

**IPSWICH SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING  
THURSDAY, JANUARY 7, 2010  
PERFORMING ARTS CENTER, MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL**

**OPEN SESSION**

**CALL TO ORDER**

J. Loeb, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m. with the following members present: N. Sheppard, H. O'Flynn, E. Traverso, B. Hopping, J. Arsenault, and L. Dietz. Also present were J. Cuff, Financial Director; and Abby Skelton, Student Representative. Mr. Loeb announced that Mr. Korb, Superintendent, has the flu.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mr. Loeb read the following announcements:

There will not be an Executive Session

Policy Committee will meet January 11, Payne School, 7 p.m.

Schools and offices will close on January 18 in observance of Martin Luther King Holiday

Athletic Subcommittee will meet on January 19, 6:30 p.m., Room B229 of the Middle/High School

ITA Negotiations Team will meet on January 19, 7 p.m., MS/HS Guidance Conference Room

Early Childhood Study Committee will meet on January 20, 3:30 p.m., Payne School

Demographic Study Committee will meet on January 20, 7 p.m., Payne School

School Committee will meet on January 21, 7 p.m., Middle/High Ensemble Room

Annual Meeting of the Feoffees will be held on January 26, 5 p.m., VFW Hall on County Road

**CITIZENS' QUESTIONS**

**I. SCHOOL COMMITTEE PRESENTATIONS**

**A. REQUEST FOR EXEMPTIONS TO MANDATORY ONLINE TRAINING REQUIREMENT FOR ETHICS REFORM CONFLICT OF INTEREST LAW**

A memorandum was sent to the Superintendent following School Committee request for clarification on the mandatory education and training (conflict of interest material) requirements for high school, college and graduate school students participating in summer and work study employment, whether paid or unpaid. Mrs. Arsenault moved, seconded by Mrs. Dietz, to petition the Ipswich Board of Selectmen to exempt anyone in the schools who fits within the guidelines provided by the State Ethics Commission: namely, school volunteers, chaperones on field trips and school events; substitutes who work periodically within the schools; high school students working as teaching assistants in the Extended Day Program who are paid but do not make decisions which affect the school system; high school, college and graduate students participating in summer and work-study employment, whether paid or unpaid; students acting as technical crew working the Performing Arts Center for various performances; and student teachers from local colleges working in the schools. UNANIMOUS.

**B. FY10 MID-YEAR STAFF REDUCTIONS**

Mr. Loeb explained that a meeting was held in Executive Session on January 6, 2010, and in a workshop with administrators. A \$210,000 shortfall for FY10 (workers' compensation, additional first-grade teacher, ESL tutor, underfunded health insurance, and federal grants which cannot be expected in FY11) makes it necessary to hold back \$300,000 in Choice money to cover the loss of grant money. After using \$130,000 in Choice money for FY10 to cover, in part, the \$210,000 shortfall, the ITA was approached to reduce the year by one day, thus saving \$80,000. An impasse followed, but it meant the reduction of 4-6 people at mid-year in order to achieve the \$80,000 shortfall figure.

In Executive Session, the Committee learned that Joanne Cuff, Financial Director, had been in communication with the Electric Light Department. The anticipated \$30,000 payment to cover wind turbine payments in FY10 is not needed this year. Secondly, Counsel suggested the concept of going back to the School Building Assistance Bureau (now known as MSBA), and after all forms were sent in, MSBA made known that \$98,000, which had been spent on litigation, could be expected in reimbursement. Anticipating that support will come from the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee for expenses by the school district incurred in the last few years in litigation, the School Committee made the decision last night to save personnel and not make cuts. Mr. Loeb stated that there will be personnel cuts next year.

Jeff Krieger, ITA President, made remarks in connection with a financial analysis he handed out, disagreeing with many of the administration's numbers and philosophy. Mr. Loeb responded that, in fact, the Town Manager has reaffirmed PILOT cuts of \$98,000, that \$300,000 will be needed for the FY11 budget, the Circuit Breaker numbers from the government are down from 72% to 42%, and the School Committee felt it was fiscally prudent not to wait until year's end.

Financial Director Cuff urged postponement of any action until the next meeting so that more will be known about the reimbursement money from MSBA.

**C. FEOFFEEES OF THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL**

Mr. Loeb set up ground rules for the discussion and explained that the purpose of the meeting is for the School Committee and the community to hear from the Feoffees regarding the agreement that has been struck with the Tenants. While the School Committee will take no vote, it is an opportunity to listen and ask questions. Attorney Sheehan, attorney for the Feoffees, presented fourteen provisions of the Agreement. The cottage owners will convey their cottages to the Feoffees to create a condominium. The settlement binds 122 owners, 33 lessees and a few others, totaling 167. A condo unit will consist of a cottage and the exclusive area around the cottage. A gross amount of \$29,150,000 came about after many months of negotiations out of court. A probate court judge must now approve, and the Feoffees are obligated to proceed, but must have deposits for \$26,500,000 Purchase and Sale (P&S) Agreements before March 5, 2010. He further outlined provisions for a mortgage and the escrow fund which was created on 7/1/97. Mr. Sheehan exhibited Pro Formas (assumptions) regarding financial arrangements, interest rates, legal and engineering fees, contingency fees, and monies to lessees, resulting in a net of \$21,550,000. He remarked that there would be no headaches of real estate ownership for the Feoffees, but the condominium would require an investment manager. He estimated that the schools would receive in excess of a million dollars each year without risk.

Mr. DiSalvo and Mr. Gottlieb of the Tenants Associates spoke in favor of the Agreement. Mr. DiSalvo cited the merits of the agreement after 2 years of disputes. Mr. Gottlieb saw the negative side if the deal doesn't go forward; namely, Feoffees' defense of litigation. The Legal Action Committee takes no official position in regard to the Trust. They offer the escrow (over \$1 million) as a gift to the schools.

Questioning began by School Committee members. Mr. Sheehan said that the Feoffees can go forward without the full 152 participants (buyers) and he outlined a procedure which could go until late 2010 for final conveyance of the Master Deed. Almost 100% unanimous support is coming from the lessees. After more questioning of structure and non-participants, tax liabilities, and the possibility of adding more school children from Little Neck, Mr. Loeb and Committee members thanked the three presenters who promised that they will be back at a later date to answer more questions. Mr. Howard, Finance Committee member, questioned the matter of the Feoffees as mortgage holders. Mr. Bingham from the audience brought up the matter of appraisals.

Break occurred at 10:10 p.m. for 10 minutes.

#### **D. "RACE TO THE TOP" MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

Mr. Traverso reported on a federal Department of Education initiative that will assist the State in applying for federal grant money. Committee Chairpersons and Superintendents need to sign on by January 13. Mr. Traverso moved, seconded by Dr. O'Flynn, to authorize the Chair, on behalf of the School Committee, to sign the Memo of Understanding "Race to the Top" and strongly urge the Superintendent of Schools and the leadership of the ITA to do the same.  
UNANIMOUS.

## **II. SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **A. VOUCHERS/BILLS**

### **B. SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORTS**

1. ATHLETICS SUBCOMMITTEE
2. ATHLETIC FIELD STUDY COMMITTEE
3. AD HOC TOWN/SCHOOL COLLABORATION COMMITTEE
4. DAY CARE CENTER SUBCOMMITTEE
5. DEMOGRAPHIC STUDY COMMITTEE
6. EARLY CHILDHOOD SUBCOMMITTEE
7. FEOFFEES SUBCOMMITTEE
8. NORTH SHORE COALITION FOR SCHOOL FUNDING

**9. OPERATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE**

Mr. Loeb reported that a new decision has been made relative to emailing communications, open meetings and evaluations. Serial emails; that is, sending emails to the full body of a Committee, is not allowed. There is an upcoming meeting of the group.

**10. POLICY SUBCOMMITTEE**

**11. PUBLIC SAFETY FACILITY COMMITTEE**

Mrs. Emerson announced that there will be a meeting on January 14.

**12. WIND TURBINE SUBCOMMITTEE**

**13. IPSWICH HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE**

**14. OTHER**

**III. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

**A. SUPERINTENDENT'S ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT**

**IV. CONSENT**

**A. CONSENT AGENDA**

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

Acceptance of Minutes of December 17, 2009, Open Session  
Acceptance of Minutes of December 17, 2009, Executive Session  
**UNANIMOUS.**

**V. ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Sheppard moved, seconded by Dr. O'Flynn, to adjourn at 10:25 p.m.  
**UNANIMOUS.**