

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (ABRSC)
Approved Meeting Minutes

Library
R.J. Grey Junior High School

August 24, 2017
7:00 p.m. Executive Session
7:15 p.m. (approximately) Open Meeting

Members Present: Diane Baum, Brigid Bieber, Mary Brolin, Amy Krishnamurthy, Maya Minkin, Paul Murphy, Kathleen Neville, Deanne O’Sullivan (7:10 p.m.)
Members Absent: Tessa McKinley, Eileen Zhang
Others: Marie Altieri (left at 9:40 p.m.), Dawn Bentley, Deborah Bookis, Bill McAlduff, Dave Verdolino

1. The ABRSC was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairperson Amy Krishnamurthy.

2. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 7:01 p.m. Amy Krishnamurthy moved, Mary Brolin seconded and it was unanimously, **VOTED** by roll call: to convene an executive session under M.G.L. Chapter 30A, section 21 (a) purpose 2, to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel.

(YES: Baum, Bieber, Brolin, Krishnamurthy, Minkin, Murphy, Neville)

Followed by a second reason when

Amy Krishnamurthy moved, Mary Brolin seconded and it was unanimously, **VOTED** by roll call: to convene an executive session under M.G.L. Chapter 30A, section 21 (a) purpose 3, to conduct strategy with respect to litigation. An open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the Board.

(YES: Baum, Bieber, Brolin, Krishnamurthy, Minkin, Murphy, Neville)

The Chair stated that the Committee would return to open meeting at approximately 7:15.

The Committee returned to open meeting at 7:30 p.m.

3. **Chairman’s Introduction**

3.1. The Committee welcomed Mr. Bill McAlduff, ABRSD Interim Superintendent.

4. **Recommendation to Approve Interim Superintendent Contract between William H. McAlduff, Jr. and ABRSD - VOTE (brought to meeting)**

Mary Brolin thanked all involved in bringing Mr. McAlduff to AB. She and Paul Murphy were at the negotiating table. Brigid Bieber helped with the Critical Shortage Waiver and Marie Altieri was very helpful with the entire process. The proposed contract includes an annual salary of \$185,000 prorated to \$156,547 for the period August 28, 2017 through June 30, 2018. Mary reviewed the contract and benefits offered, which she described as fairly standard. She welcomed questions or comments.

Mary Brolin moved, Katie Neville seconded and it was unanimously,

VOTED: to approved the Interim Superintendent Contract between William H. McAlduff and the ABRSD.

5. Superintendent's Introduction

Mr. McAlduff thanked all who welcomed him so warmly to the district. He thanked Marie Altieri in particular for her leadership and extraordinary efforts this summer.

6. Resolution of the Release of Unredacted Executive Session Minutes – Brigid Bieber

The investigation into the release of the unredacted confidential executive session minutes has been concluded. Brigid Bieber read the memo in the packet.

7. Vacancy on the School Committee

7.1. Next Steps

7.2. Unexpired Term Fulfillment Policy, File: BBBE

Since the last meeting, Kristina Rychlik submitted her resignation. Committee members praised Kristina's hard work and dedication to the district. Paul Murphy struggled with understanding the circumstances that led to her resignation and suggested that this be investigated. Brigid Bieber thanked Kristina for her years of dedication to the students and families of the community. Brigid has seldom seen anyone better prepared for meetings or who has had a better understanding of the issues than Kristina. Several members commented that people in the community don't recognize the sacrifices that it takes to work as hard as Kristina has. Brigid stated that it was unfortunate that Kristina felt that she had to resign and she will be greatly missed. Mary Brodin added that she is terribly sad to live in a community that made Kristina feel that she had to resign. The policy for fulfillment of an unexpired term and required memo to the Selectmen were shared. A meeting will be held on September 7th to fill this vacancy per the Press Release.

8. Statement of Warrants & Approval of Minutes

8.1. The Chair read the warrants. They were reviewed and signed by the committee members.

8.2. The minutes of 7/26/17 were approved as written.

9. Public Participation

A member of the public asked if the Committee would consider opening the tutor database to the substitute teachers. It used to be open to anyone, and it was too much, so it has been open only to teachers and a few students. Marie Altieri said they will look into this. There was a question about the Ethics rules and whether people could have two jobs like this.

10. FY18 Staffing Update – Marie Altieri

10.1. New Professional Staff

10.2. Changes in Staff

Marie stated that bringing on new educators is one of the best parts of her job. The list of new staff (32 certified) and their backgrounds is in the packet. Our staff is more mobile than it used to be. Those leaving AB are mostly due to family decisions. Much of the hiring effort happens in April and May. Elementary job openings generate 300-400 applicants per position, down from 700 applicants 5 years ago. Special Education positions are harder to fill with 12-20 applicants and often only 6-8 are fully qualified. English Language Educators (ELE) candidates are also tough to find and the District's need has grown a lot in that area.

11. ABRSD Budget Update – Dave Verdolino

11.1. FY17 Financial Status as of June 30, 2017 – Preliminary & Unaudited
FY18 State Budget Update

- 11.2. ABRSD Financial Reports as of June 30, 2017
 - 11.2.1. Revenue vs Budget
 - 11.2.2. Expenses vs Budget
 - 11.2.3. Special Revenue
 - 11.2.4. Grants
- 11.3. FY18 Budget Matters
- 11.4. Presentation Slides

The Committee welcomed new Finance Director Dave Verdolino to his first School Committee meeting. He acknowledged Clare Jeannotte and the Finance Team for helping with the report. The audit was just completed and no significant findings are expected. The final report is expected in September. The District is in a sound financial position.

12. School Building Committee Update – Mary Brolin, Marie Altieri, Jason Cole

- 12.1. Educational Profile Questionnaire (EPQ) – submitted to MSBA 7/3/17
- 12.2. Online Enrollment Projection – submitted to MSBA 7/3/17
- 12.3. Next Deadline is 10/2/17 for Enrollment/Certification Executed & Maintenance and Capital Planning Information
- 12.4. Special Town Meetings in Acton & Boxborough on 12/4/17
 - 12.4.1. Funding sources
- 12.5. Building Committee Recommendation Regarding Building Option – **First Read**
- 12.6. Timeline and Outreach

Marie Altieri reviewed the memo. Slides will be posted. At this time, the proposed feasibility study will be for a twin school likely on the Gates property with preschool and K-6 on each side. The two options involved whether to include an Early Childhood Center or not in the building but the Building Committee recently voted to not include the Early Childhood Center because it would mean going from 6 school programs to 5. The Building Committee would like the School Committee to vote at their next meeting on September 7 on this decision about only moving forward with one option.

The Building Committee was thanked for meeting over the summer and working so hard to get down to one option for discussion. It will help make it easier to explain to the public heading into the Town Meetings in December for feasibility study and project manager funds. The Committee discussed how the Early Childhood Center was eliminated. Deborah Bookis stated that there was no definitive research on the topic. Teachers supported a Center, however residents did not in the survey that was done. Some members were disappointed but understood the effort that went into making the decision. The Committee will vote on this next month. This information will be shared at the next staff meeting. A significant community outreach process will need to begin that is different from the Building Committee and School Committee efforts. Marie reminded the Committee that there will still be some capital work left to do per the Capital Improvement Plan. Mary Brolin noted that Marie provided extra Enrollment data to MSBA that will be very helpful.

- 12.7. Building Committee Membership Update
 - 12.7.1. Recommendation to Appoint Interim Superintendent Bill McAlduff - **VOTE**
 - 12.7.2. Discussion of Building Committee Chairperson and possible **VOTE**
Paul Murphy moved, Brigid Bieber seconded and it was unanimously,
VOTED: to appoint Interim Superintendent Bill McAlduff to the School Building Committee

Due to Kristina Rychlik's resignation, a new Chair must be voted. Diane Baum asked if the Chair has to be a School Committee member. Mary Brolin said that she would

consider chairing as long as the public does not have an issue with a Boxborough resident chairing the Committee for an Acton building. If this becomes difficult, or an Acton resident would like to chair, Mary would be happy to reconsider. Diane Baum asked Marie Altieri if she would consider chairing as she is very knowledgeable and from Acton. Marie felt that it should be a School Committee or community member, although she and the Superintendent will happily support the committee. They considered whether to wait until a new Acton member is added to the Building Committee. It was suggested that they could have Co-Chairs, one from each town.

Brigid Bieber moved, Deanne O'Sullivan seconded and it was unanimously,

VOTED: to appoint Mary Brolin as the Acting Chair of the Building Committee with gratitude.

13. **Consideration of Stipend for Acting Superintendent – VOTE – Brigid Bieber (Marie Altieri left the meeting.)**

Brigid Bieber proposed that Marie Altieri be given a stipend for the period (39 days) that she served as Interim Superintendent. Ms. Bieber explained that during this 39 day period, Ms. Altieri had taken on the responsibilities of the Superintendency in addition to her existing responsibilities as Deputy Superintendent. It seemed only fair that she should be compensated for this additional work and level of responsibility. Ms. Bieber shared a handout with some comparable salary numbers for members to consider. She looked at the differential between Ms. Altieri's current salary and the superintendent's salary as a discussion starting point. This ranged from \$165 - \$134 a day x 39 work days = \$6,435 - \$6,163. She asked for the Committee's thoughts, given the extensive initiatives and work that Ms. Altieri handled during this period without missing a beat. She noted that this became evident to Brigid when she served as Committee Chair for 2 weeks in August while Amy Krishnamurthy was away. Ms. Bieber expressed regret that the Committee did not offer Ms. Altieri a stipend at the outset when she agreed to serve in this role.

The Committee had an extensive discussion about the appropriateness of a stipend and the amount. All members agreed that Marie had done an extraordinary amount of work all summer, and most initially agreed that compensation was warranted. In response to a question, Bill McAlduff stated that giving compensation in this type of situation is very standard practice in his experience. Marie took on all of the responsibilities of the superintendent, "making hundreds of decisions", as well as continuing all of her Deputy Superintendent responsibilities, for 39 days. It was not for a day or two, such as when a superintendent is out ill or on vacation.

Maya Minkin moved to approve the proposed stipend for Ms. Altieri for the Acting Superintendent position for \$6,435.45. Deanne O'Sullivan seconded the motion.

Paul Murphy said it was too low and moved to amend the proposal to read \$20,000 instead of \$6,000 and change. Katie Neville seconded the amended motion.

Maya felt this was too high and asked Bill McAlduff for advice. He replied that there is no standard formula other than the length of time serving in a role. Brigid Bieber stated that \$8,000 would be 5% of her current salary and \$20,000 sounds high to her for 39 days. \$8,000 - \$10,000 sounded reasonable to her.

The Committee **VOTED** Paul's amendment and it failed with 3.5 in favor (Murphy, Neville) and 12 against (Baum, Krishnamurthy, Minkin, O'Sullivan, Bieber, Brolin).

Mary Brolin moved to amend the amount to \$10,000. This was seconded by Paul Murphy.

After discussion, the Committee **VOTED** the amendment to the motion for \$10,000 and it passed with 8 in favor (Murphy, Krishnamurthy, Neville, Brolin, Bieber) and 7.5 against (O'Sullivan, Baum, Minkin).

The Committee then **VOTED** the amended motion to approve a stipend of \$10,000 and it passed with 8 in favor (Murphy, Krishnamurthy, Neville, Brolin, Bieber) and 7.5 against (O'Sullivan, Baum, Minkin).

14. **Subcommittee Reports** - skipped due to time

14.1. Budget – meeting on 7/19/17 – Brigid Bieber (*oral*)

14.2. Policy

14.2.1. 2016-2017 Policy Subcommittee Summary Report – *Brigid Bieber*

15. **School Committee Member Reports** - skipped due to time

16. **Open Meeting Law Complaints Received by the Committee**

16.1.1. From S. Ballard on 8/10/17 re statement read at 7/26/17 SC meeting

16.1.2. From S. Ballard on 8/10/17 re statement sent by chair

16.1.3. From C. Kadlec on 8/14/17 re statement sent by chair on 7/20/17

Amy Krishnamurthy informed the Committee that 3 Open Meeting Law Complaints were recently received. They have been acknowledged and will be responded to by the deadline.

17. **FYI**

17.1. Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association (MIIA) Rewards Program

17.2. 2017-2018 Subcommittees and Assignments – voted 8/1/17

17.3. Homework Policy IKB – voted 7/11/17

17.4. FY17 Schools Open, Back to School/Open House Dates, FY18 School Calendar

17.5. FY17 Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee Meeting Dates

17.6. Family Financial Assistance Letter

17.7. Open Invitation for the Committee

17.7.1. ABRSD Opening Day for All Staff on August 30th at 8:00 a.m. in the High School Auditorium

The ABRSC adjourned at 10:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Petr

List of Documents Used: List of Warrants, See agenda, Proposed Stipend Handout

Next Meetings:

Staff Opening Day, August 30, 8:00 a.m. in the High School Auditorium

ABRSC, September 7, 7:00 p.m. in the Junior High Library (packet posted Sept 1)

ABRSC, TUES, September 19, 7:00 p.m. in the Junior High Library (packet posted Sept 15)