

**REGULAR SESSION MINUTES  
APRIL 10, 2007**

A meeting of the Swampscott School Committee was held in the Jennie M. McVey Memorial Library at Swampscott High School commencing at 7:15 with the following members present: Ms. Mary DeChillo, Mr. David Whelan, Ms. Paula Bonazzoli, Mr. Dan Yaeger, Ms. Shelley Sackett, Chairman Presiding. Also Present: Matthew Malone, PhD., Superintendent of Schools, Nick Stratouly, Student Representative.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mr. Brian Watson stated that he felt that it would be wise to keep jurisdiction of the Greenwood Avenue building when the Middle School students were moved to Forest Avenue. He stated that it would allow the flexibility to have swing space if needed while the Master Plan was being implemented.

Ms. Cynthia Shannon asked the School Committee to revisit the Shannon/Rotner Plan. Ms. Shannon reviewed the Shannon/Rotner Plan again for the community and the School Committee. She asked that people put aside their personal feelings.

**COMMITTEE COMMENT**

Mr. David Whelan expressed his disappointment in the Chapter 70 allotment from the state. He stated that he felt there was a lot of work still to be done with Senator McGee and Representative Petersen and that \$139,000 was not what we deserved.

Ms. Mary DeChillo stated that after six years on the School Committee this would be her last meeting. She stated that none of the public officials have all the answers but that she was encouraged to see all the people coming out to these meetings. Ms. DeChillo thanked her colleagues and Dr. Malone.

Mr. Dan Yaeger stated his appreciation to Dr. Malone for getting the line item budget done. He said he looked forward to going through it.

Ms. Shelley Sackett thanked Ms. DeChillo for her help and leadership over the last six years. Ms Sackett expressed her disappointment that the School Committee and Selectmen's race were both uncontested races.

**PUBLIC HEARING ON SCHOOL CHOICE SY 2007-2008**

Ms. Sackett explained that School Choice was where Swampscott would agree to accept students from other towns and agree that Swampscott would send students to other towns.

**Motion:** It was moved by Ms. DeChillo and seconded by Mr. Whelan to open the Public Hearing on School Choice. The motion was passed unanimously.

**Motion:** It was moved by Ms. DeChillo and seconded by Ms. Bonazzoli to decline Swampscott's participation in School Choice for the 2007/2008 school year and to notify the Department of Education of the decision. The motion was passed unanimously.

**Motion:** It was moved by Ms. DeChillo and seconded by Ms. Bonazzoli to close the Public Hearing on School Choice. The motion was passed unanimously.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

**Motion:** It was moved by Mr. Whelan and seconded by Ms. DeChillo to accept the Regular Session Minutes of March 29, 2007. The motion was passed unanimously.

### **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

#### **BUDGET 08 – LINE ITEM BUDGET**

Dr. Malone introduced Dr. Garry Murphy and stated that he now has three Murphy's on his administrative team. He stated that Dr. Murphy is the former Superintendent of the Triton Regional School System. Dr. Malone stated that Dr. Murphy was working with him as a consultant to help produce the line item budget. Dr. Malone stated that for the past eight days Dr. Murphy and Ms. Joanne van der Burg had completed a "Herculean" task by producing the line item budget using the actual 06 figures, the budgeted 07 figures and the proposed 08 figures. Dr. Malone stated that the goal is to reduce as few as possible positions that we can given the money that we have.

Dr. Malone referenced the meeting that he had at Machon. He stated he appreciated the open and honest discussions that he had at this meeting. He stated that since the vote of March 29<sup>th</sup> many other plans have surfaced but that there were two specific plans that he wanted to outline to the School Committee that are problematic in their consideration. Dr. Malone stated that the first one was not opening the new high school. He stated the School Department has an obligation to maintain the systems in order for warranties to remain in effect. He stated the warranties imply that the building has to be occupied. Dr. Malone stated that mathematically it does not make sense to not open the school.

The second plan that Dr. Malone addressed is the Shannon/Rotner Plan. Dr. Malone stated that he had vetted the plan internally. Dr. Malone stated that the class size would still average about 25 and that it violates special education rules. Dr. Malone also stated that there would be too many transitions with the plan.

## **PLAN “A”**

Dr. Malone stated that with the recommendation that was made by Fincom, (not enough money to do Plan B, the plan that the School Committee had voted on last week) he was submitting to the School Committee Plan A Plus. Dr. Malone distributed Plan A Plus to the Committee Members and the audience. Dr. Malone went over in detail Plan A Plus. He stated the intent of the Plan would be to:

- \*Reduce class size at the early elementary school levels while providing us the opportunity to pilot a 5-8 implementation.
- \*Close Machon School in June of 2007
- \*Redistrict the elementary school students into three elementary schools.
- \*Re-hire three teachers at the early elementary levels.

Dr. Malone stated that this would allow him to the best of his ability to keep the 5<sup>th</sup> graders from the Machon School together. He stated that the goal is to cause the least disruption as possible. Dr. Malone stated that he would like the School Committee to look at Plan A Plus as a viable plan.

A lengthy question and answer period ensued.

**Motion:** It was moved by Ms. Bonazzoli that because the Finance Committee did not approve funding for Plan B that the School Committee recommends supporting Plan A Plus as outlined by Dr. Malone.

There was no second to the motion. Ms. Sackett stated there could be no discussion without a second.

**Motion (continued):** Mr. Whelan stated that he would second the motion for the purpose discussion.

After Mr. Whelan seconded the motion the audience showed its appreciation by clapping. Ms. Sackett thanked Mr. Whelan for seconding the motion and stated that because it had been seconded, it could be voted on.

Mr. Whelan stated that he was a realist. He stated that he knows we do not have the money for Plan B. He stated that he liked Plan A Plus and did not have a problem with it but he did not want to vote for it tonight. He stated that he would prefer to vote on Thursday evening so people could look through the information that they had received this evening.

There was a discussion between the School Committee members and Dr. Malone about what exactly they would be voting on, the time constraints they were under and what would happen at town meeting and how that would affect the voting for the different plans that have been presented to the School Committee.

There was a discussion about amending the motion and the procedure to amend a motion. The Committee members discussed Dr. Malone's need to go forward for parents and School Department employees.

**MOTION:** It was moved by Ms. Bonazzoli to amend the motion. There was no second to the motion to amend.

The School Committee members discussed at length whether or not the budget and Plan A Plus are tied together or if they can be divorced from one another.

Dr. Malone stated that if it is the School Committee's desire to wait for two days, he would like them to vote on Thursday.

**Motion:** It was moved by Mr. Yaeger and seconded by Mr. Whelan to table the motion and postpone voting until Thursday. Mr. Yaeger – yes; Mr. Whelan – yes; Ms. DeChillo – yes; Ms. Bonazzoli – opposed; Ms. Sackett – opposed. The motion passed 3-2.

**Motion:** It was moved by Ms. Bonazzoli and seconded by Mr. Whelan to open the Public Hearing on the Budget. The motion was passed unanimously.

Mr. Neil Bernstein asked if it was possible to get an electronic version of the budget. Dr. Malone stated that they were going to work on it, maybe by tomorrow. Mr. Bernstein asked if it was going to be a spreadsheet. Dr. Malone said it would be a spreadsheet. Mr. Bernstein said he would appreciate a concise comparison like last years. He stated he was hoping to be able to compare apples to apples.

Mr. Richard Kane questioned the budget format.

Ms. Leah Ryan asked about the increase in the administrative expenses. She asked if the new alternative school is still in the budget.

Ms. Emily Cilley asked about the process of letting teachers go. She asked if the most junior people were automatically let go. Dr. Malone stated that it was based on seniority and certification in content area.

Mr. Allen Abrams asked if on Thursday the budget was going to be broken down more granularly. Dr. Murphy stated that there would be another publication on Thursday.

**Motion:** It was moved by Ms. Bonazzoli and seconded by Mr. Yeager to close the Public Hearing. The motion was passed unanimously.

## **EXTENDED DAY-REQUEST FOR RATE INCREASE**

Dr. Malone stated that Ms. Clain and Ms. Morse were requesting a rate increase in the Extended Day Program due to increased cost to the program. There was a discussion between the School Committee and Dr. Malone about consolidating the Extended Day Programs within the town and what costs of the program had increased. The Committee decided to continue the discussion on Extended Day on Thursday evening to allow time to get more information about the program.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**Motion:** It was moved by Ms. Bonazzoli and seconded by Mr. Whelan that June 20, 2007, would be the last day of school. The motion was passed unanimously.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

Dr. Malone stated that he was providing the School Committee with a memo from the Chelmsford School Committee looking for members of the Swampscott School Committee to join them and 35 other towns in this Commonwealth who would like to restore equitable funding under Chapter 70 across the system.

## **HEARINGS**

**Motion:** It was moved by Ms. DeChillo and seconded by Mr. Whelan and unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting and go into Executive Session pursuant to MGL Chapter 39, Section 23(b). Ms. DeChillo – Yes. Mr. Whelan – Yes. Mr. Yeager – Yes. Ms. Bonazzoli – Yes. Ms. Sackett – Yes.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion:** At 9:42 p.m. it was moved by Ms. Bonazzoli and seconded by Mr. Whelan to adjourn the meeting. The motion was passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew M. Malone, Ph.D.  
Superintendent of Schools  
/cs