

CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Monday May 2, 2016 – Regular Meeting

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

Members present: Ms. Palmer, Alderman White (7:08 p.m.), Ms. Pitone (7:15 p.m.), Mr. Roix, Mayor Curtatone (8:05 p.m.), Mr. Futrell, Mr. Green (7:05 p.m.), Mr. Bockelman and Ms. Normand.

Members absent:

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 7:04 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 – 5 – Palmer, Roix, Futrell, Bockelman and Normand and ABSENT – 4 – White, Pitone, Curtatone and Green.

Ms. Normand announced that, unless there was an objection, we would now take an item of New Business - **Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) Services** – be taken out of order. Ms. Normand invited Health Department Director Doug Kress and Director of Student Services, Richard Melillo, to the podium to provide information on SBIRT.

Mr. Kress provided an explanation of what SBIRT is, the components of SBIRT, the reason for implementing this program, the benefits to date of using this program and some additional data on drug and alcohol dependence. A document with this information is included at the end of these minutes.

Discussion ensued with included the following:

- Communication plan and scheduling of getting information to parents/guardians
- Plan involves a scripted conversation tool
- The plan was selected through the state for local use
- There will be a multi-level rollout of the program similar to the way the lockdown trainings were done
- Screenings will be done as part of Health Class
- Students in grades 8 and 10 will participate

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

III. REPORT OF SUBCOMMITTEES

Mr. Bockelman assumed the Chairs so that Ms. Normand could provide her report.

A. School Committee Meeting for Personnel: April 27, 2016 (Ms. Normand)

The School Committee Meeting for Personnel was held on April 27, 2016 in the conference room at 8 Bonair Street.

In attendance: Carrie Normand, Steve Roix, Dan Futrell, Lee Palmer, Andre Green, Laura Piton, Superintendent Mary Skipper, Assistant Superintendent Vince McKay, Joe Tringale, and Candidate for Director of Finance David Gordon.

Carrie Normand called meeting to order at 6:15

Superintendent Mary Skipper recommended the School Committee to considered David Gordon as the new Director of Finance to replace the retiring Pat Durette. Each member of the School Committee introduced him/herself to Mr. Gordon. Mr. Gordon then introduced himself to the committee giving an overview of his five and half years of financial administrative experience in the Boston Public School system and over five years of financial and administrative experience at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology before that. In response to Committee members' questions, Mr. Gordon described the importance of making financial decisions that are student-centered and hold students harmless even during tough financial times. He presented examples of how he was able to effectively communicate complicated budget issues to families and the community, how his management style is to value the knowledge and contributions of each staff member, and his enthusiasm for taking on new challenges with each new position.

Mr. Futrell moved to approve the Superintendent's recommendation to appoint David Gordon as Finance Director and to authorize her to enter into contract negotiations. Mr. Green seconded the motion which passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

The meeting adjourned at 7:00.

MOTION: Ms. Normand made a motion, seconded by Mr. Futrell, to approve the Superintendent's recommendation to appoint David Gordon as the Finance Director and to authorize the Superintendent to enter into contract negotiations with Mr. Gordon.

The motion was approved on a roll call vote of YES – 8 – Palmer, White, Pitone, Roix, Futrell, Green Bockelman and Normand and ABSENT – 1 – Curtatone.

MOTION: Ms. Normand made a motion, seconded by Mr. Green, to accept the report of the School Committee Meeting for Personnel meeting of April 27, 2016.

The motion was approved via voice vote.

IV. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT

A. District Report

- Thanks to the Argenziano PTA STEM Committee, the leadership and tireless work of Marian Berkowitz and Becky Masterson-Wong, and an amazing group of community partners, **Somerville STEAM Socials** have been generating great interest and excitement about Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math opportunities in our community and as a part of a students' everyday learning experience. The second STEAM social took place a couple of weeks ago, and drew more than 150 people from throughout Somerville. Greentown Labs hosted the network event, and approximately 15 STEAM-related community groups were on hand to share information and ideas. We look forward to continuing to share, learn about, strengthen, and further connect with community partners around STEAM practices in Somerville. Stays tuned for more STEAM socials in the coming months, and join the excitement!
- The **Somerville High School Building Project Committee** recently narrowed its options for a new Somerville High School to one preferred option, and will continue to discuss the preferred option in the coming weeks. Community members can learn more about and comment on the preferred option (Option 4b), online at the SHS Building Project website (www.somervillema.gov/highschool), or attend an upcoming building committee meeting.
 - Monday, May 9, 5:30pm at the Capuano Early Childhood Center conference room
 - Monday, May 23, 5:30pm at the Somerville High School library

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- The final round of **Parent-Teacher conferences** for the year conclude this week:
 - Tuesday, May 3rd, from 6:00-8:00pm at East Somerville
 - Wednesday, May 4th, from 6:00-8:00pm at West Somerville
 - Tuesday, May 10th, from 6:00-8:00pm at the Brown School
- **Student of the Quarter** presentations are taking place at schools throughout the District. This morning we celebrated students at the West Somerville Neighborhood School. I'm excited to help recognize students from the following schools this Thursday:
 - Thursday, May 5th, 8:30am – Kennedy School
 - Thursday, May 5th, 1:30pm – Brown School
- We invite you to join us at our **Public Budget Hearing** next week. The Hearing will take place on Wednesday, May 11th, from 6:30-7:30pm at the East Somerville Community School Auditorium.
- It's that time of year when we have an opportunity to celebrate students' and teachers' hard work throughout the year. We hope to see you at these **end-of-year events**:
 - World Language Awards Night, 6:30pm on Tuesday, May 3rd at the Somerville High School Auditorium
 - CTE/Vocational Senior Awards Night, 6:00pm on Wednesday, May 4th at the Somerville High School Field House and Atrium
 - Spring String Fling, 7:00p on Thursday, May 5th at the SHS Auditorium
 - SHS STEM Awards Night, 6:30pm on Tuesday, May 10th at the SHS Auditorium
 - All-City Middle School Concert, 7:00pm on Thursday, May 12th at the SHS Auditorium
 - SHS Senior Prom, Friday, May 13th at the Cambridge Marriott

Ms. Pitone asked about the preferred option for the new Somerville High School. What is the comment period deadline?

FURTHER: that the Somerville School Committee opposes the lift of any cap on charter schools in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts; AND

THAT: a copy of this resolution be delivered to the Governor and the Somerville state and local legislative delegations and otherwise widely distributed.

MOTION: Ms. Palmer made a motion, seconded by to approve the resolution.
The motion was approved via voice vote.

Ms. Palmer invited members and the audience to attend a forum on May 12th from 7:00-9:00 p.m. at the Visiting Nurse Assisted Living building at 259 Lowell Street to discuss a proposed ballot question on this topic.

VI. ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

Mr. Bockelman

A reminder that the School Committee meeting for Finance and Facilities will take place tomorrow evening at 7:30 p.m. Mr. Bockelman asked if the meeting might be moved to Somerville High School so that members could leave the Vocational Awards Banquet and not have to travel to Bonair Street for the meeting. Ms. Marques will consult with City Clerk John Long and change the location, if possible.

Ms. Pitone

Ms. Pitone announced that the first meeting of Technology Advisory Group (TAG) Planning Committee will be held in the conference room at 8 Bonair Street on May 5 from 4:00 – 6:00 p.m. Ms. Pitone shared a draft of the TAG Charter with members. Draft Charter reads:

Explore, analyze and make recommendations to the Somerville School Committee regarding priorities for use of technology in teaching and learning as well as the scope and depth of the SPS technology offerings to promote the use of technology as content and a tool. Consideration should be given to both encouraging innovative practices and providing universal exposure to all students to technology. The Somerville School Committee will use the recommendation and findings of this group to inform the SPS goals and investment plans.

Discussion ensued which included thanks to Ms. Pitone for getting this going, question of whether the charter should be voted on this evening, and how invitees were determined.

The charter will be voted on by the TAG. Ms. Pitone was sharing this with members to get any input they may feel necessary. The group will vote on the charter statement at the meeting. The initial planning group was selected by staff members (John Breslin, Charlie LaFauci and others) based on people's current involvement with technology. In the future, the meetings will be open to others and outreach will be done. Those doing outreach will be mindful of including opportunities for ELL parents as well as for addressing the digital divide.

Ms. Normand

Ms. Normand announced that teachers at the Healey School worked with students to develop videos, using Chrome books and other technology to compete projects on Greek history.

Ms. Normand also commented on the wonderful work of our student and staff around the various musical performances she has recently attended and asked members to keep these things in mind during the budget development process.

Ms. Palmer

Miss Palmer issued a reminder that she made a request to the Finance Director for additional information regarding the Community Schools budget.

Ms. Palmer introduced the Resolution Calling for Full Funding of the Foundation Budget Review Commission's Recommendations and read the resolution aloud:

Whereas the Massachusetts Foundation Budget Review Commission identified two areas (employee health insurance and special education) where the Massachusetts Foundation Budget significantly understates the true cost of educating students in the Commonwealth and has failed to keep pace with rising costs;

Whereas this underfunding means the cost of providing a quality education has increasingly been borne by local communities, most often at the expense of other vital municipal operations;

Whereas investing in education today leads to higher incomes, and thus less investment in police, prisons, subsidized health care, low income housing, welfare, etc. in the future;

Whereas state and local economies are most effectively strengthened “by investing in education and increasing the number of well-educated workers.”

Therefore Be It Resolved that the Somerville School Committee calls on the Massachusetts Legislature and the Governor of Massachusetts to fully fund and adopt the recommendations of the Foundation Budget Review Commission in the immediate future.

MOTION: Ms. Palmer made a motion, seconded by Mr. Green, to approve the resolution. The motion was approved via voice vote.

Mayor Curtatone

The Mayor issued his thanks to John Oteri, Tony Ciccariello, Tony Pierantozzi, Mary Skipper and Nicole Viele for their hard work, over the past decade, to find an appropriate athletic league for our students to compete in – the Northeast Conference. This will have a very positive impact on our kids. This four-year pilot program will take effect in January 2017.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Prior to adjourning, Mr. Bockelman expressed the School Committee’s condolences for the following staff members and family of staff members who recently passed away:

- Frederick Beebe, brother of Frank Beebe, retired teacher from the Somerville Public Schools.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:23 p.m. via voice vote.

RELATED DOCUMENTS:

1. Agenda
2. A packet of information on the SBIRT program
3. A Legislative Bulletin from the MASC regarding the Opioid Bill
4. One SCALE ADP graduate request
5. One donation acceptance request
6. Three (3) thank you letters for donations
7. Two (2) condolence letters