

Sutton School Committee
Sutton, Massachusetts 01590

The Sutton School Committee met in Room 1A of the Sutton Municipal Center on Monday, March 22, 2010.

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

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

Others present – Mr. Ted Friend, the new Superintendent of Sutton Public Schools, Ms. Motyl-Szary and Ms. Haghdoost, High School Spanish teachers, Mr. Delongchamp, Athletic Program Director.

Agenda Item 1 – Call to Order

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

Agenda Item 2 – Adjournment to Executive Session

Ms. Mead moved and Ms. Feifert Clark seconded to adjourn to Executive Session for the purpose of discussing contract negotiations with the intent to return to open session.

Carried 5/0

Agenda Item 3 – Return to Open Session

At 7:07 p.m. the Committee returned to open session.

Agenda Item 5 – Approve Contract for New Superintendent

Ms. Mead moved and Ms. Feifert Clark seconded to approve the contract for Mr. Ted Friend as the new Superintendent of Sutton Public Schools, as presented.

Carried 5/0

Agenda Item 7 – Consent Agenda

Ms. Mead moved and Ms. Feifert Clark seconded to approve the Minutes of the March 1, 2010 meeting as amended with the correct date, as well as the removal of the duplicate entry on the Bill Schedule of March 22, 2010.

Carried 3/2, with Ms. Zuliani and
Mr. Brennan abstaining

Agenda Item 12 – Update on Building Project

A meeting took place last week in Boston with the MSBA, which Ms. Mead, the OPM and one of the architects attended. Sutton is confirmed to be one of the few districts that are on the MSBA's upcoming board meeting agenda on March 31st. With the MSBA's vote on March 31st, Sutton will receive final approval of the project's gross number of square feet, the gross and net cost, as well as the building schedule as Sutton proposes it, with the phasing. Representative Jennifer Callahan and a representative from Senator Richard Moore's Office, who have stepped in on Sutton's behalf on this project, attended the meeting as well. The Sutton team successfully negotiated for an additional 7,000 square feet in the project which will be included in the state supported portion of the building. With an anticipated reimbursement rate of about 55%, this development translates to a savings to the Town of approximately \$1 million. The goal is to keep the Town's portion to at or below \$30 million, which is a building project of about \$62-64 million. The OPM and architects are working very hard to find cost-savings measures in the project (i.e. flooring materials, window treatments), to cap the project; once the MSBA commits to a total project cost the Town will be responsible for any cost overruns. The project remains on track to go to a vote at Town Meeting in May and a ballot later that month, and, if approved, break ground next March, 2011. Public forums will be held on the last Thursday of this month and April in the Middle School auditorium. The Town Administrator as well as the OPM and school administrators will be on hand. Tours will be available for anyone interested.

Agenda Item 13 – Superintendent's Update

Dr. Di Bella offered the following:

- Congratulations to Merrielle Ondreicka a senior at Sutton High School; she is being honored by the Massachusetts State Track Coaches Association. She will be winning the Frank Kelley Adversity Award which is given once each year to athletes who exceed expectations and overcome some significant adversity in their career. Sutton is very, very proud.
- MCAS season begins this week, some as early as tomorrow. Students should feel confident that they have been well prepared and should get a good night's sleep to be well-rested and, of course, a good breakfast!
- Congratulations to, among other people, Emily Shugarman and her team, for presentation of the Middle School play, The Comic Book Artist, which was performed the weekend before last. They were great productions. The drama program been a wonderful experience for all of the students involved in the three years since it has been reintroduced.
- Thank you to the Sutton Educational Foundation Trust; the recent dinner dance a Pleasant Valley Country Club was a lovely event. Particular thanks are due to Sandy Burke, who chaired the event, and to Karen Vallero and Pam Wright, from the steering committee, and many thanks to Sue Howard Chair of SEFT and the rest of the officers for all of the work that they do throughout the year, providing support to the teachers and their special projects in the schools.
- As a follow-up to an issue raised recently at the Finance Committee meeting regarding per pupil expenditures for both the Sutton Public Schools and the Blackstone Valley Technical High School, Dr. Di Bella distributed and reviewed data from each school. Certified per pupil expenditure data for all school districts in the state can be found on the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education website, in the School Finance section. For clarification, the FY 2009 'Out-of-District FTE Average Membership' of 39.1 for Sutton does not mean that 39 students are going out of district on private special education placement, rather the number includes home-school students. Most importantly, are the numbers depicting Sutton's per-pupil expenditure of \$10,234 and the state average expenditure per pupil of \$13,060; Sutton clearly spends far less in all major categories than either BVT (at \$16,590 per student), which is higher than the state average, and the state average per

- pupil. Sutton continues to be a very lean organization, with excellent return on investment to Sutton students, parents and citizens.

Agenda Item 14 – New Business, Agenda items, Action Items

- The School Committee's annual summer retreat will be held on Tuesday, July 20, 2010. It is possible that a second date will be scheduled at a future date.
- Survey Monkey questionnaires should be developed soon, with a goal of a May survey.

Agenda Item 10 – Discuss Trip to Costa Rica

Ms. Motyl-Szary and Ms. Haghdoost, Sutton High School Spanish teachers presented their proposed 2011 student trip to Costa Rica.

Ms. Mead moved and Mr. Brennan seconded to approve the student trip to Costa Rica as presented.

Carried 5/0

Agenda Item 4 – Conduct Budget Forum

Ms. Rothermich conducted a line item review of the proposed FY2011 budget, which is a maintenance budget; seeking to maintain the current faculty, services and class sizes. It includes two new positions; an aid, which is directly tied to a special education student, and a Technology Director. Even with a level-funded, maintenance budget, there is an increase of \$797,723 in the FY2011 budget. This is likely not a fundable budget and the administration continues to work to find reductions.

Agenda Item 6 – Citizen Forum

No one wished to speak.

Agenda Item 9 – Introduction of MASC Student President

Dr. Di Bella introduced Cody Reinhold, the first Sutton High School student to be elected president of the State Student Council. This is a great honor, which the district is very proud of! Cody noted that he will be representing Sutton and the State of Massachusetts at the state and national level through his senior year, 2010-11. His focus is on increasing communication between districts and towns and to build inter-school communication networks to confront issues that high school students are facing.

Agenda Item 8 – Student Update

Dan Sylvia presented the following:

- Progress reports were distributed on March 5th.
- The 'Fire and Ice' dance took place on March 19th at the high school.
- Spring sports recently began; tennis, baseball, softball, and track and field.
- Third quarter grades close on April 1st, with report cards going out on April 9th.
- April 6th is college planning night for the juniors, in the high school auditorium at 6:30 p.m.
- There will be a band concert on May 13th at the high school.
- On May 20th, there will be a chorus concert.
- The Junior/Senior Prom will take place on May 14th at the Crown Plaza Hotel in Worcester.
- Graduation is on June 4th.

Agenda Item 11 – Update on the Athletic Program

Mr. DeLongchamp provided an update on the athletic program. It is an active and successful program, with participation from grades 7 – 12. Overall, approximately over 40% of the high school students participate in at least one varsity sport.

Agenda Item 15 – Adjournment to Executive Session

At 8:27 p.m., Ms. Mead moved and Ms. Feifert Clark seconded to adjourn to Executive Session for the purpose of discussing collective bargaining and negotiations and not return to open session.

Carried 5/0

Respectfully Submitted,

Carol S. Colena,
Recording Secretary