

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (ABRSC) MEETING
Minutes (approved 4/30/15)

Library
R.J. Grey Junior High School

March 30, 2015
7:00 p.m.

Members Present: Brigid Bieber, Mary Brolin, Dennis Bruce, Michael Coppolino, Amy Krishnamurthy, Kathleen Neville, Maria Neyland, Deanne O'Sullivan, Kristina Rychlik

Members Absent: Maya Minkin, Paul Murphy

Others: Marie Altieri, Deborah Bookis, Glenn Brand, Mary Emmons, Clare Jeannotte, Beth Petr

The ABRSC was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Kristina Rychlik, Chairperson.

1. Chairmen's Introduction

Kristina Rychlik thanked Dennis Bruce for his service on the Committee since being appointed in June 2011. Maria Neyland thanked Dennis for the past two years in particular when they were ABRSC and APSC Chairs and regionalization was developed, proposed and approved. She wanted the Acton community to know how well Dennis represented them while serving on the Committee. Dennis thanked everyone and stated that he was leaving not because he didn't want to serve, but due to the time commitment required. He thanked Mike Coppolino and former members Xuan Kong and Kim McOsker for their assistance and Maria Neyland for her tenacity during last year. He appreciated his family's support during his tenure, and Beth Petr's attention to all of the details. Dr. Brand thanked Dennis for his commitment to the community.

2. Approval of Minutes

1. The minutes of the meeting on 3/19/15 were approved.

3. Public Participation - none

4. Special Education Administrator - Legal Requirements

(Mary Emmons left the room for agenda items 4 and 5 as she is a finalist in this search.)

Marie Altieri explained that when the District moved to a PreK-12 region with more than 4,000 students, this position became required per MGL Chapter 71B, Section 3A. The Administration will come back to the School Committee when they are ready to make a recommendation. They do not expect to be adding staff or expense with this decision.

Nancy Sherburne asked Marie to elaborate on how she envisions this position working with the District's current structure. The administration would like to get the Director in place first, then decide on the structure. Nancy stated that the SpedPAC is wondering how this could not have budgetary impact as outlined. They would like to be part of this discussion.

5. Leadership Search Update - Pupil Services Director

Glenn Brand reported that the site visits of the two candidates are complete and they have both spent a day at AB. A public forum was held last week and feedback forms have been collected. Approximately 30 have been received for each candidate. He hopes to make a decision this week.

6. ABRSD FY16 Budget Update

Dr. Brand reported that there is no new information. He thanked Kristina Rychlik for all of her hard work. He appreciates the support of the leaders in both towns. House Budget should be out in the next few weeks.

7. Kindergarten Registration Update

The annual kindergarten registration took place. Currently 268 students are registered and typically about 25 more students arrive between now and September. This is lower than the 315 projected. Marie Altieri reported that they are in the process of shrinking the number of classrooms. A result of cutting a classroom is that there are less siblings at a school when it comes to kindergarten registration. The lottery will be April 15.

8. Acton Town Meeting Prep (begins 4/6/15)

Kristina Rychlik thanked everyone who helped with her budget presentation, specifically Glenn Brand, Marie Altieri, Clare Jeannotte, Melissa Andrew and Tom Blondin. A Family Friendly Movie Night/babysitting is being offered for Acton Town Meeting again sponsored by the Town of Acton, the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District, the League of Women Voters, the ABEA and the local PTOs.

9. Regionalization Financial Oversight Subcommittee Report

Michael Coppolino reported that a final analysis will be done this week regarding the statement the subcommittee is going to make at the Town Meetings. Jim Ham is being replaced by Amy Burke from Boxborough now. Mary Brolin presented the financials and Regionalization Financial Benefits Tracking Working Document. She acknowledged that the FY16 budget is higher than expected, and described it as a change in landscape.

Marie Altieri noted that projections of savings and projections of what the base case to run the district would be were done. The projections of savings were right on target. The base case is different than what was in the projection, due to changes in Chapter 70 funding, OPEB contributions and Middlesex Retirement. These were items that would have changed whether the District regionalized or not. It was also noted that when regionalization was planned, there were half time Assistant Principals in the Acton elementary schools, and last year's budget process increased them to full time positions.

Mary Brolin said that the subcommittee discussed what might happen to the savings that were created. Acton can point to that specific amount as the transfer on Table 6, showing how the assessment decreases.

Emphasizing the importance of monitoring these numbers, Clare Jeannotte noted that it is also mandated by the Regional Agreement and partly by the state. The new chart of accounts should be helpful in this regard. Per pupil costs for each school will need to be assessed at the close of each fiscal year. Mike Coppolino would like to see more cost comparisons with similar communities. Kristina said that Peter Ashton's list could be updated by a small group and it could be a topic for the July School Committee workshop.

10. Subcommittee Updates

1. **Budget** – Kristina reported that they might meet on 4/8 to review the Budget process
2. **Policy** – *Mary Emmons*
 - i. Bullying Prevention and Intervention, File: JICFB – **FIRST READING**
 1. Proposed policy
 2. Current policy

3. Current Plan/Procedures, File: JICFB-R

The proposed policy includes more specific language from the law, as mandated. The Plan also includes more detail with the procedures. Two members asked if there might be a shorter way for parents to read and understand it, perhaps using bullets. Maria Neyland emphasized that the details are required per our attorney. The plan is longer per the State. Their model is meant to be lengthy due to the complicated nature of the topic. This is not a change to our current policy/plan/procedures, but just including more of the detail.

11. School Committee Member Reports

1. A new OPEB Trust Group rep is needed with Dennis leaving the Committee
2. Acton Board of Selectmen – Mike Coppolino reported that Town Meeting was discussed as well as consideration of increasing the CPA from 1.5% to 3% to receive greater reimbursement from the State.
3. Acton-Boxborough SpedPAC – Kathleen Neville reported that next month spedpac reps and the Administration will attend a 3 day workshop by the APPLE leadership institute. Emphasis will be on developing a team action plan.
4. Joint PTO/PTSO/PTF Co-Chairs – Deanne O’Sullivan thanked Glenn for presenting the FY16 budget and his entry plan findings, and Deb Bookis and JD Head who presented on the Playspace proposal.

12. Acton and Boxborough Local Elections

Tomorrow is Acton’s election day. Boxborough elections are May 18.

13. Superintendent’s Report

- MA Association of School Business Officials (MASBO) Review visit was last week. The draft report is expected in about 5 weeks. It will be available to the Committee and the public.
- A “Blended Learning Presentation” was done by author Heather Staker for some of our administrators recently. This hot topic in education involves leveraging technology in support of teaching and learning, using classroom time differently.

15. FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Mary Brolin asked if the Committee would consider moving the next meeting from May 7th to April 30th because Boxborough Town Meeting begins on May 11.

A 6:00 p.m. ABRSC meeting will be posted prior to Acton Town Meeting in case it is needed. Beth will send a confirmation to the Committee that morning.

The ABRSC was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Beth Petr

List of Documents Used: see agenda