

Sutton School Committee
Sutton, Massachusetts 01590

The Sutton School Committee met in Room 1A of the Sutton Municipal Center on Monday, January 11, 2010.

School Committee Members present at the meeting were Ms. Liisa Locurto, Chairperson, Ms. Kristen Feifert Clark, Secretary, Mr. Paul Brennan and Ms. Tracey Zuliani and Ms. Wendy Mead.

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

Others present

No others present.

Agenda Item 1 – Call to Order

Ms. Locurto called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Agenda Item 2 – Citizen Forum

No one wished to speak.

Agenda Item 3 – Consent Agenda

Mr. Brennan moved and Ms. Fiefert-Clark seconded to approve the Minutes of December 7th and December 14th, 2009 and the Minutes of the December 14th Executive Session, as presented.

Carried 4/1, with Ms. Mead abstaining

Ms. Mead moved and Mr. Brennan seconded to approve the Bill Schedule dated January 11, 2010, as presented.

Carried 5/0

Agenda Item 4 – Student Update

Adam Wright provided an update as follows:

- The High School band concert was held on December 10th and was very well attended.
- Progress Reports were issued on December 11th.
- A chorus concert took place on December 17th and was also well attended.
- On December 22nd, the entire sophomore class attended the play ‘A Christmas Carol’ by Charles Dickens at the Hanover Theater in Worcester.
- The Winter Variety Show was held on December 23rd, featuring performances by both students and staff.
- On January 6th, 2010, the High School hosted the Worcester County Math League. For over two hours, over 250 freshman students from 26 schools in Worcester County participated in this competitive event. Hats off to Mr. Milaszewski and Sue Hebert for organizing this.

- Marks close on January 15th and report cards will be issued on January 22nd.
- The Winter Ball, sponsored by the PTO, is scheduled for Saturday, January 23rd, from 7-11p.m.

Agenda Item 5 – Review Preliminary FY’11 Budget

Ms. Rothermich reviewed the preliminary FY’11 budget, highlighting specific areas of increase, including salaries, which is the largest portion of the budget, special education, transportation, fuel oil, technology and athletics. Information about revenue from the State will not be available until the end of the month. Any questions should be sent to Ms. Rothermich and, if global, will be addressed at the next meeting, on January 25th. The School Budget is due to the Town by January 29th.

Agenda Item 6 – Report on Superintendent Search

The Search Committee held a workshop on January 9th with Dr. Ferris of NESDEC and narrowed the group of thirty candidates to eight. The Committee will be conducting interviews in the upcoming week and expect to narrow the pool further to three to five candidates by the next meeting on January 25th.

Agenda Item 7 – Update on School Building Project

Two new members have been appointed to the committee, replacing two members who had resigned. Both new members are engineers and well-qualified to contribute to the School Building Committee. The project is moving ahead. The expectation is that Sutton will be on the MSBA’s board meeting agenda at their next meeting in January in which Sutton hopes to receive approval to move ahead to schematic design, enabling Sutton stay on the proposed time schedule, bringing this to town meeting in May. All pertinent information regarding the school building project can be found on the website (http://www.suttonma.org/Pages/SuttonMA_BComm/schoolbuild), which can be accessed either directly or through the <http://www.suttonschools.net/> website. Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month and all members of the community are encouraged to follow the project and ask questions.

Agenda Item 8 – Update on School Committee Goals

- Hire new superintendent – see Agenda Item #6
- Redefine indicators of success developed by the District Learning Team – the DLT has not met and there are some questions about how much refinement is desired. Dr. Di Bella will meet with Ms. Zuliani and Ms. Locurto and will report back to the Committee.
- Signed contracts with the Sutton Teachers Association and Sutton Educational Support Association – there has been one meeting with the president of the teachers’ association.
- Town Meeting Approval of School Building – see Agenda Item #7
- Complete Policy Manual – Dr. Di Bella is working on the final large section after going through each section and working with the appropriate departments to fill any holes that existed over the last two years. This project is very close to completion.
- Communications – there are some technical difficulties that are thwarting efforts to disseminate mass email communications. Ms. Feifert-Clark will work with Mr. Brennan to resolve this as soon as possible.

Agenda Item 9 – Update on Subcommittees

Updates related to this Agenda Item have been covered earlier in the meeting; all members continue to attend their meetings.

Agenda Item 10 – Superintendent’s Update

Dr. Di Bella offered the following:

- Congratulations to Coleen Motyl-Szary, High School Spanish teacher who won the Spanish Embassy Award through the Massachusetts Association of Foreign Languages; she won the grand prize in this state-wide competition – a trip to Spain. This is a big honor!
- The Math Competition, mentioned earlier under Agenda Item #4, was fantastic.
- Ms. Rothermich, Dr. Di Bella and other School Committee members attended Mr. Reville's, Massachusetts' Secretary of Education's budget forum on December 9th. Mr. Reville outlined budget issues related to FY2011. The budget is 3 billion dollars out of balance, which will make next year a real challenge for everyone. Maintaining current programs and services is becoming more and more difficult without a new revenue source.
- A public 'thank you' to Pam and Ray Nichols for all of the public access work that they have done; they are truly champions for the schools.
- There is a lot going on in terms of the curriculum and Ms. Dileo will give an update to the Committee soon. In particular, along with the Virtual High School (VHS), the middle school now participates in a Virtual Middle School (VMS). In mid-December, there was a celebration for the first students in the VMS class who did very, very well.
- There is also a lot going on in technology; there have been both service and equipment upgrades which have been very well received. The technology team will also be invited to give an update to the Committee, following the budget meetings.

Agenda Item 11 – New Business, Agenda Items, Action Items – nothing at this time.

Agenda Item 12 – Adjournment to Executive Session

At 8:05 p.m., Ms. Mead moved and Ms. Zuliani seconded to adjourn to Executive Session for the purpose of discussing personnel issues, not to return to open session.

Carried 5/0

Respectfully Submitted,

Carol S. Colena,
Recording Secretary