

Medford School Committee
Medford, Massachusetts

**Special Meeting
August 29, 2016**

The special meeting of the Medford School Committee was called to order by Mayor Burke at 6:09 p.m. in the library resource center at Medford High School.

Those present were Ms. Cugno, Ms. DiBenedetto, Ms. Kretz, Ms. Mustone, Mr. Skerry, Ms. Van der Kloot, Mayor Burke and Superintendent Belson.

All rose to salute the Flag.

Mayor Burke stated that tonight is a special meeting of the Medford School Committee.

The purposes of the meeting are update report on the opening of school year 2016-2017; presentation and discussion of capital plan proposals, public interviews of finalists for Director of Finance and Administration and the selection of a candidate for the position of Director of Finance and Administration. The School Committee reserves the right to enter Executive Session to discuss salary negotiations associated with the position of Director of Finance and Administration. Mayor Burke also mentioned the recent passing of former Mayor John J. McGlynn and dedicated the meeting in his memory. A moment of silence was held.

Update Report on Opening of Schools

Superintendent Belson reported that we are ready for the opening of school year 2016-2017. Grade 1 through grade 12 students report on Tuesday, August 30th and kindergarten students start on Wednesday, September 7th. In preparation for the opening our administrators have been meeting to complete hiring and review necessary policies, protocols and programs. They also participated in meetings with our new teachers, staff, and contractors to ensure that we are off to a great start. Enrollment in our schools is increasing. We will reserve judgment on the need for additional faculty/staff until we can calculate actual attendance over the first two weeks of school. Transportation routes are posted online. This year we used a new software package to produce our routes/schedules (*Transfinder*). As usual adjustments will be made over the first month to reflect actual ridership. We are working on consolidation of at least one bus if possible. Security plans and personnel are in place. All schools have updated their plans and scheduled drills to practice the various response measures. A preliminary report on our summer maintenance and repair work from Buildings and Grounds Director John McLaughlin is attached to this report for your review. As you know we will be discussing capital planning this evening as well. Additional work was completed in our

buildings with the help of our vocational school faculty and students. We will be awarding a new contracted cleaning contract very soon. We have interviewed multiple vendors and expect a decision by the first week of September. We are working on a new initiative that will have our students adopt specific sections of their buildings for upkeep and improvement. Details on this initiative will follow after early on meetings with our students. After school and before school programs are ready to go. Demand for these programs and services continue to grow. We are working hard to ensure that we have enough staff in place to keep up with the demand. Supplies and materials are on hand for the opening. New texts have been ordered and will be in place early on in September. Team Medford (Hallmark Health, Staples and Armstrong Ambulance) has presented over \$27,000 of additional school supplies to us this past week. Our athletic teams have been practicing and will be ready for their openers in September. A fall schedule is included in your materials. The marching band practices everyday and they will be very active at games and other community events this year. We will follow-up with a report on the actual opening of our schools at our regularly scheduled meeting of September 12, 2016.

Discussion:

Mr. Skerry said that he has received calls regarding bus times and concerns about the time of pick-up. Superintendent Belson said that it is hard to know during the first week of school if they will be on time. Ms. Velie commented that they are using the new *Transfinder* system for the first time. It is only an estimate on the time as it gets underway. It will be reviewed and a more accurate schedule will be forthcoming. Ms. Cugno asked Mr. McLaughlin to go over the list of repairs that were completed this summer. John McLaughlin proceeded to go over his end of summer report. He stated that this summer was a busy one in our facilities. Besides our regular cleaning schedule we were able to work in these areas.

Medford High School:

The Custodial staff painted the Nurses Suite, 3 stair wells in C building, Lecture Halls 2 and 3 and the corridor near the pool area.

We had a landscape project in the entrance to the High School by Ground Masters. They pulled out 15 overgrown and dead bushes and replaced the area with mulch and hydro seeded as well as replaced old mulch in the tot lot at the west court yard. They also did some minor landscaping in the Vocational School court yard.

Working with the Superintendent we are trying to come up with innovative ways to make the front foyer of the High School more attractive to perspective students.

I commissioned Garland Roofing to do an infrared scan of the roof. The scan has been completed. I am awaiting the results.

The ceiling was removed in the teachers' lounge outside the library. We will be replacing the lights and ceiling to make the room attractive for meeting purposes. That project will start in September. The backboard project had a scheduling conflict, but I'm confident it will be completed in the next couple of weeks.

McGlynn Middle and Elementary Schools:

Department of Corrections painted stairwells and common area's as well as the Main Office. The Custodians did some painting of common areas.

The Maintenance team changed all the filter cartridges on all the sinks. This corrected issues we were having with leaking faucets.

Working with Mayor Burke and the DPW a project has started to replace some side walk panels and curbing in the parking lot.

Curtis Tufts High School:

Department of Corrections painted all the classrooms on the upper level of the building. We were able to strip and sand the finish in the recreation room and apply polyurethane to the floor. The refinishing project will be an ongoing project at the school.

Columbus Elementary:

Working with The Mayor and the DPW we were able to replace some sidewalk panels. Thor Construction is working to replace a piece of flashing near the front entrance. This will be accomplished on Thursday August 25th.

Roberts, Columbus, Andrews and Brooks Schools:

Library carpets shampooed

McGlynn, Roberts

We were able to hire a painting service to paint the chipping metal on the outside of the buildings. I'm expecting the work to be completed soon. My best hope is before school is in session.

Ms. Van der Kloot asked what the curbs are being repaired with? Mr. McLaughlin answered that the same materials are being used at this point because safety is our priority and the replacement of the curbs are part of the capital plan. Ms. Cugno is concerned that the new curbing won't match the existing ones and she doesn't want to see patches. She said the cosmetics need to be addressed. Ms. Cugno also commented on the carpet near the pool entrance is still bubbling and needs attention. She is also once again requesting the signs for the high school entrance and lots. Ms. DiBenedetto said that her priority is the kitchen area of the Curtis Tufts. She would like to visit the school soon to take a look at and address this area. Ms. Van der Kloot would like the School Committee to tour the Curtis Tufts. Ms. Cugno suggested setting up meeting at all the schools. Ms. DiBenedetto asked for an update on the tile situation districtwide. Mr. McLaughlin said that the Brooks has been repaired, much has been fixed but that they are still in the process of chipping away at this. Ms. Van der Kloot is concerned with the color of the paint. Mr. McLaughlin stated that they have all the color codes on a spreadsheet so everything matches. Mr. Skerry requested an update on the grant for lighting. Mayor Burke announced that they got the contract today for \$250,000 from the state for the lighting. The work will go out to bid soon. Ms. Kreatz said that she has received calls about September 8th being a school day and some parents do not want to send their children to school because of security concerns. Superintendent Belson has talked to the building principals and Ed Finn about the polling locations. Superintendent Belson also said that each school will have a Medford Police at the polling location. Ms. Kreatz suggested making a robo call to reassure parents. Superintendent Belson answered that he would rather have the principals send a letter to the parents/guardians.

Ms. Cugno requested that the School Committee invite Glen Koocher to a future meeting to go over the rules/regulations.

The report was accepted and placed on file.

Presentation and Discussion of Capital Plan Proposals

Mayor Burke said that everyone should remember that at this time, this is a “wish” list. It will be fine tuned as we move forward. Superintendent Belson stated that the capital plan for the Medford Public Schools is part of a citywide investment. Since funding for capital projects is a municipal function school system requests must be integrated and prioritized with overall city needs. The capital plan request by the school administration are prioritized and scheduled according to the following criteria from highest to lowest: health and safety; functional need for operation of the schools; educational value; and cosmetic improvement. Each project must be reviewed with an eye towards alternative sources of funding from state, federal and non-governmental sources. Projects must be scheduled in ways that reduce or eliminate disruption to school operations to the extent possible. Projects must be scheduled to reflect emergent/anticipated legal and as educational requirements. The proposed projects listed in this report are based upon our best current cost estimates pre-bid. There may be a preference for combining certain projects in any given year that could produce a preferred economy. This is a first step which must be reviewed by the Mayor, School Committee, and City Council to ensure consensus, ownership and efficiency.

Discussion:

Ms. Van der Kloot suggested visiting each school to go over the list. Ms. Cugno asked who sat down to discuss what would be on the list. Superintendent Belson answered that the site council reports were used as well as meetings with Pat Velie, John McLaughlin the compliance audit report at the vocational school as well as multiple other sources. Ms. Mustone said that she would like to add signage to the list. Superintendent Belson said that would be part of the operational budget. Ms. DiBenedetto commented that the Medford High School library should be added to the list. Parent Carolyn Mongello asked about the beautification plan discussed in the spring for the library. Superintendent Belson answered that we were semifinalists for a grant but did not receive the grant. Discussion was held regarding the skate park and modules. Mayor Burke also suggested visiting each school and then deliberating.

On the motion of Ms. DiBenedetto, seconded by Mr. Skerry to move capital plan discussion to a Committee of the Whole with site visits:

Vote:

Yes: 7
No: 0
Absent: 0

A five minute recess was held at 7:03 p.m.

The School Committee continued with interviews of the three candidates for the position of Director of Finance and Administration.

The Committee went into Executive Session at 9:00 p.m. to discuss salary and other contractual terms associated with the hiring of the Director of Finance and Administration.

The Committee returned from Executive Session at 9:55 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 9:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Emmett Skerry Jr.
Secretary