

**IPSWICH SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
DECEMBER 4, 2008
MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL ENSEMBLE ROOM**

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. N. Sheppard, Chair Pro Tem, called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. with the following members present: E. Traverso, B. Hopping, J. Loeb, D. Ross, and H. O'Flynn. Richard Korb, Superintendent; Joanne Cuff, Finance Department; and Matthew Roberts, Student Representative, were also present.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Sheppard read the following announcements:

There will be Executive Session to discuss two separate litigation matters, after which the meeting will adjourn

Budget Subcommittee will meet on December 8, 7 p.m., Middle/High Guidance Conference Room

School Committee, Finance Committee and Board of Selectmen will meet on December 9, 7:30 p.m., in Meeting Room A, Town Hall

A tentative meeting of the Public Safety Facility Committee is scheduled for December 10, 7 p.m., Town Hall, Town Manager's Conference Room

School Committee will meet on December 18, 2008, at 7 p.m., in the Middle/High School Ensemble Room

CITIZENS' QUESTIONS

SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I. SCHOOL COMMITTEE PRESENTATIONS

A. DOYON AND WINTHROP SCHOOLS MCAS PRESENTATION

Dr. Cooper began the PowerPoint presentation by expressing pleasure at strong results in academic progress, stating that he has asked every SAC representative to look at trends that will impact instruction. Analysis has shown where more focus needs to be made in areas of language arts and math in Grades 3, 4, and 5 and that staff is working on it. Mrs. McAdams presented her material on PowerPoint with comparison of the same three grades as they moved ahead each year. She spoke of the need to emphasize writing in both language arts and math, and analysis underway to determine error patterns and redesign of support groups and interventions with focus on writing. There was discussion of the sub-groups in the MCAS and Mr. Traverso brought up low-income families. A major concern in America is that schools are not addressing the needs of its people. Mr. Hopping commented that, while the socio-economic factor is the most important, there are exceptions, and he thanked Dr. Cooper and Mrs. McAdams.

B. PICTURING AMERICA – NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

The National Endowment for the Arts offers grants to get artwork in the schools. Mr. Traverso, who was thanked for his idea, was the original person to bring the grant to the attention of staff. Forty prints that essentially represent something about America are housed at Winthrop's library and are being used as part of an initiative to get kids to write about art (visual art).

C. WIND TURBINE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

In the rotation of presentations, Mr. Engel reviewed meetings with the School Committee, the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee. Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee members had recommendations. The Board of Selectmen projected the project as a losing financial investment for the Light Department while the School Department would be making money. The Finance Committee asked for a Memorandum of Understanding which has been put together and approved by Attorney Krathwohl. Mr. Engel asked that the School Committee not vote on it yet because the Board of Selectmen has not seen the document. Discussion ensued regarding the production of electricity beyond the schools' needs. Mr. Korb reported that the School Department gets credit for it on an annual basis. Mr. Engel said the Light Department has this long-standing problem that system costs are a constant but revenues are going down, conservation being only one of the reasons. Reality is that revenues don't go down because rates are increased.

Mrs. Ross asked for assurances that the School Committee with 38% of the total investment be kept informed about this project rather than being the silent partner. The joint meeting on Tuesday evening, December 9, will be a venue for a vote on the Memorandum.

D. LONG RANGE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Mr. Korb stated that, while the system has four years of successful project completions without having to procure extra bonds, overrides, etc., FY08 appears to present little opportunity to do anything. The Budget Subcommittee requested information from Kevin Merz, Town Treasurer, regarding availability of funding for FY08 Capital Improvements.

Mr. Hopping remains concerned about the overall security of the school buildings and feels the need to address district security. Mr. Bedard reported that the intercoms have been rectified and strobes and fire alarms provided as well as front and back lighting at Winthrop. Mr. Korb spoke about vandalism at performances in the Performing Arts Center and, with a huge investment in the track, a need to make sure that that is kept up. To Mrs. Ross' question of parking lot lights at the Middle/High Schools, Mr. Bedard replied that they are set by the atomic clock, but lights are of poor quality and could be retrofitted with better lighting. Mrs. Ross mentioned the annual appeal for carpet replacement at the Middle/High Schools but other things take precedence.

II. SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. VOUCHERS/BILLS

B. SCHOOL COMMITTEE SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

1. ATHLETICS SUBCOMMITTEE – None.

2. BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE

Mr. Loeb, with a meeting coming up Monday, asked fellow members to read the Town Manager's spreadsheet.

3. DAY CARE CENTER SUBCOMMITTEE – None.

4. DEMOGRAPHIC STUDY SUBCOMMITTEE - None.

5. FEOFFEES SUBCOMMITTEE – None.

6. OPERATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE – None.

7. POLICY SUBCOMMITTEE

(a) Executive Sessions, BEC, Proposed Revision (first reading)

Mr. Loeb commented that #8 had, in effect, eliminated the ability of the School Committee to discuss the Superintendent's contract. He recommended that #8 be restored, that the rest of the new #8 be made #9, and that #9 become #10. Mr. Loeb amended that this action be taken to the proposed revision, for first reading, seconded by Mrs. Ross. UNANIMOUS.

(b) Advance Notice of Voluntary Absence, JED-F, Proposed Revision (first reading)

(c) Student Absences (Voluntary) Rules and Regulations, JED-R, Proposed Revision (first reading)

Mr. Loeb moved, seconded by Mr. Hopping, to accept the two policies' proposed revision for first reading. UNANIMOUS.

(d) Electronic Versus Paper Submissions Discussion

Mr. Hopping asked for discussion because no decision had been reached last year, looking for a more efficient way of keeping people informed. Dr. O'Flynn suggested that every Board member get a laptop as standard equipment. Mr. Korb said that he would have to sit down with office staff and set a timeline to phase out hard copies. While Mr. Sheppard said that he enjoys having hard copies, there was consensus to go electronic. Decision will be made at the next Policy Subcommittee meeting. Mr. Traverso asked that all of the documents come all at once rather than in small parts.

8. PUBLIC SAFETY FACILITY COMMITTEE

Mr. Loeb and Jean Emerson reported that the architect has had two meetings with firefighters, and December 10 is still only tentative for a Committee meeting.

9. SPACE USE COMMITTEE

Mrs. Ross reported that inventory has been made of all buildings and floor plans and meetings have taken place with the Superintendent. Mr. Korb is pursuing space for Birth to Three at the Town Hall. There will be a report soon.

10. TECHNOLOGY SUBCOMMITTEE – None.

11. WIND TURBINE SUBCOMMITTEE – None.

12. IPSWICH HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

Matt Roberts reported on current events at the High School including the TADA night and read information about winter concert CDs on sale which would make great gifts.

13. OTHER

Mrs. Ross asked that the Athletic Field Study Committee be placed on the agenda. Mr. Hopping reported that he will be attending a seminar on extending the school day by an hour. He promised to give Mr. Korb an update.

III. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Mr. Korb had no report.

IV. CONSENT

Mr. Sheppard moved, seconded by Mr. Hopping, to approve the Consent Agenda as follows:

- Accepted Minutes of November 12, 2008, Tri Board Open Session
- Accepted Minutes of November 20, 2008, Open Session Meeting
- Accepted Minutes of November 20, 2008, Executive Session Meeting
- Accepted anonymous donation of \$2,500 to the Winthrop School to be used for the fifth grade field trip to Plimoth Plantation
- Accepted a grant donation of \$785 from the Institution of Savings to benefit the Ipswich High School TADA Club's annual teen dating abuse awareness program
- Accepted the anonymous donation of \$25,000 to the Birth to Three Center
- Accepted the donation of \$3,992.80 from the Friends of Ipswich Elementary Schools/Doyon to be used to cover the mentor stipends associated with the Student Leadership Team and Early Act programs at Doyon School
- Accepted the donation of \$3,726 from New England BioLabs to the Doyon School to fund the purchase of an interactive whiteboard
- Accepted the donation of \$999 from New England BioLabs to the Winthrop School to fund the purchase of astronomy binoculars and a solar telescope for the science program. **UNANIMOUS.**

Mrs. Ross asked what the items concerning Geskus Photography were about. Mr. Korb explained that the contract calls for 20% of the total amount of money from student pictures to go back to the schools. Mr. Sheppard moved, seconded by Mr. Hopping, to accept the two following items:

- Accepted \$1,583 from Geskus Photography, Inc. as the Winthrop School's portion of the proceeds from the school photographs.
- Accepted \$1,482 from Geskus Photography, Inc. as the Doyon School's portion of the proceeds from the school photographs. **UNANIMOUS.**

V. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mrs. Ross moved, seconded by Mr. Hopping, to go into Executive Session at 9:37 p.m. for the purpose of discussing two litigation matters after which the meeting will adjourn. IN FAVOR - Traverso, O'Flynn, Sheppard, Hopping, Loeb, Ross.