

Sutton School Committee
Sutton, Massachusetts 01590

The Sutton School Committee met in Room 1B of the Sutton Municipal Center on Monday, July 13th, 2009.

School Committee Members present at the meeting were Ms. Liisa Locurto, Chairperson, Ms. Tracey Zuliani (at 7:14 p.m.), Vice-chair, Ms. Kristen Feifert Clark, Secretary, and Ms. Wendy Mead.

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

Others present – none present.

Agenda Item 1 – Call to Order – Ms. Locurto called the meeting to order at 7:09 p.m.

Agenda Item 2 – Citizen Forum – no one wished to speak.

Agenda Item 3 – Consent Agenda

Ms. Mead moved and Ms. Feifert Clark seconded to approve the Consent Agenda as presented (the Minutes of the June 15th, 2009 meeting and the Bill Schedule of July 13, 2009).

Carried 3/0

Agenda Item 4 – FY'09 Final Budget Transfers

Ms. Rothermich presented the proposed end-of-year budget transfers. She explained that the \$578,013 FY2009 Federal Stimulus Grant has changed the way districts must spend out local monies at year-end. For Sutton, it means that local and revolving account funds must be expended before the stimulus grant can be applied. The grant is designed to back-fill the reduction in fourth quarter FY2009 Chapter 70 funds. As a result, the year-end budget wrap-up is very different and more complicated than in previous years.

Ms. Mead moved and Ms. Zuliani seconded to allow the budget transfers as presented.

Carried 4/0

Agenda Item 5 – Update on FY2010 State Budget

Ms. Rothermich reported that Chapter 70 funds have been reduced by \$110,000, the Kindergarten Grant has been further reduced by \$10,800 and Circuit Breaker 30% reimbursement is now down to \$50,000, leaving a total potential gap of \$170,800. These numbers are still not final at this time and uncertainty remains; at this time, two weeks into FY2010, the State still does not have a balanced budget. There is a Town budget gap, not just a School budget gap. Within the school budget, there is still an unfilled Assistant Principal position. There is also more money left in the School Choice account than expected. Both places provide some financial flexibility to help fill any budget gaps.

Ms. Rothermich then noted that the school district participated in a collaborative bidding process for several items with the French River Collaborative Center in Oxford, MA. A list of vendors that the Collaborative agreed to award the bids to was presented in a memo.

Ms. Mead moved and Ms. Feifert Clark seconded to award the bids as presented in the memo dated June 15, 2009.

Carried 4/0

Agenda Item 6 – Approve Consultant for Superintendent Search

Ms. Zuliani moved and Ms. Mead seconded to contract with NESDEC as Sutton’s consultant for the superintendent’s search.

Carried 4/0

Agenda Item 7 – Review Policy Manual

The Committee reviewed Sections A and B of the Policy Manual. One more reading of the policies will take place, at which point, they will be officially adopted as policy. The Committee will aim to get through Section G at the upcoming retreat.

Agenda Item 8 – Superintendent’s Update

Dr. Di Bella reported the following:

- The Simonian Center roof project has begun in what is now a very highly restricted construction area; all offices have been moved out of that end of the building. While inconvenient, it must be so and all are encouraged to please honor the restriction when traveling around the area.
- Tomorrow, Senate Bill 780 will be heard, sponsored by Senator Moore and supported by Town Administrator James Smith. This Bill will create a separate water district in West Sutton, which would bring water and sewer to the schools. Passage of this Bill would have an enormous positive impact on the middle school/high school project. Specifically, it would allow the building project to pursue a more aggressive design, less restricted by the current water/well/septic situation. The School Committee is very thankful to Senator Moore for his part and efforts.
- Ms. Emily Shugarman and Colleagues were awarded a grant through the Blackstone Valley Education Foundation in the amount of \$1,800 for the Cedar Swamp Program. These funds will be used to restore trails and highlight wildlife and flora in the cedar swamp behind the schools, which will create an educational opportunity for students as they participate in this program.

Agenda Item 9 – New Business, Agenda Items, Action Items

- Thank you to all of those that responded to the survey (256 parents and 128 staff); the Committee will consider the responses when developing the School Committee’s goals.
- Update on the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA); Dr. Di Bella, Ms. Mead and Mr. Smith (Town Administrator) gave a presentation to the MSBA in Boston today, which was very well received. The School Building Committee will be meeting the Wednesday night with the chance to meet the Owner’s Project Manager (OPM.) The hope is to have the architect on board by the end of August, too. The hiring of the OPM is a crucial, important first step; the school building project is now ‘off and running’, which is very exciting!
- The School Committee summer retreat will take place over two days; July 27th and August 19th from 9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. at the Unibank in Whitinsville.

Agenda Item 10 – Adjournment to Executive Session

At 8:24 pm, Ms. Mead moved and Ms. Zuliani seconded to adjourn to Executive Session for the purpose of discussing contract negotiations, not to return to open session.

Carried 5/0

Respectfully Submitted,

Carol S. Colena,
Recording Secretary