



## QUABBIN REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

School Committee Meeting Minutes

September 8, 2011

Educational Support Center

### **PRESENT**

Chairman	Edward Leonard	Member, Hubbardston
Vice Chair	Lee Wolanin	Member, Barre
	Mark Brophy	Member, Barre
	John Barringer	Member, Oakham
	Paula Bolger	Member, Barre
	Ned Kelly	Member, Hardwick
	Steven Labarre	Member, Oakham
	Charles Miller	Member, Barre
	Marcelino (Tex) Sarabia	Member, Hardwick
	Peggy Thompson	Member, New Braintree
	Mark Wigler	Member, Hubbardston
	Timothy Williams	Member, Hubbardston

### **ALSO PRESENT**

Dr. Maureen Marshall	Superintendent of Schools
Cheryl Duval	Director of Administrative Services
Sheila Muir	Assistant Superintendent
District Administrators/Staff	
Townspeople	
Press	

I. The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM.

### **II. Approval of Minutes**

A motion was made by John Barringer and seconded by Tex Sarabia to approve the minutes of June 16, 2011 and June 29, 2011

The motion passed by a vote of 10-0-2. Mr. Williams and Mr. Miller abstained.

### **III. Administrative Reports**

- a) Superintendent of Schools – The Superintendent deferred her report to items covered on the agenda.
- b) Director of Administrative Services – Presentation of Warrants: AP warrants FY11 26C and FY12 1A, 1C, 2A, 2C, 3B, 4B, 5A, 5C, 6A, 6C, 7A and Payroll Warrants FY11 26-29 and FY12 1-5 were approved by the Warrant Subcommittee.

- c) Teachers Advisory Council – Dennis Dextrateur reported no problems with the new traffic pattern at the middle/high school due to the construction project. No other special events to present at this time.
- d) Student Advisory Council –No report was given.

#### IV. **Subcommittee Reports**

- a) Administrative Review Subcommittee – No report was given.
- b) Alternative Funding Adhoc Subcommittee – No report was given.
- c) Barre Building Subcommittee –No report was given.
- d) Central Office Subcommittee – Lee Wolanin reported on the Central Office Subcommittee meetings held over the summer. The meetings were held in executive session for the purpose of discussing a grievance with a paraprofessional. The matter was referred to the Superintendent and the grievance has been resolved.
- e) Collective Bargaining Subcommittee –Mark Brophy reported that the Collective Bargaining Subcommittee continues to meet with collective bargaining groups.
- f) Plants & Facilities Subcommittee – The Supt. reported that the atrium roof project is on schedule. She commended the staff, students and cafeteria staff for their patience and understanding in dealing with changes in traffic patterns, and closure of sections of the building during the construction.
- g) Policy, Review and Reform Subcommittee – Next meeting scheduled for October 3, 2011 may be rescheduled due to a conflict with Tastefully Quabbin event.
- h) Special Education Subcommittee – The Superintendent introduced Kristin Campione, Interim Director of Pupil Personnel.
- i) Technology Subcommittee –Tim Williams reported that a meeting will be scheduled in late September or early October to meet with the new Director of Technology.
- j) Budget Subcommittee – Mark Brophy summarized the events to-date relative to the budget process. As a result of the recent defeat of the budget in New Braintree and Oakham, the Budget Subcommittee met on September 7<sup>th</sup> to discuss concerns by town representatives relative to the FY12 budget. No recommendations were made and the Subcommittee deferred to the Superintendent for further clarification on the STM votes.

A discussion ensued.

Mr. Leonard stated that the objection from New Braintree and Oakham Town Officials that no accommodations were made was incorrect. The Committee reduced the budget by \$1.3 million including 13 eliminated positions.

Supt. Marshall informed the Committee that because the special town meeting warrant articles in Oakham & New Braintree were in question, the DESE recommended the District consult with legal counsel. The Administration contacted Attorney Edward Lenox who specializes in regional school district issues.

Supt. Marshall introduced Attorney Lenox who briefly reviewed his work experience relative to regional school districts. Attorney Lenox stated that he had reviewed the budget process and procedures followed by the school district and the special town meeting warrants and votes in Oakham and New Braintree.

Attorney Lenox briefly reviewed MGL Chapter 71, Section 16B as it relates to the regional school district budget process.

Attorney Lenox stated that in his opinion the towns of New Braintree and Oakham did not fulfill their statutory obligation and violated state law (Chapter 71, Section 16B) and DESE regulations by not presenting voters with the school district's recommended figure at Special Town Meeting. He said that both votes taken at the August STM's constituted inaction and could be deemed as approving the budget. He said the Committee could bring the matter to Superior Court to seek a declaratory judgment or resubmit the budget to the two towns.

The Superintendent stated that the process should not be sullied by inappropriate warrant articles and recommended the Committee not consider legal action but ask the towns to follow the process.

Committee Members asked the Superintendent if the Administration was given an opportunity to speak at the Special Town Meetings. The Superintendent stated that in New Braintree no one from the school district was allowed to speak on the budget and a motion to move the question was immediately made and a vote taken. In Oakham, the Town placed a different number on the floor. The school district was again not given an opportunity to speak before a vote was taken.

A motion was made by Mark Brophy and seconded by Paula Bolger pursuant to MGL Chapter 71, Section 16B, after reconsidering the FY12 budget on the basis of issues raised during member towns' special town meetings, move to approve the FY12 budget in the amount of \$30,270,641.

A discussion ensued.

Member Steven Labarre stated that he believed the towns' intentions were clear and anticipated the budget would be once again rejected if not lowered by the Committee.

Member Lee Wolanin stated that he found the violation of the spirit of the law by the Towns' to be offensive.

Member Steven Labarre stated that he did not feel it was the towns' intent to violate the law.

Chairman Leonard stated that as a matter of good faith, the Committee should resubmit the budget and settle the matter without going to court.

A roll call vote on the motion was taken:

Paula Bolger-yes; Mark Brophy-yes; Charles Miller-yes; Lee Wolanin-yes; Ned Kelly-yes; Tex Sarabia-yes; Mark Wigler-yes; Timothy Williams-yes; Peggy Thompson-yes; John Barringer-yes; Steven Labarre-yes; Chairman Leonard-yes.

The motion passed unanimously.

The Committee requested that a letter of explanation relative to state statute from legal counsel be included with the certification letter to the Towns from the District Treasurer.

5) **Unfinished Business**

- a) Reconsideration of FY12 Budget – This item was discussed and voted under the Subcommittee Report Section of the agenda.

6) **Public Comment**

No one addressed the Committee.

7) **School Committee Concerns**

Committee Member Mark Brophy reminded members of the Tastefully Quabbin event to be held on Monday, October 3<sup>rd</sup> at 7:00 PM at Eagle Hill School. All proceeds benefit the Quabbin 5013C organization.

8) **New Business**

- a) School Opening – Supt. Marshall reported that the District had a very smooth opening of schools. She introduced Cherie McComb, the new principal of Hubbardston Center School.

**ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Mark Brophy and seconded by Lee Wolanin to adjourn.

The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy A. Landry, Secretary