

**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS**

**SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

**Monday May 16, 2016 – Regular Meeting**

7:00 p.m. - Board of Aldermen's Chambers – Somerville City Hall

**Members present:** Ms. Palmer, Alderman White (7:23 p.m.), Ms. Pitone, Mr. Roix, Mr. Futrell, Mr. Green, Mr. Bockelman and Ms. Normand.

**Members absent:** Mayor Curtatone

**ORDER OF BUSINESS**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Carrie Normand called a Regular Meeting of the School Committee to order in the Board of Aldermen's Chambers at City Hall at 7:02 p.m., with a moment of silence and a salute to the flag of the United States of America. Ms. Normand asked for a roll call, the results of which are as follows: - Present – 7 – Palmer, Pitone, Roix, Futrell, Green, Bockelman and Normand and ABSENT – 2 – White and Curtatone.

**II. STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL** – Mr. Ojo was not present at this evening's meeting.

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- April 25, 2016 Regular Meeting  
MOTION: Mr. Green made a motion, seconded by Ms. Palmer, to approve the minutes of April 25, 2016.  
The motion was approved via voice vote.
- May 2, 2016 Regular Meeting  
MOTION: Mr. Roix made a motion, seconded by Mr. Green, to approve the minutes of May 2, 2016.  
The motion was approved via voice vote.

**IV. REPORT OF SUBCOMMITTEES**

**A. School Committee Meeting for Finance & Facilities:** May 3, 2016 (Mr. Bockelman)

The School Committee meeting for Finance and Facilities was held on May 3, 2016 in Gallery 81 at Somerville High School.

Members present: Paul Bockelman, Dan Futrell and Laura Pitone, Lee Palmer, Andre Green, Steve Roix

Also in attendance: Superintendent Skipper, Assistant Superintendent Vince McKay, and Finance Director Durette and one audience member.

Mr. Bockelman called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

1. Bill Rolls - Members had questions about some of the bills presented on the bill rolls. Ms. Durette answered and offered to provide background material via email after the meeting. Ms. Pitone moved to approve the bill rolls as presented. Mr. Green seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.
2. FY17 Budget - The members reviewed the latest draft budget projection developed by the Finance Director and Superintendent. Specifically, the Committee reviewed the FY17 Budget Summary, FY17 Operations recommendations in line-item detail, FY17 staffing recommendations and comparisons with FY16. The staffing recommendations are based on current staffing with recommended positions noted. The recommendations also included all known salary increases, negotiated raises, step and lane changes, and longevity. The Superintendent and Finance Director continue to refine the budgets. The Subcommittee reviewed the projected classrooms needed to meet our needs of our student population.

There was discussion about the line item for School Committee expenses and what was applied to that line item.

3. FY2016 Expenditure Report - The Committee reviewed the FY2016 expenditure report.

4. Other business

- a. The Superintendent asked for leeway in how she spent the funds in her contract designated for the New Superintendent orientation. She found a program that was more valuable and less expensive for the District. The members supported this change.
- b. Mr. Bockelman reviewed the calendar for our budget process including the budget public hearing on May 11<sup>th</sup>, and a meeting on May 16<sup>th</sup> prior to our regular board meeting.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:15 pm.

**B. Somerville Public Schools Public Budget Hearing:** May 11, 2016 (Mr. Bockelman)

The Somerville Public Schools Public Budget Hearing was held at 6:30 p.m. on May 11, 2016 in the Auditorium of the East Somerville Community School.

Members present: Paul Bockelman, Dan Futrell and Laura Pitone, Lee Palmer, Andre Green, Steve Roix, William White.

Also in attendance: Superintendent Skipper, Assistant Superintendent Vince McKay, and Finance Director Durette, and various staff and six audience members.

Mr. Bockelman called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

Mr. Bockelman welcomed the staff and members in the audience. He noted that the proceedings were being recorded for broadcast on cable television.

He said the purpose of the hearing was for the Superintendent of Schools to summarize her proposed budget for the FY2017 fiscal year and present it to the School Committee. The School Committee would then accept public testimony on any elements of the budget. He said comments could be made in public that evening or could be written to the School Committee after the hearing. He asked that all comments be submitted prior to 5:00 p.m. on Monday, May 16<sup>th</sup>. He said the School Committee would meet at 6:00 p.m. that evening to begin its deliberation of the public and that the Committee may decide to vote that night or could decide to discuss the budget further on June 1<sup>st</sup>.

FY17 Budget - Superintendent Skipper introduced her team and proceeded to walk through a PowerPoint presentation that summarized the key components of the budget, assisted by numerous members of her staff.

At the conclusion of her presentation, Mr. Bockelman asked if there were any comments. Ms. Erin Hemenway said she had two children in the East Somerville Community School and asked that consideration be given to providing transportation for the El Sistema program as it is designed to be a city-wide program but the lack of transportation inhibits students from other schools from participating in this excellent program fully. She also asked that the School Committee give serious consideration to the petition of over 100 people who were requesting that the Unidos program be expanded. And, lastly, she asked that the Step Program in which police officers "adopt" a sixth grade class be continued.

There were no other public comments at this time.

Superintendent Skipper announced that she had received a petition from a group of students requesting that the District implement and improve the recycling options in the schools.

After Mr. Bockelman described the School Committee's deliberation schedule again, Ms. Pitone moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. White seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

MOTION: Mr. Bockelman made a motion, seconded by Mr. Roix, to accept the report of the School Committee Meeting for Finance & Facilities of May 3, 2016 and the Public Budget Hearing of May 11, 2016. The motion was approved via voice vote.

**C. Educational Programs and Instruction:** May 10, 2016 (Mr. Roix)

This report was deferred to our next meeting.

**V. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT**

**A. Personnel Report**

The Superintendent announced that three more staff members will be retiring at the end of the year:

- Louise Mercer, teacher at the Argenziano School
- Dianne DeVito, teacher at Somerville High School
- Kim Rice, Senior Clerk in the Central Office

Mrs. Skipper congratulated these three retiring staff members and wished them health and happiness upon their retirements.

Mrs. Skipper also announced that, with the impending retirement of Finance Director Pat Durette, the District has hired Mr. David Gordon to replace her. Mr. Gordon was present this evening and stepped to the podium while the Superintendent gave a brief introduction:

Mr. Gordon comes to us with five and half years of financial administrative experience in the Boston Public School system serving as a Budget Analyst, International Baccalaureate Business Administrator and Director of Business and Data Management.

Mr. Gordon also has over five years of financial and administrative experience at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology where he served as a Business Manager, Financial Administrator and Budget Analyst.

Mr. Gordon knows the importance of making financial decisions that are student-centered and which hold students harmless even during tough financial times.

Mr. Gordon is finishing up the Mass Association of School Business Officials (MASBO) Business Administrators' Program through Worcester State University and also has recently completed the Massachusetts Certified Public Purchasing Official Program.

Mrs. Skipper added that she worked with Mr. Gordon in the Boston Public Schools and he is a man of integrity, is very intelligent, thorough, hard-working and respectful. He has big shoes to fill in Pat Durette's absence, but, if anyone can do it – Dave can!

#### **B. District Report**

- The **Somerville High School Building Project Committee** selected a preferred option out of the 9 building options that were originally presented, and will have further discussion on the preferred option (4b) later this month. Community members are invited to join the committee at its May 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting to learn more about and comment on the preferred option. The meeting will be held at the Somerville High School auditorium and begins at 5:30pm. An opportunity for public comment is part of the meeting agenda. We hope you will join us. Comments can also be submitted online at the SHS Building Project website ([www.somervillema.gov/highschool](http://www.somervillema.gov/highschool)).
- We're excited to be among the communities that will be participating in the Harvard Redesign Lab's "By All Means" consortium which kicks off tomorrow and Wednesday. I look forward to bringing you updates as the Somerville team works with other community teams from across the U.S. to address and eliminate the persistent link between socioeconomic status and student achievement. We look forward to learning, contributing, and challenging ourselves to find innovative solutions that will result in stronger educational outcomes for all students.
- School Improvement presentations are continuing this week. We sincerely appreciate the incredible efforts that School Improvement Councils have put forth in their work throughout the year, and in their presentations. We have two presentations taking place tomorrow evening at the Healey School. Kennedy School will make their presentation from 6:00 to 7:00pm, followed by the Healey School presentation from 7:00 to 8:00pm. These presentations are open to the public. Please join us if you can.
- We have been working on the XQ grant final project which is due to be submitted on May 23<sup>rd</sup>. We have recently partnered with MIT, EDC and Google to collaborate on this venture which, if selected, will bring a \$10 award.
- The celebrations throughout the district continue in the next few weeks as we wind down another excellent year in the Somerville Public Schools. This is the first opportunity that I have had to participate and enjoy some of these end-of-year events as I wrap up **my** first school year as Superintendent of Schools in this great city. I am so proud to be part of this District and to have the opportunity to share in the excitement and celebration of the tremendous work that students, staff members, and families have put forward throughout the year. Congratulations and thank you for your hard work. I invite members of the community to please join us in the celebrations when you can. Here is a glimpse at what is coming up. Please check our website calendar of events for a complete list. There are many events and celebrations coming up throughout the District.

#### **UPCOMING EVENTS:**

- The **Somerville High School Evening of Song** featuring the SHS Chorus and Guitar is Thursday, May 19<sup>th</sup>, 6:30pm at the high school auditorium.

- **Somerville Rocks** invites you to their season-ending performance on Friday, May 20<sup>th</sup>, 7:00pm at the SHS auditorium.
- **El Sistema Somerville** invites you to a documentary and fundraiser on Saturday, May 21<sup>st</sup>, from 6:30 to 9:00pm at the SHS auditorium. You'll enjoy a documentary about El Sistema students from around the world who have been positively impacted by the program, and have an opportunity to learn more about El Sistema Somerville.
- The **SHS Varsity Highlander Awards Night** is Tuesday, May 24<sup>th</sup>, 7:00pm at the Somerville High School field house.
- The **Class of 2016 Scholarship Awards Night** is Wednesday, May 26<sup>th</sup> from 6:30-8:30pm at the SHS auditorium.

Following the Superintendent's Report, Mr. Bockelman asked for information regarding the use of rest rooms, etc. by our transgender students and also for a report on the status of our drinking water. Ms. Skipper responded that, regarding facilities for transgender students, we are ahead of the curve on making sure options are in place. Last year, Mr. Melillo worked with staff to identify both unisex as well as rooms that can be selected based upon the person's comfort regarding gender identity. Regarding the drinking water, testing began in Somerville prior to learning of issues elsewhere and should be completed this week. Mr. Koty or one of his staff will attend the next Finance and Facilities meeting to provide the report.

**VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**A. Superintendent's Entry Plan Update**

Mrs. Skipper reported that, at the Long Range meeting, she shared an overview of her Entry Plan during which time she communicated what she had learned after nearly 18 months of meeting and talking with the various stakeholders in the district. After peeling back what she had learned from these meetings, discussion of the development of School Committee goals and vision took place which included the following:

- A listing of goals with possible metrics for each, which was shared this evening with members
- Discussion of goal by goal potential metrics
- Progress measuring
- Structural changes
- Qualitative vs. quantitative measurements
- The fact that these goals and metrics will be used as tools to evaluate the Superintendent and her administrative team going forward
- More discussion will take place at the next Long Range meeting

**VII. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. FY2016 SCALE/ADP Graduates – (Recommended Action: Approval)**

The Superintendent of Schools recommends that the following student, who has successfully completed the requirements for graduation from SCALE, be granted his diploma:

Luisa DaSilva-Mosso      50 Fuller Street      Boston, MA 02124  
 Carlo Signati              2 Peabody Terrace, Apt. 1201      Cambridge, MA 02138

MOTION: Mr. Futrell made a motion, seconded by Mr. Roix, to approve the SCALE/ADP graduates. The motion was approved via voice vote.

**B. Acceptance of Donation** (recommended action: approval)

The Superintendent recommends the acceptance, with gratitude, of the following donation:

<b>Donation</b>	<b>Donor</b>	<b>City, State</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>Program donated to</b>
Monetary	Robert McNary Somerville Lodge of Masons	Somerville, MA	\$2,500	SHS Summer School Program

MOTION: Ms. Pitone made a motion, seconded by Mr. Bockelman, to accept the donation with gratitude. The motion was approved via voice vote.

**C. Field Trips** (recommended action: approval)

**June 16, 2016**

East Somerville Community School grade 8 students to Canobie Lake Park, Windham, NH. Transportation via school bus with a cost of \$25 per student.

<b>June 17, 2016</b>	Argenziano School grade 8 students to Canobie Lake Park, Windham, NH. Transportation via bus with a cost of \$25 per student.
<b>June 20, 2016</b>	Healey School grade 8 students to Canobie Lake Park, Windham, NH. Transportation via bus with a cost of \$35 per student.
<b>June 13, 2016</b>	West Somerville grade 8 students to Canobie Lake Park, Windham, NH. Transportation via bus with no cost to students.
<b>June 16, 2016</b>	Winter Hill Community Innovation School grade 8 students to Canobie Lake Park, Windham, NH. Transportation via bus with a cost of \$25-30 per student.

MOTION: Ms. Pitone made a motion, seconded by Mr. Roix, to waive the reading of the field trips and approve.

The motion was approved via voice vote.

### **VIII. ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS**

#### **Mr. Futrell**

1. Announced that he will be away for the next two weeks and, therefore, will miss the Kennedy and Healey School School Improvement presentations, as well as the meetings on May 23.
2. Provided a report on the recent meeting regarding the Charter School cap which was held at the Visiting Nurses' Assistive Living facility on Lowell Street.

#### **Ms. Pitone**

1. Asked if there was an update regarding the request to be held harmless regarding the MCAS testing. Ms. Skipper responded that Dr. McKay had hoped to cover this tonight, but that Commissioner Chester communicated that he is not inclined, at this time, to agree to a hold harmless provision. He is taking this matter very seriously, but it is still under review. He wishes to let the test run and see what happens.

#### **Mr. Bockelman**

1. The PTA Dinner Dance is Friday night and is always a good time and the PTA's major fundraiser for the scholarships they provide to our students.
2. Somerville High School Scholarship Foundation raffle was held on Friday, May 13<sup>th</sup> and 209 tickets were sold. The top prize was split between 9 groups. This organization does an outstanding job of providing scholarships to our students!
3. Vocational Awards Banquet – A great event and it was wonderful to see Ellie Blute honored for all she has done in the City. Ellie is basically the "Godmother" of the Vocational, Title I and PTA and is one who never likes attention on herself, but she so deserves it!
4. World Language Awards – this was a wonderful event and it was impressive to learn that there are nearly 1,200 students enrolled in foreign language instruction and that this number is growing. Mr. Nocito and many ambitions and lots of good things are happening in his department.
5. Reported that at the School Committee meeting for Finance and Facilities, a vote was approved to accept the Superintendent's recommendation and recommend this amount to the Mayor for inclusion in his budget presentation to the Board of Aldermen (BOA). On June 8, Mrs. Skipper will present the School Department's budget to the BOA.

Ms. Normand thanked everyone for their work on the budget.

### **IX. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:47 p.m. via voice vote.

### **RELATED DOCUMENTS:**

1. Agenda
2. Minutes of April 25, 2016 and May 2, 2016 for approval
3. May Personnel Report
4. Two (2) SCALE ADP diploma approvals
5. One (1) donation request form
6. Three (3) Out of State Field Trip requests
7. Eight (8) Condolence Letters