

**IPSWICH SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING  
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2008  
MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL ENSEMBLE ROOM**

**OPEN SESSION**

**CALL TO ORDER**

J. Arsenault, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with the following members present: D. Ross, J. Loeb, B. Hopping, N. Sheppard, and E. Traverso. Also present were R. Korb, Superintendent of Schools; J. Cuff, Financial Director; Principal C. Forster-Cahill, and School Representative Matthew Roberts.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mrs. Arsenault read the following announcements:

There will be an Executive Session to discuss pending litigation matters following Open Session after which the meeting will adjourn

School Committee will meet at 6:30 p.m., Monday, October 20, before the start of Town Meeting, in the Middle/High Cafeteria

Town Meeting will take place at 7:30 p.m., October 20, in the Performing Arts Center

A subcommittee meeting of the Public Safety Facility Committee will be held on October 23, 7 p.m., Town Manager's Conference Room, Town Hall

Policy Subcommittee will meet at 4 p.m., October 27, Payne School

School Committee will meet on November 6, 2008, 7 p.m., Middle/High Ensemble Room

A Tri Board meeting will be held at 7:30 p.m. on November 12, 2008.

**CITIZENS' QUESTIONS**

Mr. Pierre Belperron raised the matter as a concerned parent/citizen of conditions in the schools which have affected his own son who is susceptible to neuron toxins (mold) and cannot attend classes in the Middle School. He was concerned about the community at large with issues of air quality and that the problems were not being addressed seriously enough. He asked for dialogue with school officials so that what has happened to his family will not happen to anybody else.

Mrs. Arsenault appreciated the father's coming before the School Committee and referred to Mr. Korb who responded that it is a well-known fact that the health, safety, and welfare of the children of the district is of utmost importance. While it is true that the schools have suffered serious water damage issues, significant repairs and mediation have been done successfully. Federal standards give accurate and acceptable testing data. He explained that samples taken in the copy room, after a lengthy time period to get results, demanded that the copier and the carpet in the room be gone and were gone.

Results of tests were taken to the Town's health agent when rehabbing of the schools was going on. The health agent appreciates the concerns and recommends usage of the Center of Environmental Health through the Department of Public Health, with a Ms. Susan Koszalka. Ms. Koszalka will do a visual examination, take samples of air quality and do a particle

assessment (CO2 and carbon monoxide), swabs and sweeping in each of the four buildings, and do a complete review of the HVAC systems, working with Paul Bedard, Head Custodian, on November 6 at Doyon, on November 12 at Winthrop, and at the Middle/High a week later. A Harvard Medical School consultant will work with Ms. Koszalka. Mr. Hopping commented that the district has never been monetarily driven nor been desirous of "letting something go."

Mrs. Arsenault told Mr. Belperron that he will be invited to attend the meeting when these new results are presented.

## I. SCHOOL COMMITTEE PRESENTATIONS

### A. CHINA EXCHANGE UPDATE

Mrs. Forster-Cahill reviewed the plans for choosing 16 students (from the pool of 72 applicants in Grades 7 and 8 to travel to China) by a committee of teachers, selections to be done prior to Thanksgiving. She commented on people who have come forward with connections to China with offers of help. Reservations are confirmed and the travel agency is handling arrangements well. Gerry Dolan's jazz band group plan is pretty intact. Fund raising includes "Roots Revisited", a hope that corporations will sponsor, and that grants will come in. Updates will be provided to the Committee when the students have been selected.

### B. STATE BUDGET UPDATE

Rep. Brad Hill presented the upsetting 9C cuts as it applies to schools, explaining that under State constitution following budget passage, the Governor is allowed in 9C to cut within his own administration when needs demand cuts. The Governor would like to expand his powers to include local aid, but Representative Hill is opposed. Representative Hill included the Special Education Circuit Breaker and Birth to Three cuts. The Student Assessment cut of \$850,000 was not understood, and Hill will investigate. Mrs. Arsenault asked the Representative if he would be able to attend the Nov. 12 joint meeting of the Finance Committee, Board of Selectmen and School Committee.

Dr. O'Flynn joined the meeting at 7:45 p.m.

Mr. Korb asked about the effect of passage of Question 1, elimination of state income tax, on the November ballot. Representative Hill advised that the loss of revenue would be terrible and if the question passes and becomes law, an appeal would be filed by legislators, or a bill to raise money elsewhere would be put forth, or nothing would be done.

### C. FINANCIAL REPORT

Mrs. Joanne Cuff, Financial Director, reported encumbrances to the personnel line, and expressed concern over \$123,000 cut in the Birth to Three program, and Mr. Korb added the projected shortfall because of fourteen new health insurance enrollees @ \$5,000 each.

The Budget Subcommittee will reconvene after the November election and report at the December School Committee meeting. Mr. Korb is withholding distribution of revenue in Choice funds to the principals until after elections. To meet this year's budget, \$809,000 of Choice revenue is needed. Administration has been informed that no expenditures will be accepted (i.e., professional development, technology) in lieu of a possible freeze later. Mr. Loeb asked that there be equity in encumbrances in the event of the freeze. Mrs. Cuff announced that the end-of-the-year report is completed, is under review by the Town Accountant, and will be submitted by the end of October.

## II. SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORTS

### A. VOUCHERS/BILLS

### B. SCHOOL COMMITTEE SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

#### 1. ATHLETICS SUBCOMMITTEE

Mrs. Ross questioned the vote taken on policy of food/drink at football games. Mr. Loeb reminded that, if the shack is open, no food/drink can be brought in.

2. BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE – Discussed earlier.

3. DAY CARE CENTER SUBCOMMITTEE – None.

4. DEMOGRAPHIC STUDY COMMITTEE – None.

5. FEOFFEES SUBCOMMITTEE – None.

6. OPERATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE- None.

#### 7. POLICY SUBCOMMITTEE

Mr. Loeb moved, seconded by Mr. Hopping, to accept for adoption the following Job Descriptions:

- a. Business Office Clerk Proposed Revision, Adoption
- b. Accounts Payable Associate Proposed Revision, Adoption
- c. Director of Finance and Operations Proposed Revision, Adoption.

UNANIMOUS.

#### 8. PUBLIC SAFETY FACILITY COMMITTEE

Mr. Loeb reported that a subcommittee of the 20-member committee has been appointed to meet with the architect when he comes back with a smaller plan which is a little closer to Central Street and farther away from the Winthrop School's driveway area. Mr. Loeb feels there are gaps in the planning and procedures. The last 2–3 fire chiefs had expressed needs and, incorporating the current 100-year-old fire station in the design, a blended square foot cost of \$200 exceeds what a new facility would cost. Three areas of concern the School

Committee: safety for the children; safe access and turning radius for school buses and other vehicles; and the loss of 25-30 parking spaces. Mr. Korb, in a quid pro quo move, suggests that with the serious drainage problem existing under the Winthrop School and the fire station, perhaps there could be an arrangement where the playground area and parking facilities at the school could be improved.

9. SPACE USE COMMITTEE – None.

10. TECHNOLOGY SUBCOMMITTEE – None.

Mr. Traverso reported that four people from the Massachusetts Education Collaborative made a presentation on email services for teachers.

11. WIND TURBINE SUBCOMMITTEE

Mr. Korb reported that the legislature has passed an extension deadline for CREB funding adding one year which allows more flexibility for further study.

12. IPSWICH HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

Matt Roberts suggested that the students should hear from Representative Brad Hill regarding budget cuts. He was urged to call Mr. Hill. Spirit Week within the High School was mentioned.

13. OTHER

**C. REVIEW OF TOWN MEETING WARRANT ARTICLES AND SCHOOL COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS**

Article 3 is assigned to Diane Ross and Article 15 will be decided on at the 6:30 p.m. School Committee meeting prior to Fall Town Meeting on Monday, October 20.

**IV. SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT**

**A. SUPERINTENDENT’S ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT**

No report.

**IV. CONSENT**

**A. CONSENT AGENDA**

Mr. Loeb moved, seconded by Mrs. Ross, to approve the Consent Agenda as follows:

Acceptance of Minutes of October 2, 2008, School Committee Open Session

Acceptance of the anonymous donation to the Ipswich High School Music

Department in the amount of \$2,150 for the purpose of purchasing a

Yamaha electric piano and IMAC computer for use by Ipswich students in grades 6-12

Acceptance of the donation of \$20,800 from the Ipswich 21<sup>st</sup> Century Education Foundation, a gift from the proceeds of the Golf Classic Tournament Fundraiser. \$10,400 will be given to the Doyon School and \$10,400, to the Winthrop School

Acceptance of used computer equipment, valued at \$1,000 from EBSCO Industries, donated to the Computer Club at Ipswich High School.

**UNANIMOUS.**

**V. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Mr. Hopping moved, seconded by Mr. Sheppard, to adjourn to Executive Session at 8:50 p.m. to discuss pending litigation matters, after which the meeting will adjourn. Roll call vote  
IN FAVOR: Traverso, O'Flynn, Sheppard, Arsenault, Loeb, Hopping, Ross.