all public buildings. The website was also suggested. Candidates should present a letter of interest and a resume. Mr. Korb then suggested that the Chair would appoint a subcommittee or the whole Committee would review with an appointment date by the end of April. Mr. Loeb suggested applicants speak before the Board of Selectmen and School Committee jointly. Mrs. Arsenault referred the matter of proper procedure to the Policy Subcommittee. Mr. Hopping said that Mr. Morley has offered to remain until his successor is appointed and Mr. Hopping requested that a letter be sent to Mr. Morley thanking him for his lengthy service as representative.

B. 2008-2009 FINANCIAL REPORT

Ms. Cuff reviewed her financial report, citing purchases not being made for the second half of the year, and \$20,000 in additional expenses with burst pipes, HVAC issues, and a long spell of cold weather wiping out fuel savings which had been anticipated. In a full review

of Food Services with a drop in participation, heavy increase in costs, and increased balances being carried by students, a deficit has resulted. She presented a comparison sheet documenting lunches purchased in 2007 and 2008. Matt Roberts volunteered to offer suggestions regarding lunch offerings and participation. While there are enough funds to carry the mandated program, there may be a need to increase prices before the end of the year.

There will be \$36,000 coming back to the district from Greater Lawrence Educational Collaborative (GLEC), formerly Coastal Education Collaborative. To Mr. Hopping's question of unanticipated costs, Ms. Cuff replied that there have been some increased tuitions and a new student identified at the elementary level, necessitating an additional teacher assistant.

Mr. Korb mentioned a \$276,000 reduction in the FY09 budget figures. Mr. Korb reported that Brad Hill, State Representative, will come to the workshop on January 29 following the forum at the Town Hall to speak on educational, 9C, and local aid cuts.

C. FY10 BUDGET UPDATE

Mr. Korb reported on difficult administrative meetings regarding the FY10 budget that reflects 0% increase in revenue. A \$1.5 million deficit appears with the calculations of utilities, insurance, SPED increases, and possible cuts by the Governor and could go to \$1.75 million. It means that the override achievements are eliminated, and there is no recommendation for another override. Mrs. Arsenault invited the public to attend the open meeting workshop on January 29 when there will be information and discussion without votes taken.

D. FEOFFEES TRUST DISCUSSION

Mrs. Arsenault began by stating that, regarding the nature of the trust revision, she wants to make it clear that the School Committee is dissolving the Trust by changing the property management to cash assets, modernizing the governance of the Trust and, in order to get the Attorney General and Probate Court approval, the School Committee needs to make adjustments.

Mr. Howard, Finance Committee member, asked several questions relating to timing of the process. Mr. Allen stated that it is a judgment opportunity to have a sale, bring back the new revision, and be able to bring both together to the Attorney General. Mr. Howard questioned whether the Feoffees could move ahead with a new trust to which Mr. Allen replied that, being in constant touch with the Attorney General, it is the goal right now to work with all parties to go together to the Attorney General. Mrs. Arsenault intends to have copies of the revised Trust sent to the Feoffees, Finance Committee, and Board of Selectmen. A separate Tri-Board meeting will be set aside for discussion of the Trust. Mr. Howard had a few suggestions for Trust revision wording.

In discussion of the 1/21/09 revision copy of the Trust, Mr. Allen worked backwards beginning with #6. In #5, p. 6, there was discussion and clarification of reporting dates and distributing dates by Mr. Allen, and Mr. Loeb suggested flip-flopping (s) and (t) for time-line readability. In discussion about annual audits of the Trust's finances, members agreed in consensus that there will be a "certified financial statement of the Trust published in the annual Town Report," as a result of the Town audit.

Sue Brengel recommends that the investments not be in multi banks to assure FDIC coverage, and Marie McDermott (FNBI employee) recommends using the term “best practices” for as much insurance as possible. There was consensus by the School Committee.

Under (d), the red-lined section was omitted and added was a mention of reporting to the School Committee and communicating the investment policy to Town Boards. In discussion of (a) and (b), members felt that it is better to say there will be at least a minimum percentage of what is to be distributed each year in order to continue to adjust the principal upward for inflation and growth. Mr. Allen expressed the need for faith in the market and faith in the professionals who will be hired. He opined that value will rebound and he is comfortable with the wording. In a consensus vote, five members present agreed while Mrs. Ross abstained, feeling that tying hands in the future is not wise when there needs to be a payout.

Under #4(d), Serve without compensation ..., the words “at least quarterly” replaced “periodically”. Under #4(c) Terms of Service, the words “Town Moderator” were deleted in two places. Under #4(b) Number and appointment of Feoffees, after considerable discussion, a consensus vote went as follows: 3 members to be chosen by the School Committee; 3 to be chosen by the Board of Selectmen; 1 by the Fin Comm; and 1 at Town Meeting.

Under #4 (a) Eligibility to serve as a Feoffee, after discussion, Mr. Traverso moved, seconded by Mrs. Ross, to vote “yes” or “no” on the concept of whether or not Selectmen should be allowed to be Feoffees. Vote YES: Arsenault, Loeb; NO: Traverso, Sheppard, Hopping, Ross. The current private Feoffee is now ineligible for an appointment.

Mr. Traverso moved to change the wording in #1 Name to “William Paine Trust in support of the Ipswich Public Schools”. There was no second.

Mr. Howard felt optimistic for success with the Court and questioned whether there would be public discussion with regard to the sale price. Mrs. Arsenault answered that the School Committee has made the decision that the price is right and the issue of what happens with the funds is very open.

II. SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. VOUCHERS/BILLS

B. SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. ATHLETICS SUBCOMMITTEE

Mr. Loeb reported on a philosophical discussion about gate fees, an expectation that the user fees will remain as they are for now, and a \$100,000 cut in the Athletics budget.

2. ATHLETIC FIELD STUDY COMMITTEE

3. BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE

4. DAY CARE CENTER SUBCOMMITTEE

Mrs. Ross announced that the group will make a presentation regarding the following year at the next School Committee meeting. On January 30, two local bands will present a benefit concert for the Tiger Tots program.

5. DEMOGRAPHIC STUDY SUBCOMMITTEE

6. FEOFFEES SUBCOMMITTEE

7. OPERATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

8. POLICY SUBCOMMITTEE

a. Student and Staff Safety, JHF (first reading)

Mrs. Ross moved, seconded by Mr. Hopping, to accept Student and Staff Safety for first reading. UNANIMOUS.

b. Behavioral Specialist – Job Description (first reading)

Mr. Traverso moved, seconded by Mrs. Ross, to accept the Behavioral Specialist policy for first reading with several agreed-upon changes in wording. UNANIMOUS.

Mr. Hopping announced that the decision has been made to do away with delivered Friday packets to School Committee members for the February 5 meeting and, instead, transmit them electronically to all members. One hard copy will be kept at the Central Office. Executive Sessions will be sent as a separate e-mail. Once a month a miscellaneous general information packet will be sent. Mrs. Arsenault commented that it wouldn't work for her because she travels. Mr. Loeb commented that a technological issue exists; Mr. Korb replied that it is the software, not the people doing the work, and he has no money to buy new software.

9. PUBLIC SAFETY FACILITY COMMITTEE

10. SPACE USE COMMITTEE

Mr. Korb reported that this is a work in progress. Mr. Ken Savoie, hired by the Town, has submitted a report and another meeting will take place on January 28 to look at cost factors. There are four options being reviewed. Interviews are being conducted with departments affected, and Mr. Markel will be meeting with Kitt Cox of Birth to Three, currently renting downtown space. Mr. Korb stated that it was not within the purview of the study to determine costs of modification/renovation to the stage/gym at Town Hall and Mr. Loeb commented that the study doesn't show value for the money spent without the cost factor. Mr. Korb stated that a figure of between \$500,000 and \$1 million based on current square footage costs was mentioned.

11. TECHNOLOGY SUBCOMMITTEE

12. WIND TURBINE SUBCOMMITTEE

13. IPSWICH HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

14. OTHER

III. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

A. SUPERINTENDENT'S ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

None.

IV. CONSENT

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Loeb moved, seconded by Mr. Hopping, to go into Executive Session at 10:02 p.m. for the purpose of discussing collective bargaining after which the meeting will adjourn. IN FAVOR - Traverso, Sheppard, Arsenault, Hopping, Loeb, Ross.