

APPROVED
C. May

Nauset Regional School Committee
Eastham Town Hall
January 24, 2013

Present for the Committee: Sue Skidmore, Sarah Blackwell, Ed Brookshire, John O'Reilly, Chris Galazzi, Jayne Fowler, Jon Porteus, Brian Kavanaugh, Cheryl Codair and Greg O'Brien

Present for the Administration: Principal Maxine Minkoff, Principal Thomas Conrad, Dr. Ann Caretti, Dr. Bonny Gifford, Ms. Giovanna Venditti, and Dr. Richard Hoffmann

Others: Russ French, Dave Dunford, Marilyn Creary, and John Knight

Call to Order -

Chair O'Reilly called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Agenda Change - None

Citizens Speak

Glen Loomis, citizen from Eastham addressed the committee in support of the most recent recommendation of Dr. Hoffmann and the Police Chiefs for an overall review of safety procedures for students in our school system and asked that it become part of our policy which is reviewed on a yearly basis. He also encouraged the state to create safety standards across Massachusetts.

Solar Panels

Dr. Hoffmann reviewed information relative to placing solar arrays on the roof of Nauset High School. The Green Repair Subcommittee met and brought forward a list of concerns from the District's Attorney, Nancy Campany. The major concern was the warranty issues on the roof after the solar panels were installed. The Superintendent could not recommend the installation of panels on the roof as it is a 1.7 million dollar roof with a 30 year warranty, and he would not want to jeopardize the warranty. Members expressed their concerns over mitigating the warranty by installing the solar panels, authority to proceed with the agreement, and jeopardizing MSBA funding. Dr. Hoffmann indicated that the attorney has been involved with the project since Day 1 and she has been working with CVEC.

Motion:

On a motion by Sarah Blackwell, seconded by Cheryl Codair, it was voted 8-0, with 2 abstentions (Brian Kavanaugh and Chris Glazzi) to NOT enter into an agreement with CVEC.

Dr. Hoffmann indicated he will contact the attorney. Chair O'Reilly indicated that if the program becomes available again, perhaps the region will be notified. Mr. Brookshire suggested there must be another way to have the solar panels without damaging the roof and suggested this be investigated in the future.

Food Service

Susan Murray, Director of Nutrition and Food Services, updated the committee relative to menu changes, new state and federal regulations, healthier items being sold, popular lunches, the POS system, increased cost of foods being served and ideas to improve the program. She noted a huge drop in participation in the a la carte sales which she felt was due to the new Massachusetts regulations that limits the items that can be sold at school. She also indicated it would take a while for students to accept change and it might take a year before the schools see an increase in participation. She stated that the POS system has been helpful in many different areas of accounting and more and more parents are going on line to place money in student accounts. Ms. Murray informed the committee that she is setting up focus groups to enable students to tell her what they would like to see on the menus. Dr. Hoffmann also indicated that a group met last week to see what can be done to improve participation and revenues. Next month Ms. Venditti will review the financial reports of the cafeterias. Some committee members expressed concerns over the long lines and time it takes for students to purchase a meal. Ms. Murray will look into that situation. Ms. Murray also indicated that local farmers can call her anytime and indicated she has used produce from school gardens in cafeterias.

FY14 Budget

Chair O'Reilly asked if anyone had any questions regarding the high school, middle school, region only or central office budgets. Dr. Hoffmann reminded the committee that the February meeting is the Public Hearing on the FY14 budget. Dr. Hoffmann also met with the Town Administrator in Orleans and Chief MacDonald regarding the school resource officer and the hopes to have a similar financial arrangement that we have presently in Eastham. The region pays the officer for 10 months and the town covers the other two months, the training and the benefits package. Dr. Hoffmann indicated the Town of Orleans was interested in supporting this and will bring it to their Board of Selectmen.

Greg O'Brien asked the committee to consider, when it comes to public safety issues, the expense should be outside the percentage that the budget is increasing.

Ms. Venditti reviewed the School Choice Revolving Account with the committee. She read a statement regarding the accuracy of the books of the Nauset Public Schools and also gave the committee a letter from the auditor, Richard Bienvenue, stating there were no issues of non-compliance noted in the audits. The letter from the certified public accounting firm MLBCPA, LLP, was entered into the records. It indicated that "based upon the results of our audit work done in recent fiscal years and our contemplation of applicable provisions of MGL and DESE guidance, the District has met the fiscal and compliance requirements with regard to its operation of the School Choice Fund." Mr. Kavanaugh noted that the response of the auditor didn't address the central questions to which he was seeking answers. Mr. Kavanaugh concluded with frustration that he was the original/primary petitioner for outside financial/legal advice and that his key questions remained unanswered. Chair O'Reilly indicated the letter from Mr. Bienvenue clears up any misinformation and indicates that the District is well in compliance with what they are required to do with funds. Three years ago the committee voted to remove positions from the operating budget and pay for them using school choice funds and now this committee needs to vote to put the positions back into the operating budget. He also indicated the question of any wrong doing has been answered. It was the

consensus of the school committee members to move on with the agenda, having been satisfied with the letter from the auditor.

Dr. Hoffmann indicated that the budget document has been used in the district for many years and if this School Committee wants to present finances in a different way, it could be changed with a vote of the committee. He added that the current form used for the budget summary does not state that this is the total cost to educate our children. If there were such a report it would include: grants, cafeteria revolving funds and donations.

Ms. Venditti indicated there is a \$79,757 balance in the Foreign Student Tuition Account paid by 4 full time and 2 part time students. The school is utilizing some of this money for enrichment for the students for incidental expenditures while on trips. Large expenditures from that account would be brought to the committee for approval. Health Insurance costs, Transportation, Special Needs Transportation, Electricity, and Technology were discussed. Barbara Lavoine, Director of Technology will give a presentation at an upcoming meeting relative to the Capital Plan going forward.

Expenses and revenues were analyzed and a question was raised as to why all funding sources are not listed on the budget documents. The Superintendent suggested this information be obtained from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's website.

Review of Projected FY14 Revenue & Budget Summary

The Superintendent and the Director of Finance and Operations presented a projection of the FY14 revenue from state aid and other sources. It was by consensus that the committee decided to move the positions being paid through the school choice account back into the operating budget. Ms. Venditti reviewed versions 1, 1A, 1B, and 1C of the Operating and Capital Budget Summary with the committee.

On a motion by Brian Kavanaugh, seconded by Greg O'Brien, it was voted unanimously to include the SRO Officer in the budget.

Greg O'Brien indicated that the SRO officer should be a joint responsibility between the schools and the towns. He stated this was not an educational expense. If security needs to be provided, then perhaps we would have to reduce teaching staff in future years.

A history of the Excess and Deficiency Account balances was requested. Ms. Codair suggested a policy be created that allows a certain balance always be maintained in E & D and that the school committee does not go below that certain dollar amount in the Excess & Deficiency Account. The Superintendent indicated there is no requirement to keep a certain amount in E & D and that it is a good idea to have a policy. Mr. Kavanaugh also noted that the schools are presently doing a substantial amount of purchasing relating to security and using money from operating budgets for this purpose. Chair O'Reilly asked the committee if they were comfortable instructing Administration to withdraw an additional \$50,000 from E & D. Committee members discussed drawing down E & D and amounts.

Ms. Fowler indicated that the committee voted on placing the teachers back into the operating budget and felt comfortable taking the money out of E & D. She also agreed with Mr. O'Brien that we should engage the town now to help with the expense of an SRO officer. She supported Version 1B and would add the SRO on top as an expense which would result in an increase in the FY14 net operating budget by 2.75%. It was the consensus of the committee to use Version 1B of the Operating and Capital Budget summary with the cost of the SRO added to that amount.

Policy Manual Update

Sue Skidmore, Chair of the Policy Subcommittee presented Section A (Foundation Section) of the Policy Manual and answered questions relating to this section. Members were sent a mock-up of the policy reflecting the changes so that they could see the work of the subcommittee.

Motion:

On a motion by Ed Brookshire, seconded by Sarah Blackwell, it was voted 9-0, 1 abstention, Brian Kavanaugh, to approve "in form" section A of the policy manual for a first reading.

Adjournment

On a motion by Jon Porteus, seconded by Cheryl Codair, it was voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 p.m. The Committee was reminded of the Joint School Committee scheduled for January 31st, 7:00 p.m. at the Nauset Middle School.

Respectfully submitted,
Ann M. Tefft

Included in the packet: Notes prepared by Legal Counsel, Nancy Campany dated Jan. 4, 2013, Sika Sarnafil letter dated 8-16-2012, Region Revenue for FY14, School Choice Teachers' Salaries, Versions of Nauset Regional Schools Operating and Capital budgets, letter from Richard Bienvenue, CPA, Partner, MLBCPA,LLP, School Committee minutes of 1-10-2011, Policy Manual Update Section A.