

SCHOOL COMMITTEE
HULL PUBLIC SCHOOLS
HULL, MA 02045

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
MONDAY, JUNE 2, 2003

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

John Silva, Chair
Christopher Shipps, Vice Chair arrived at 6:45 p.m.
John Lidington, Secretary
Stephen Avakian, Member
Rhoda Kanet, Member

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT

Kathleen Reynolds, Superintendent of Schools
William Hurst, Chief Business and Financial Officer
Maureen Robishaw, Secretary to the Superintendent

Meeting began at 6:35 p.m.

At 6:35 p.m. Stephen Avakian made a **motion** to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing contract negotiations and potential litigation. Rhoda Kanet seconded the motion. Stephen Avakian, Kristen Evans, Rhoda Kanet and John Silva took a roll call vote. (Christopher Shipps arrived at 6:45 p.m.)

At 8:10 p.m. chair called the Open Session meeting to order.

A. Reorganization of School Committee:

Chair turned the meeting over to the Superintendent.

A **motion** was made by Christopher Shipps to nominate John Silva as Chair. Stephen Avakian seconded the motion. Stephen Avakian, Kristen Evans, Rhoda Kanet, and Christopher Shipps voted to approve the motion. John Silva abstained.

A **motion** was made by Rhoda Kanet to nominate Christopher Shipps as Vice Chair. Stephen Avakian seconded the motion. Stephen Avakian, Kristen Evans, Rhoda Kanet and John Silva voted to approve the motion. Christopher Shipps abstained.

A **motion** was made by Stephen Avakian to nominate Kristen Evans as Secretary. Christopher Shipps seconded the motion. Stephen Avakian, Rhoda Kanet, Christopher Shipps, and John Silva voted to approve the motion. Kristen Evans abstained.

B. Approval of Agenda:

Rhoda Kanet made a **motion** to delete item C – Student Representative’s Report, item D1 – Report on Draft Findings – DOE Coordinated Review of Special Education, Title 1 and Civil Rights, item E1 – Policy Issues, and insert Discussion of Superintendent of Schools after item C on tonight’s agenda. Stephen Avakian seconded the motion. All members voted unanimously to accept the motion.

Chair on behalf of the School Committee extended a warm welcome and congratulations to Kristen Evans.

C. Input from the Public:

Chair noted that because of the number of members from the public who wish to speak there would be a two (2)–four (4) minute limit for each speaker.

The following members of the public spoke:

- Jack Wholey, Community Member, – SAT, central office administration salaries, ESP not rehires, vocational school;

The following people spoke in favor of extending the contract of Dr. Kathleen Reynolds, Superintendent of Schools:

- Daniel Sullivan, Community Member
- Jennifer Ashley and Cathy Crawford, Community Members, (read a letter from Jacobs School Council members)
- Beverly Whitcomb, Community Member
- Susan Brander, Community Member, (also spoke about people with personal issues; concentrating on the children)
- Mary Merrigan, Community Member
- Raymond Joyal, L.M. Jacobs Principal, (on behalf of all HPS administrators)
- Timothy Hurley, Community Member (also spoke in favor of Denise Heavern)
- Cathy Bowes, Community Member
- Stephanie Grillo, Community Member
- Kathy Sullivan. Teacher
- Sharman McNally, Teacher (also requested to give Denise Heavern professional status)
- William Smyth, Community Member

The following people spoke against rehiring Dr. Kathleen Reynolds, Superintendent of Schools:

- Marianne Harte, Teacher
- Jeremy Smith, Student
- Cathy Falcetta, Community Member
- Frank McNamee, Community Member
- Patricia DiGiusto, President of HTA, (read a letter from Dr. Jerilyn Quirk, past Hull High School Assistant Principal)

The following people spoke in favor of rehiring Denise Heavern, Middle School Science Teacher:

- Nancy Dunn, Mother of Denise Heavern
- Deborah McCarthy, Sister of Denise Heavern, (asked to meet publicly with School Committee)
- Denise Heavern (Patricia DiGiusto, HTA President was with Denise)
- Paul McCarthy, Brother-in-law of Denise Heavern
- Mathew Howard, Student
- Rachael Lampke and Amanda Brophy, students
- Casey Leeber, student
- Timmy Callahan, student (also spoke in favor of rehiring Mrs. Centerrino and Mrs. Harte)
- John Dow, student (also thanked Mrs. Harte)
- Robert Wacks, Step-father of Denise Heavern
- Katie Walper, Student, (also spoke in favor of Ms. Harte, Mr. Frank and Ms. Centerrino)
- Sarah Coughlin, Student
- Nancy Sullivan, Community Member

The following person spoke in favor of rehiring Andrea Centerrino. Memorial Middle School Adjustment Counselor:

- Joanne Rose, Community Member

The following person spoke on other issues:

- Susan Catyb, Community Member – high school diploma for her son – Wellspring

After many speakers Chair stated that School Committee had nothing to do with releasing Ms. Heavern. Dr. Silva stated that it is an administration decision. It is beyond the scope of School Committee authority.

At 10:15 p.m. Kristen Evans made a **motion** to take a five-minute recess. Christopher Shipps seconded the motion. All members voted unanimously to approve the motion. Meeting reconvened at 10:25 p.m.

D. Discussion of Superintendent of Schools' Contract:

School Committee discussed the issues of School Committee and Superintendent issues.

Christopher Shipps made a **motion** to move to initiate negotiations with the Superintendent of Schools for a one-year contract extension. Said contract extension being subject to successful negotiations of terms and conditions as put forth by both parties. Kristen Evans seconded the motion. See below for vote.

School Committee continued discussion.

Stephen Avakian made an **amendment** to the **motion** that the Hull School Committee approved initiation of contract negotiations with Dr. Kathleen Reynolds for a one-year extension on her contract, to June 30, 2005. Such negotiations will include a specific list of actions and programs that the School Committee feels must be undertaken, and any contract entered into will include this list as a formal and binding addendum to said contract. Christopher Shipps seconded the motion. See below for vote.

School Committee continued discussion.

Chair stated that the motion made tonight does not require a reconsideration vote because the motion was for a one-year extension on the Superintendent's contract. The motion and vote from the previous meeting were for a two-year extension on the Superintendent's contract.

Jack Whooley asked if a 2/3 vote is needed. Chair responded that the motion on the floor is a new motion. It is not a reconsideration motion.

Chair asked for a vote on amending the motion. AYES: Stephen Avakian, Kristen Evans, Christopher Shipps; NAYS: Rhoda Kanet and John Silva. Motion passed.

Susan Brander, Community Member, asked if Rhoda Kanet is going to recuse herself. Chair responded that it is the decision of the chair that Ms. Kanet not recuse herself. It is a personal issue with Ms. Kanet.

James Lampke, Town Counselor clarified the State Conflict of Interest Law regarding this matter. Attorney Lampke stated that the decision as to whether or not Ms. Kanet wants to recuse herself lies with Ms. Kanet.

Chair asked for a vote on the motion as amended. AYES: Kristen Evans and Christopher Shipps; NAYS: Stephen Avakian, Rhoda Kanet and John Silva. Motion failed.

James O'Brien, Community Member, asked what rights does the community have regarding Rhoda Kanet's participation in the vote on extending the Superintendent's contract? Attorney Lampke responded that if Ms. Kanet did not vote, that the motion would have failed on a 2 –2 vote.

Kristen Evans made a **motion** to suspend Roberts Rules of Order for reconsideration on the last vote. Christopher Shipps seconded the motion. (see below for vote)

Chair explained that if Roberts Rule of Order is suspended that a 2/3 vote is not necessary to pass a motion.

Chair requested the vote on the motion. AYES: Kristen Evans and Christopher Shipps; NAYS: Stephen Avakian, Rhoda Kanet, and John Silva. Motion failed.

E. Superintendent's Reports and Requests

2. Request to Accept Scholarships

Stephen Avakian made a **motion** to accept scholarships as presented by the Superintendent to be presented to the 2003 graduating class. Christopher Shipps seconded the motion. All members unanimously voted to accept the motion.

F. School Committee Considerations

2. Superintendent's Re-evaluation

Stephen Avakian explained that Joel Gagne was a member of the School Committee during the time of the superintendent evaluation process. This evaluation was read at the May 12th School Committee meeting but did not include Joel Gagne's input. It has since been included and Mr. Avakian read the new scores including Joel Gagne's scores (copy attached).

G. Approval of Minutes

A **motion** made by Stephen Avakian to approve the March 24, 2003, School Committee minutes as presented. Christopher Shipps seconded the motion. AYES: Stephen Avakian, Rhoda Kanet, Christopher Shipps; ABSTAIN: John Silva. Kristen Evans did not vote because she was not a member of the committee during that time. Motion passed

A **motion** was made by Christopher Shipps to approve the minutes of the April 7, April 14, and May 1, 2003, School Committee minutes. John Silva seconded the motion. AYES: Stephen Avakian, Rhoda Kanet, Christopher Shipps, and John Silva. Kristen Evans did not vote, as she was not a member of the School Committee at the time of these meetings. Motion passed.

H. Old Business

None

I. New Business

1. Request from Wellspring to Establish Adult Diploma Granting Program:

Chair read a letter from Wellspring, Inc. requesting to establish an adult diploma granting program.

Stephen Avakian made a **motion** to create a Subcommittee of the School Committee to consist of administration, school committee and high school faculty to work with Wellspring on establishing an adult diploma program. Christopher Shipps seconded the motion. AYES: Kristen Evans, Rhoda Kanet, Christopher Shipps and John Silva; Abstain: Stephen Avakian.

Superintendent noted that according to School Committee policy that the purpose of the subcommittee, length of time of its existence, and the task to be assigned be included. Dr. Reynolds suggested Chair

direct the Superintendent to create required information and come back with contents to be adopted at the next meeting.

Chair appointed Kristen Evans and Christopher Shipps to this School Committee Subcommittee.

Stephen Avakian made the following **motion**:

Whereas, Industrial Technology holds enormous potential to aid the development of certain Hull children, and

Whereas, the opening of the renovated Hull High School will afford a unique opportunity to re-institute a quality ITE program, and

Whereas, the School Committee has voted to approve development of an ITE program for Hull High School,

Therefore, the Hull School Committee proposes creation of a subcommittee of the Hull School Committee to be known as the ITE Implementation Subcommittee, effective June 2, 2003, that will serve as a standing subcommittee until the organizational meeting of Hull School Committee in 2004, unless dissolved earlier by the Hull School Committee.

The purpose of the ITE Implementation Subcommittee will be to serve an advisory role to the School Committee on all matters pertaining to revival of ITE. It will provide written and oral opinions on items where the Superintendent requests assistance and also on items that the School Committee seeks advice. At the end of its tenure, the Subcommittee may be asked to give an oral presentation to the public through the auspices of the School Committee.

Membership on the subcommittee will be limited to four persons, including a member of the Hull School Committee. All meetings will be open to the public and will be posted by the Town Clerk per the Open Meetings Law. Christopher Shipps seconded the motion. (See below for vote)

Superintendent requested that this be a School Committee Subcommittee. Dr. Reynolds noted that there have been no identified budgetary line items to support the program that is recommended for implementation. There is no shop at the high school next year and there is no shop teacher in the budget for next year. The issues are strictly School Committee issues. Curriculum and implementation come under the direction of the Superintendent, and this, therefore, is a budgetary issue.

Stephen Avakian requested changing the word Superintendent to *School Committee* in line nine (9) of the above motion.

Chair asked for a vote on the motion. All members voted unanimously to approve the motion.

Chair stated that under Ed Reform School Committee has no authority in hiring teachers. Dr. Silva, Christopher Shipps, Rhoda Kanet and Stephen Avakian voiced their opinion about Denise Heavern not being rehired.

Superintendent reiterated stated it is principals who make decisions of who will not be rehired.

Nancy Sullivan, Parent, asked if the Superintendent has the right to give Professional Development to teachers. Dr. Reynolds responded that yes she does.

Cathy Bowes, Parent, stated that it was inappropriate for School Committee to speak on the Denise Heavern issue.

A discussion regarding student diploma issue ensued between School Committee, Superintendent, Susan Caytb, parent and Carol Borgess, Wellspring. Christopher Shipps read minutes from the January 1994, and August 1994 School Committee meeting. Chair told Mrs. Caytb that it would be looked into regarding a diploma for her son. This item will be on the June 23rd School Committee agenda.

Kristen Evans made a **motion** to create a School Committee subcommittee including a facilitator to be appointed to meet with the Superintendent to address concern of the School Committee members and report back to School Committee on a possible extension of her contract. Christopher Shipps seconded the motion. (See below for vote)

Kristen Evans spoke of the difficulty of attracting good candidates for a Superintendent of Schools position.

Frank McNamee asked how many times could motions regarding the Superintendent be made.

Mary Merrigan asked if School Committee has obtained legal opinion on not extending Dr. Reynolds contract.

Chair requested a vote on the motion. AYES: Kristen Evans and Christopher Shipps; NAYS: Stephen Avakian, Rhoda Kanet, and John Silva. Motion failed.

Superintendent requested Chair read the letters School Committee had received from department heads and community members regarding the Superintendents contract extension. Chair responded that he did not have the letters with him.

Rhoda Kanet made a **motion** to adjourn School Committee meeting at 11:55 p.m. Stephen Avakian seconded the motion. All members voted unanimously to approve the motion.