

**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

Monday, May 15, 2017 – Regular Meeting

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

Members present: Mayor Curtatone (8:04 p.m.), Mr. Futrell, Mr. Roix, Ms. O'Sullivan, Ms. Normand, Mr. Green and Ms. Pitone.

Members absent: Ms. Palmer, and Alderman White

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Laura Pitone called a Regular Meeting of the School Committee to order in the aldermanic chambers at 7:09 p.m., with a moment of silence and a salute to the flag of the United States of America. Ms. Pitone asked for a roll call, the results of which are as follows: - Present – 6 – Futrell, Roix, O'Sullivan, Normand, White, Green and Pitone and Absent – 3 – Curtatone, Palmer, and White.

Ms. Pitone announced that Mrs. Skipper was feeling ill and was home resting and that Dr. McKay would stand in for her this evening.

II. STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL

Mr. Domond was not in attendance this evening.

REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT

- Recognition of Somerville High School Robotics Team

Members of the award-winning Somerville High School Robotics Team and their coaches were present this evening to present information about their team and the many different components of how the team prepares, strategizes, and collaborates before, during and after competitions. Coaches provided a timeline and history of both their team and information on their recent appearance at the competition in St. Louis where they earned a Creativity Award and qualified 16th out of 68. Various team members spoke individually about their particular role on the team. Essentially, teams design, build, and test game-playing robots. We were lucky enough to have Somerville High's robot at our meeting and the students gave a demonstration of one of its "tricks".

School Committee members praised the team, asked about time constraints that come with being a member of the team, and what the School Committee can do to support the team in the future.

The School Committee recessed at 7:28 p.m. to congratulate and thank the Robotics Team members. The meeting resumed at 7:38 p.m.

Following the recess, a video that captured a recent competition was shown and the coaches also announced their thanks to the assistance the team has received for parent supporters, the community, administration and other Somerville Public Schools staff.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The approval of minutes was deferred to our next meeting.

- April 24, 2017 Regular Meeting
- May 1, 2017 Regular Meeting

IV. REPORT OF SUBCOMMITTEES

A. School Committee Meeting for Rules Management: May 1, 2017 (Mr. Green)

The School Committee met for a Rules Management Meeting of the Whole on May 1, 2017. The meeting was called to order at 6:04 p.m. in the BOA Chambers of City Hall.

In attendance were: Ms. Pitone, Ms. Palmer, Mr. Roix, Mr. Futrell, President White, Ms. O'Sullivan, Ms. Normand, and Mr. Green. Also present were: Mrs. Skipper, Dr. McKay and Ms. Marques and approximately 7 audience members

At the last Regular SC meeting, Ms. Palmer presented a draft proposal on Opt Out of students regarding standardized testing (MCAS), which was referred to this committee for further vetting.

Mr. Green read that draft proposal aloud.

Following the reading, Mr. Green announced that he would set aside no more than 15 minutes for comments from the public. Mr. Green informed audience members that comments would be limited to one minute and announced that there would be certain ground rules for speaking.

There were three (3) members of the public who chose to speak. Their comments focused on opt out.

Following the public comment, Ms. Palmer made a motion, seconded by Mr. Green, to substitute a new version of the draft proposal and that this version focuses more on uniformity and clarity of process, is more in the form of a resolution, rather than a policy, and is a statement of intent and that the procedures would be left to the administration. Discussion ensued relative to whether a policy was needed.

Following discussion, Mr. Green entertained a motion to table the motion. Mr. Futrell made a motion, seconded by Mr. Roix, to table the motion.

Discussion ensued which included the following about the need for opt out and there was vigorous and respectful conversation around this issue.

Mrs. Skipper and Dr. McKay shared the current status of the procedures – The procedures, on letterhead, were sent to principals on 3/31, 4/12 and 4/24 and these procedures had been vetted through legal and DESE, including Jeff Wolfson. The 15-minute rule judgement, with guidance from DESE, dates back about 10 years or so, and seemed to be a good starting place. The aim was to treat kids fairly.

Mr. Futrell suggested the SC direct the District to provide a document for parents that was clear and easy to reference.

Back to the motion to table the policy—Mr. Futrell made a motion, seconded by Ms. Palmer to amend the motion to read that the SC direct the SPS to create a procedure that is clear and easily referenced and share with SC.

Following more discussion including assurances that procedures are in place and that a template letter has been developed, some members thought the directive was redundant.

A motion was made by Ms. Palmer, seconded by President White, to move the motion.

On the motion made by Mr. Futrell and seconded by Ms. Palmer, directing the administration to create a procedure and share with SC, the motion failed on a roll call vote of NO – 4 and YES – 3.

Mr. Green adjourned the meeting at 7:02 p.m.

Mrs. Skipper informed that SC that documents will be finalized and share with them at the May 23rd Ed programs meeting.

MOTION: Mr. Green made a motion, seconded by to accept the report and minutes of the School Committee Meeting for Rules Management of May 1, 2017.

The motion was approved via voice vote.

B. School Committee Meeting for Finance & Facilities: May 2, 2017 (Mr. Futrell)

This report was deferred to our next meeting. Mr. Futrell did, however, provide some key facts about the budget process and reminder audience members that the Somerville Public Schools Pubic Budget Hearing would take place on May 17 at 6:30 p.m. at the East Somerville Auditorium. Budget documents have been placed on the Finance Department's page of the school website. The School Committee will meet on May 22 to deliberate on the budget and make any necessary edits, etc. This budget is the culmination of over five months of work and is driven, primarily, by our School Committee goals.

C. Somerville Public Schools Massachusetts School Choice Public Hearing: May 15, 2017 (Ms. Pitone)

Mr. Green assumed the Chair so that Ms. Pitone could report on tonight's School Choice Public Hearing. A public hearing was held regarding the Massachusetts Interdistrict Choice Program. Chairman Pitone opened the hearing at 6:49 p.m. in the Board of Aldermen's Chambers at Somerville City Hall and turned the meeting over to Assistant Superintendent Vincent McKay. Dr. McKay provided some background on the history around this program as well as the reasons why Somerville has historically opted out of the program, including its impact on our class sizes. Dr. McKay also stated that according to Massachusetts General Law, prior to June 1st each year, school districts must conduct a public hearing relative to their participation in the Massachusetts Interdistrict Choice Program.

As there were no speakers in the audience, the School Committee approved the following motion:

MOTION: Mr. Green made a motion, seconded by Ms. Normand, that the Somerville School Committee adopt a resolution withdrawing from its obligation to enroll non-resident students during the 2017-2018 school year.

The motion was approved by voice vote.

The public hearing was adjourned at 6:53 p.m., by voice vote.

V. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT

A. Personnel Report

Dr. McKay announced that there was one new retirement to report – that of Christine Thompson, a Senior Clerk in the Special Education Evaluation Center after 14 years. Dr. McKay wished Ms. Thompson many happy and healthy years upon her retirement!

A question was asked relative to the AP Coach position listed on the personnel report. Dr. McKay will check and report back to the School Committee with the information.

Mayor Curtatone arrived at 8:04 p.m.

B. District Report

Dr. McKay presented the District Report, as follows:

- Congratulations to the Winter Hill Community Innovation School for receiving the 2017 Pozen Prize for Innovative Schools from the Boston Foundation last week. The Pozen Prize, which includes a \$75,000 award, was established in 2013 by the Boston Foundation and donors Robert and Elizabeth Pozen. The Prize recognizes schools for innovative practices that lead to academic excellence and a quality learning environment for all students. This was the first year that the scope of the award was expanded to include innovative district schools. Winter Hill was one of 5 schools in Greater Boston invited to apply for this year's award, all of whom were either Innovation or Pilot in-district schools.
- It's that time of year when we're celebrating, recognizing and showcasing students' hard work throughout the school year. We invite you to join us at the many upcoming awards ceremonies and music events. In the last few weeks, we honored our CTE/Vocational seniors at the annual CTE Senior Awards Banquet; more than 400 students and family members attended the event. Last week, nearly 180 students were honored at the 2017 Somerville High School STEM Awards celebration.

All of these celebrations recognize not only the outstanding work of our students and teachers, but also the tremendous role that our community partners have in providing students with rich learning opportunities. Congratulations and thanks to all of you – students, teachers, families, and community partners – for working together to provide our students with experiences that will have a long-lasting positive impact throughout their lives.

- The following events are coming up in the next few weeks:
 - District Chamber Strings and Viol de Gamba Ensembles at the SHS Library tomorrow, Tuesday, May 16th, from 6:30-8:00pm
 - SHS Spring Concert on Thursday, May 18th, 7:00-9:00pm at the SHS Auditorium
 - SHS Annual Scholarship Awards Night will be held Wednesday, May 24th, starting at 7:00pm at the SHS Auditorium
 - Evening of Song Concert, which includes performances by the SHS Chorus, SHS Guitar Ensemble, and the All-City Middle School Chorus, takes place Thursday, May 25th, starting at 6:00pm at the SHS Auditorium
 - SHS Music Department Awards Ceremony will be held Thursday, June 1st, starting at 6:30pm at the SHS Cafeteria
- And then we're on to Graduation and Moving Up Ceremonies.
 - SHS Class Day will be held on Friday, June 2nd
 - SHS Graduation is scheduled for Monday, June 5th, 6:00pm at Dilboy Stadium (weather permitting)
 - Full Circle Graduation is Wednesday, June 7th, 5:30pm at the Arts at the Armory
 - Next Wave Graduation is Wednesday, June 14th, 5:00pm at the Arts at the Armory
 - SCALE Graduation is Wednesday, June 14th, 7:00pm at the SHS Auditorium

Please check our Calendar of Events for dates of Moving Up Ceremonies as they're finalized.

- Finally, just a quick reminder that the last day of the 2016-2017 school year is Wednesday, June 21st. It will be a half day for all students. All students will be dismissed at noon that day. We have many summer program offerings throughout the District, and in partnership with other City and community agencies. We're finalizing our programming and hope to have the opportunity to work with many of

our students throughout the summer. Look for news about summer programming in an upcoming edition of our CONNECTIONS newsletter.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Acceptance of Donations (recommended action: approval)

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

Donation	Donor	City, State	Value	Program donated to
Tenor Viola da Gamba and Shortridge Tenor Bow	Brian Cooper	Gaithersburg, MD	\$2,800	SHS Early Music Ensemble
Drum Set	Stephen G. Smith	Somerville, MA	\$250	SPS Music Program

MOTION: Mr. Futrell made a motion, seconded by Mr. Roix, to accept the donations, with gratitude. The motion was approved via voice vote.

B. FY2017 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:

Samantha Marie Cain 3 Pine Street Stoneham, MA 02180

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

C. Field Trips (recommended action: approval)

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

The motion was approved via voice vote.

June 1, 2017

Argenziano grade 8 students to New York City. Transportation via bus with no cost to students thanks to successful fundraising efforts.

June 8-9, 2017

Healey School grade 3 students to the Museum of Science, overnight. Transportation via parent cars, MBTA with a cost of \$55 per student.

June 12, 2017

Grade 6-8 students from the following schools to Canobie Lake Park, Windham, NH to participate in the Annual Middle School Adjudication Festival. Transportation via bus with a cost of \$30 per student. Participating schools are: Argenziano, Kennedy, East Somerville, Brown, West Somerville, Healey, and Winter Hill.

June 13, 2017

West Somerville grade 8 students to Canobie Lake Park, Windham, NH. Transportation via bus with no cost to students.

June 15, 2017

Argenziano grade 8 students to Canobie Lake Park, Windham, NH. Transportation via bus with a cost of \$25 per student.

June 16-18, 2017

SHS Spring Track athletes to Durham, SC to participate in the National Scholastic meet. Transportation via school mini-bus. No cost to students for transportation, lodging or meet fees, only money needed would be for lunch and dinner. Meals will be provided to those who cannot otherwise afford through the fundraising efforts of the Track PAC.

June 20, 2017

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

June 20, 2017

Healey grade 8 students to Canobie Lake Park, Windham, NH.
Transportation via bus with a cost of \$35 per student.

VII. ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

Ms. Normand

- Encouraged people to attend Friday night's PTA Dinner Dance.

Mr. Green

- Announced Thursday night's Rally for Affordable Housing.
- Announced a rally on Saturday at 2:00 p.m. on the Boston Common in support of the Foundation Budget

II. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:24 p.m. via voice vote.

RELATED DOCUMENTS:

1. Agenda
2. The May 2017 Personnel Report
3. Two (2) sets of minutes for approval
4. Two (2) donation acceptances
5. One (1) SCALE ADP diploma request
6. 14 out of state or overnight field trip requests
7. Three (3) letters of condolence
8. Two (2) thank you letters for recent donations