

## **Sutton School Committee Sutton, Massachusetts 01590**

The Sutton School Committee met in Room 1A of the Sutton Municipal Center on Monday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2009.

**School Committee Members present** at the meeting were Ms. Liisa Locurto, Vice-chair, Ms. Tracey Zuliani, Secretary, Ms. Pam Beaton Graves and Ms. Wendy Mead.

**Administrators present** at the meeting were Dr. Cecilia Di Bella, Superintendent, and Ms. Susan Rothermich.

**Others present** – approximately two dozen members of the community present, including teachers, parents and other citizens concerned with the budget.

**Agenda Item 1 – Call to Order** – Ms. Locurto called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

### **Agenda Item 2 – Public Hearing on Preliminary FY2010 Budget**

Ms. Locurto explained that the budget is ‘needs-based’ and is funded through federal, state and local money, revolving accounts and fees for such things as busing and athletics. The goal is to provide students with an adequate and quality education. This currently works well within Sutton; MCAS scores are consistently good, students succeed in AP and virtual classroom courses, there is an excellent SPED program, which keeps children IN Sutton rather than incurring the cost of sending them out of the district. Sutton is able to offer music and art and technology and world language. Sutton’s philosophy is to teach the whole child and achieves this through an excellent teaching staff, while trying to maintain small class sizes. All of this comes at a cost and huge thanks is extended to the PTO and the Sutton Education Foundation, both of which go a long way toward covering the gap between the budget and supplies that are not covered by the budget. In the current difficult economy, this year’s goal is to keep the system stable, which means no teacher lay-offs. However, the current budget, as it currently stands, will require five teacher lay-offs; 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, 5<sup>th</sup> grade, one in the middle school and 2.1 in the high school. The positions put forward for lay-offs were an effort to have minimal disruptions to students and programs. There is enormous concern that a slow erosion of the quality of education in Sutton will occur over time.

Ms. Rothermich then presented the details of the proposed FY2010 budget, noting that the budget numbers continue to change as final numbers for the new bus contract and federal stimulus aid are not yet known.

The discussion was then opened to the public for comments/questions at which point, several concerned citizens came forward to address the Committee.

**Agenda Item 3 – Adjourn Public Hearing** at 8:09 p.m.

**Agenda Item 4 – Convene School Committee Meeting** at 8:09 p.m.

**Agenda Item 5 – Citizen Forum** – no one wished to speak.

### **Agenda Item 6 – Consent Agenda**

Ms. Locurto moved and Ms. Mead seconded to approve the Bill Schedule of March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2009 as presented.

Carries 4/0

**Agenda Item 7 – Student Update** – none present to provide an update.

### **Agenda Item 8 – Update on School Committee Goals**

Ms Locurto reviewed the School Committee's 2008-2009 goals, as listed in the meeting packet.

### **Agenda Item 9 – Update on Subcommittees**

The following updates were provided:

- New Building (Ms. Mead) – the project is moving forward; a walk-through was conducted with nine contractors ultimately submitting proposals for the OPM (Owners Project Manager) required by MSBA. Interviews with the contractors will be scheduled.
- Policy (Ms. Locurto and Mr. Brennan) – ongoing.
- District Learning Team (Ms. Beaton Graves) – nothing new to report.
- Superintendent Evaluation (Mr. Brennan, Ms. Locurto) – ongoing.
- Media/Communication (Ms. Zuliani, Ms. Beaton Graves) – ongoing.
- Administrative Contracts (Mr. Brennan, Ms. Zuliani) – the new contract template is done.
- Personnel (Ms. Mead, Ms. Locurto) – the non-affiliated staff employee revised employment agreement is almost complete.

### **Agenda Item 10 – Superintendent's Update**

- The Drama Club will be presenting the play 'Our Town' this week. Mr. Loss and the members have done a terrific job preparing and are working very hard to match last years' success. Admission is reduced to \$3 from \$5 with the contribution of a canned or nonperishable item to support the Sutton Food Pantry.
- The athletic banquet will be held on Tuesday with many special presentations to this year's amazing athletes and their achievements.
- At the next meeting, Mr. Delongchamp will provide the Committee with an update on the prospects of developing an ice hockey program in Sutton.
- MCAS is on the horizon; watch the newsletters and message boards. Our students are well prepared academically. Parents are reminded to be sure that students have a good night's sleep and a good breakfast, etc.
- Results of the Teaching, Learning and Leading survey are discussed in an article from the Massachusetts Society of School Committees (MASC); full results of the survey are available on the website (<http://masstells.org/>).
- Notification has been given from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education that the Sutton school district meets the federal accountability requirements for educating children with disabilities at the highest level!
- There was a visit last Thursday, March 19<sup>th</sup> by four members of the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) who were on-site to follow-up on our SOI (Statement of Interest) for a major repair project to replace the Simonian Center roof. They agreed that roof does need replacing and will submit a report. MSBA funding is unclear at this time. Special 'thanks' to Tim Greene in Senator Moore's office for his participation.

- A recent memo from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education provides an update on the American Recovery and Investment Act (ARRA), discussing some general procedures and requirements that apply to all of the federal education stimulus programs funded under ARRA.
- Finally, in terms of the proposed hockey program, Dan DeLongchamp, Athletic Director, has been meeting with other communities and will be attending a Coaches meeting in two weeks. One important consideration, especially in light of current economic situation, is the cost and fee structure for this program. Charges will likely be based on actual costs. Dan will bring a specific proposal to the Committee following the Coaches meeting in 2 weeks. Thanks to all of the parents for all the information they have provide to Dan and for being so engaged in making this happen.

**Agenda Item 11 – New Business, Agenda Items, Action Items**

- Ms. Mead noted that with respect to the policy passed last year requiring all track students running on the roads to wear brightly colored, reflective vests to increase visibility, there seems to be a gender gap; the girls are seen running with the vests, however the boys are not always wearing them. This observation will be brought up with Mr. DeLongchamp, Athletic Director.
- The budget presentation to the Finance Committee is scheduled for April 13<sup>th</sup>.

**Agenda Item 12 – Adjournment to Executive Session**

At 8:37p.m., Ms. Mead moved and Ms. Zuliani seconded to adjourn to Executive Session, not to return, for the purpose of discussing contract negotiations.

Carried 4/0

Respectfully Submitted,

Carol S. Colena,  
Recording Secretary