

**IPSWICH SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2008
MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL ENSEMBLE ROOM**

OPEN SESSION

CALL TO ORDER

Mrs. J. Arsenault, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. with the following members present: N. Sheppard, E. Traverso, H. O'Flynn, B. Hopping, D. Ross, and J. Loeb. Also present were R. Korb, Superintendent; Matthew Roberts, Student Representative; and Joanne Cuff, Financial Director.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mrs. Arsenault read the following announcements:

There will be an Executive Session this evening to discuss strategy in contract negotiations after which we will return to Open Session.

An additional Executive Session will be held to discuss matters of pending litigation, after which we will adjourn.

The Policy Subcommittee will meet on Monday, September 22, at 4:00 p.m. in the Payne School.

A meeting of the Athletics Subcommittee will be held on Tuesday, September 23, at 6:30 p.m. in Room B229 of the Middle/High School.

There will be a meeting of the School Committee's Feoffees Subcommittee on Wednesday, October 1, at 7:30 p.m. in the Payne School.

The next regular School Committee Meeting will be held on Thursday, October 2, 2008, at 7:00 p.m. in the Middle/High School Ensemble Room.

CITIZENS' QUESTIONS – None.

I. SCHOOL COMMITTEE PRESENTATIONS

A. CHINA EXCHANGE UPDATE

Mrs. Cheryl Forster-Cahill and Mr. Gerald Dolan presented a proposal to the School Committee to take 16 Middle School students, eight each from 7th and 8th grade, and 22 High School Jazz Band students to China in April of 2009. There would be six chaperones and one translator. The trip would be from April 16th to April 26th, 2009. There was a PowerPoint presentation with pictures of Mrs. Forster-Cahill's trip to China showing the places they will visit and some of the schools they would see. They have been talking extensively with the Concord Middle School teacher who has led their exchange for the last seven years.

They plan to visit Beijing, Tianjin, Xian and Pangliu. They discussed the selection process and funding for the trip. Allowing for a \$1,000 contribution from each chaperone and by charging each student an additional \$300 to cover the rest of the cost for chaperones, the cost of the trip per student would be approximately \$2,430. They discussed funding including corporate sponsors, grants, scholarships and extensive fundraising. If given approval they will begin this

and the selection process immediately. They would stay in a combination of hotels and homestays and the families would agree to be homestays for the Chinese students visiting in the fall of 2009. The Jazz Band hopes to perform at least 2 concerts. Some of the challenges they expect to face are language, bathrooms, food, "rock star reception" and the 10 days away from home.

Mr. Sheppard made a motion seconded by Mr. O'Flynn to approve the trip. The School Committee asked that per policy they fill out the form for overnight field trips. They also gave approval for \$1,000 cost for each chaperon except for Cindy Sun (the translator) who will be paid for in full. The School Committee also decided to revisit the issue of extra teacher chaperones due to the teachers missing school days. The Committee requested periodic updates at future school committee meetings of the trip.

UNANIMOUS

B. FINANCIAL REPORT

Mrs. Cuff stated that the first 2 major payrolls have been completed, purchasing for supplies and materials has started and is well on its way. She also reviewed the new bus routes, energy costs and the Medicaid appropriation.

II. SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. VOUCHERS/BILLS - NONE

B. SCHOOL COMMITTEE SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

1. ATHLETICS SUBCOMMITTEE

They will be meeting next week.

2. BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE - NONE

3. DAY CARE CENTER SUBCOMMITTEE - NONE

4. DEMOGRAPHIC STUDY SUBCOMMITTEE - NONE

5. FEOFFEES SUBCOMMITTEE

6. OPERATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

7. POLICY SUBCOMMITTEE

8. PUBLIC SAFETY FACILITY COMMITTEE

Mr. Loeb said that they heard about a meeting on September 24th but it had not been confirmed. Mrs. Arsenault requested of Mr. Bob Markel, Town Manager, who was in the audience that the School Committee members be there and that minutes be taken and sent to the appropriate people

9. SPACE USE COMMITTEE

10. TECHNOLOGY SUBCOMMITTEE

11. WIND TURBINE SUBCOMMITTEE

12. IPSWICH HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

13. OTHER

a. FIELD STUDY COMMITTEE

Mrs. Ross expressed that she is waiting for a letter of appointment from the selectmen. Mrs. Arsenault asked Mr. Bob Markel, Town Manager, who was in the audience if he could check on that for Mrs. Ross. He agreed.

C. SUPERINTENDENT'S EVALUATION

Joan Arsenault read the Executive Summary Evaluation for the record which included commending Mr. Korb for his unrelenting advocacy for the children, teachers and programs of Ipswich Schools working hand in hand with the Turn the Tide Committee resulting in the passage of an override that supports the school system. Mr. Korb then addressed the committee. He noted seven areas he intends to address; he thanked the committee for their candor and said he looks forward to taking the district to the next level.

III. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

A. SUPERINTENDENT'S ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Mr. Korb deferred to Mr. Markel who will discuss the GASB 45 Actuarial Valuation and the GIC Insurance Option.

The School Committee invoked the Rule of Necessity. Mrs. Arsenault read the Rule of Necessity and noted the School Committee members who have family members who are eligible for the insurance plan.

Mr. Markel discussed the GASB 45 Actuarial Valuation concerning the Town of Ipswich Retiree Welfare Plan which was a mandated study. Mr. Markel discussed a special act he is suggesting to fund our unfunded obligation as a few other towns have done using the Medicare funds. The School Committee asked Mr. Markel some questions about this and then asked if this could be included in their joint meeting.

Mr. Markel then reviewed the GIC (state insurance plan) which has been reviewed by a consultant for the town and been compared to the current health plan in August and early September. There is a deadline of October 1, 2008 to join the plan or wait until next year. The decision will be made between the Town Selectmen and the PEC (Public Employee Committee) which represents the unions. The study showed that the town wide savings would be \$430,000. The MIAA is expected to give a new proposal for their plan next Thursday. There was a discussion of the GIC plan including the higher co-pays, lack of time for teachers to have enough understanding to make a decision and the effect upon retirees. Mrs. Cuff asked if there was a projection of the annual cost increases and Mr. Markel said 5.8%. A few people who had knowledge of the GIC plan said they or people they knew were very happy with it.

The School Committee thanked Mr. Markel for coming.

IV. CONSENT

A. CONSENT AGENDA

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

- Acceptance of Minutes of September 4, 2008, School Committee Open Session
- Approval of the Middle School sixth grade class overnight field trip to Ferry Beach Ecology School, Saco, Maine, April 28-May 1, 2009
- Approval of the High School Advanced Project Adventure overnight field trip to Blackberry Crossing Campground, Conway, NH, October 17-19, 2008
- Approval of the Ipswich High School Model UN Club overnight field trip to Boston, February 27-March 1, 2009
- Acceptance of the planting of 5 magnolia trees at the Middle/High School donated by Corliss Nurseries at a value of \$375.00

Mr. Hopping issued a reminder that Cori's be done for all chaperones for field trips.
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Mr. Hopping moved, seconded by Mr. Loeb to go into Executive Session at 8:45 p.m. to discuss strategies in contract negotiations. IN FAVOR – Arsenault, Traverso, Loeb, Sheppard, Ross, O'Flynn, Hopping.

VI. OPEN SESSION

Mrs. Ross moved, seconded by Mr. Hopping to return to Executive Session at 9:50 p.m. to discuss the Pending Litigation Matter and Contract Negotiations. IN FAVOR - Arsenault, Traverso, Loeb, Sheppard, Ross, O'Flynn, Hopping.

VIII. OPEN SESSION

In attendance: Arsenault, Traverso, Loeb, Sheppard, Ross, O'Flynn, Hopping

Mr. O'Flynn moved, seconded by Mr. Sheppard to vote on the contract for the Superintendent as follows:

2.5% raise, \$1,500 annuity bonus and an extension of the contract for 1 year for a total of 3 years ending June 30, 2011.

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IX. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Hopping moved, seconded by Mrs. Ross, to adjourn at 10:18 p.m.
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