

**IPSWICH SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING  
TOWN HALL MEETING ROOM A  
JULY 27, 2017**

**OPEN SESSION**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Player called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. with the following persons present; B. Hopping, P. Kneedler, C. Whitten, C. Nylen, H. O'Flynn, N. Zito, Dr. B. Blake, and J. Cuff.

**READING OF DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT**

Mrs. Kneedler read the Mission Statement.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

August 24 – School Committee meeting, 7 p.m., M/HS Ensemble Room

September 4 – Labor Day

“ 5 – First day of school  
Kindergarten orientation

“ 6 - “ “

School Committee meetings:

August 10 – Turner Hill workshop

“ 14 – New teacher orientation

“ 30 – Staff opening at DPAC

“ 31 – All-day teacher workshop

**CITIZEN COMMENTS**

Ms. Player stated that she would hold each speaker to a three-minute time frame for a 30-minute period.

There were nine speakers, five of whom spoke in favor of “one community school at Doyon” and four spoke against. Mr. Champion questioned the omission of the “free cash” option at the June Special Town Meeting. Mrs. Skelton, Fin Com member, reported from the July 24 Fin Com meeting that the vote was 7/0 in favor of the one building for providing the best space, eliminating redundancy of services (special needs and specialists), and providing more playing fields, and then she spoke of her own three children’s success in the Ipswich schools. She said that three quarters of the Town is closer to Doyon than to Winthrop.

**SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

Dr. Blake noted that Colleen Werner, head of the High School Math Department, has been selected to participate in the College Board’s Annual AP Reading in Statistics. The Advanced Placement Program enables willing and academically prepared students to pursue college-level studies (earning college credit, advanced placement, or both) while in high school.

#### A. SUPERINTENDENT'S ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Ms. Player introduced the new Superintendent who has 15 years of

experience as a superintendent and had been chosen as Superintendent of the Year in NH last year.

He thanked the School Committee for their support, stating that he had spent only eight days since his beginning on July 1 actually visiting the schools and Birth to Three, and the YMCA, unpacking and setting up his office, conducting interviews and meetings filling various vacancies in Central Office. He had attended the mandatory sessions in Massachusetts law and a conference as well. He has met with the Ipswich Education Association president, and the sustainability group, and has a lot of work to do with action plans, and things which have been left unattended over the last few years, SPED concerns, and, of course, the building project. He spoke of his entry plan which is a seven-page detailed plan for meeting with and interviewing each of the leaders and people involved in the school system.

Upon Mr. Nylen's urging, he detailed his professional background in school psychology and SPED administration, 24 years in NH of which 15 were as Superintendent, and is a resident of Loudon, NH. His wife is a school administrator and he has two college-age children. He will be staying in Hampton, NH.

### III. SCHOOL COMMITTEE PRESENTATIONS

#### B. REQUEST FOR NONRESIDENT PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL CHILDREN TO ATTEND/SCHOOL CHOICE

Mr. Hopping, Chair of the Policy Subcommittee, presented the request for an application of a non-resident to allow a child to attend whose sibling already attends Ipswich High School. The Policy Committee supports by a 2/1 vote.

Dr. O'Flynn moved, seconded by Mr. Hopping, to allow the child of a non-resident to attend through a Choice slot. IN FAVOR- O'Flynn, Nylen, Kneedler, Whitten, Zito; OPPOSED- Player.

Dr. O'Flynn moved, seconded by Mr. Nylen, to support the application (a late-date unusual circumstance) of a non-resident professional to allow her child to attend kindergarten at Doyon. UNANIMOUS.

#### C. PAYNE GRANTS/RECOMMENDATIONS/VOTE

Bandi Chen, Payne Grant Chair, spoke of the originally submitted Grant which had been sent back for more details. This grant contains professional development opportunities for meeting the District's changes, methods, and new ideas, totaling \$70,655. Dr. O'Flynn explained that, while SC has always supported professional development, one school had applied and the others had not. In discussion, it was noted that hotel expenses at the High School were not included and that additional funds are available in the Feoffee account.

Dr. O'Flynn moved, seconded by Mr. Hopping, to accept the proposed Payne Grant for professional development of \$70,655 with support of an additional amount not to exceed \$5,000 for hotel expenses in the high school allotment of the Grant. UNANIMOUS.

Mr. Chen noted that the SC vote on the Updating Environment for Today's Learning Grant @\$30,000 included the contingency that the update on furniture compliant with MSBA standards and their ties to project-based learning was to have been submitted to the SC in July. Consensus was reached to extend the vote of approval until August 24 for the furniture inventory.

#### D. STAFFING UPDATES – CENTRAL OFFICE

No information was available.

#### E. SPECIAL TOWN MEETING REVIEW

Ms. Player reviewed the June Special Town Meeting as follows: Article I, the binding Article that requested \$250,000 to fund a feasibility study for one single elementary school at Doyon from the Stabilization Fund which failed to meet the 2/3 majority requirement, and Article II, the nonbinding citizen petition that requested reconsideration of a two-school arrangement with a proposed Winthrop building to house 490 students and refurbished Doyon school which passed with an 8-vote majority. Both votes essentially got 50% of the vote.

Reactions from School Committee were forthcoming: Mr. Hopping was very disappointed and he received various reasons in feedback for why people voted against Article I. The 50/50 vote didn't convince him and his position stands for a single elementary school as the best option for the kids and the residents. He feels that it is unfortunate that the in-town location has been blocked.

Dr. O'Flynn focused on the fact that the failed 2/3 majority hinged on the stabilization fund when "free cash" or the school budget might have been successful.

#### F. SCHOOL BUILDING PROJECT – NEXT STEPS

Ms. Player introduced the Perkins Eastman team of Bob and Dan who began with a projection of the grade configuration map following MSBA regulations to make building(s) last another 50 years for Winthrop and Doyon base repairs. They pointed out the height requirements, restrictions because of the old buildings' construction, lack of fire protection, and there would be no change to improvement of educational spaces.

They studied five sites for a new school, eliminating Green Street and Mile Lane almost immediately. They compiled vision and goals, speaking with and listening to educators and 50 representatives from all walks of life in town re what works and what isn't working, studying the 30-page educational program (the State relies on this document and the architect is responsible for meeting these goals). The key educational objectives are: 1. Importance of PreK - 5 grade levels and special education, 2. Small-school feel, 3. Providing organizational flexibility with grade level/house/or mixed/gradeless, 4. Robust arts, STEAM, integration, 5. Supporting co-teaching model, 6. Sustainable education and community, 7. Professional learning community, 8. Specialized/support spaces, and 9. Technology rich/fully integrated.

Slides continued with extensive considerations with three sites, either add/renov or new – "focus that was almost overwhelming" the architect said.

Projected were overlays on a schematic, breaking down the large building so that it becomes neighborhoods, all rooms surrounding large court areas with daylight and ability to move around. Flexible areas include the playground outside the cafeteria and the building intentionally connecting to the landscape and outdoor learning spaces. K and Grade 1 are clustered; the second floor has 6-room clusters for grades 2 and 3, then grades 4 and 5. Further slides showed natural safety and security and examples of flexible learning.

The drawings for Winthrop renovation (K – 5, 775 students) show the existing building with very narrow classrooms/hallways, limiting flexibility, not achieving what could be achieved with new construction. The gym is above the cafeteria exceeding zoning height. Music room is forced to the second floor, not ideal. Efficiency is all lost without the environment, lighting, and open spaces. Another slide showed Doyon renovation for K – 5 with 355 students.

Cost comparisons of options were projected. As start dates change, costs escalate and numbers have to change. There is a big delta on Doyon from 2020 to 2025 and questioning when Ipswich could get back into the MSBA pipeline.

When Mrs. Zito asked if they did new schools or old, the architect's answer was 75% in extensive renovations associated with additions to buildings.

Questions were accepted:

To one of challenges with a large school on the Doyon site, Bob replied that new construction on a separate building would be much less destructive than a "phase occupied" (Winthrop) because of Doyon's larger site.

New construction timeline would be 20-24 months; a reno, 24-26 months.

Base renovations do not meet the educational program. MSBA does have a repair program but it is a whole separate application.

At the Doyon site (775 school), a new gas line would mean more expense.

For the Doyon 775, Mr. Murphy said, Town Meeting would probably be January – March.

Dr. Blake remarked that, having lived through a renovation project in the past, they are a nightmare for the kids. With all the best intentions no matter how much is done to reduce noise, etc., there is considerable disruption.

Mr. McAlpine asked for clarification on costs. Total project costs:

- |                                 |                                    |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| (1) 775 W - \$68 million        | (4) 355 D - \$50 million           |
| (2) 775 D - \$66 million        | (5) Base repair W - \$20 million   |
| (3) 420 W - \$46 million (2025) | (6) Base repair D - \$21.5 million |

Numbers are available online.

Walter Hartford, FinCom member, presented school scenarios run through the "calculator"—whatever is going to be spent divided by the revenue in the Town equals the tax rate. Two examples follow:

1. One community school, Doyon \$66,353,000 w/MSBA help \$ .70 taxrate
  2. 775 add/renov, Winthrop \$60,000,000-100%Town funded 1.19 "
- Other examples are online.

Debt retirement for the M/HS at \$2.5 million will be retired in 2021. The only guarantee with MSBA right now is to renovate Winthrop (not Doyon).

Ms. Player thanked the architectural firm for presenting the information. In discussion, Ms. Player asked for SC member comment on grade configuration, on single school, and on site. On grade configuration, Dr. O'Flynn, Mr. Nylen, Mrs. Zito, and Mr. Whitten gave support for the K – 5 configuration specifically. With the single school, Mr. Nylen, Mrs. Zito, Mrs. Kneedler, Mr. Hopping, Ms. Player, and Dr. O'Flynn gave support specifically, and with the site at Doyon, Mrs. Zito, Mr. Hopping, Mr. Nylen, Dr. O'Flynn, and Ms. Player gave support.

When Mr. Hopping asked if SC should move funds, Ms. Cuff recommended that \$250,000 come out of the appropriated budget, Chapter 70 funds are expected, \$226,000 is available for repurposing and can go into funds for Capital Projects to supplant with Choice funds in the area of technology. Mrs. Skelton, referring to Monday night's FinCom meeting, stated that roll call vote to the question of FinCom support for using appropriated funds for the feasibility study, carried on a 7/1 vote. No decision was made in the discussion of whether FinCom would enter into conversation about all of the \$250,000 in the 2017 budget. Mr. Nylen commented that the FinCom Chair said he would support it.

Dr. Blake said that, as a School Committee, they need to satisfy MSBA's need for a final vote on the next step and the Building Committee needs to do that as well.

Dr. O'Flynn moved, seconded by Mr. Nylen, to support the 775 building at Doyon. Because of questions, Dr. O'Flynn deferred the vote. Mr. Whitten felt the rejection of the 2/3 Stabilization funding at Town Meeting and SC vote funding outside of that is not doing the right thing. While Ms. Player agreed, she felt it would be a bigger tragedy to walk away from the \$550,000 already spent and letting MSBA's funding opportunity go. She supports the School Committee's investing this money for the solution of a big problem in Town. Mrs. Skelton is concerned that many people felt moving money out of the Stabilization Fund was wrong rather than not moving on with Doyon.

Mrs. Zito asked about the likelihood of the project passing with the Town, thinking this was a referendum on Town support. She asked several other questions about the support for \$250,000 and declared that, being fiscally responsible, the SC should take a break, begin anew, and find unexplored possibilities.

Mr. Nylen's opinion was that there is a community, a School Committee, and a School Building Needs Committee who are nearing exhaustion and he can't imagine going through this again. He feels a better sense of momentum now than he has felt in a long time. If there is finally a chance that it may work, they owe themselves to do so, having discovered both the value and the limits of Town Meeting. He feels there is not enough support today but a full campaign is not yet executed, and a way must be figured out to complete the project.

Dr. O'Flynn moved, seconded by Mr. Nylen, to take \$250,000 from the Appropriated budget to do a feasibility study for the 775-school at Doyon. Vote: IN FAVOR- O'Flynn, Nylen, Player, Hopping, Kneedler; OPPOSED- Whitten, Zito.

After a short discussion re the certified vote needed for the district's decision, Mr. Hopping moved, seconded by Dr. O'Flynn, to authorize the School Building Committee to request an extension with MSBA on the 775-school, creating the documents needed to change the site to the Doyon School. Vote: IN FAVOR- O'Flynn, Nylen, Player, Hopping, Kneeder; OPPOSED- Whitten, Zito.

Mr. Nylen spoke of outlining the next phase of work: soliciting ideas, keeping out front with how to proceed, making sure that those who wish to participate have the opportunity to do so while making changes in the process.

#### **IV. SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- A. VOUCHERS/BILLS
- B. SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORTS
  - 1. ATHLETIC SUBCOMMITTEE
  - 2. BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE
  - 3. COMMUNICATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE
  - 4. GRANT SUBCOMMITTEES
    - a. Payne Grant Subcommittee – meeting for final decisions
    - b. Instructional Mini-Grant Subcommittee
  - 5. OPERATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE
  - 6. POLICY SUBCOMMITTEE – met with Gilbert making sure Ipswich is in compliance; legal counsel suggests that future votes on Choice taken by May 1 do not have to declare the grade levels
  - 7. TURF FIELD SUBCOMMITTEE
  - 8. SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE – meeting July 31
  - 9. NEW BUSINESS

#### **V. CONSENT**

##### **A. CONSENT AGENDA**

Ms. Player moved, seconded by Mr. Hopping, to approve the Consent Agenda as follows: Acceptance of School Committee Open Session Minutes of 6/15/17

Acceptance of Tri-Board Minutes of Open Session, 4/26/17

Acceptance of Quad-Board Minutes of Open Session, 5/24/17

Acceptance of reimbursement from Winthrop Fries of \$1,360, to be deposited in Winthrop School Gift account.

UNANIMOUS

#### **VI. ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Hopping moved, seconded by Mr. Nylen, to adjourn at 11:15 p.m.

UNANIMOUS.