

**IPSWICH SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
JULY 21, 2016
MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL ENSEMBLE ROOM**

CALL TO ORDER

Barry Hopping, Senior Member, called the meeting to order at 6:12 p.m. Attending were J. Bauman, C. Whitten, C. Nylen, H. O'Flynn, and S. Player. Dr. Hart was also present.

I. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Ms. Player moved, seconded by Mr. Whitten, to move to Executive Session for the purpose of conducting strategy in preparation for negotiation with non-union personnel and to discuss the deployment of security personnel or devices or strategies with respect thereto. IN FAVOR- Bauman, Whitten, Nylen, Hopping, Player, O'Flynn.

II. OPEN SESSION

CALL TO ORDER

Pro Temp Chair Hopping called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m. Attending were C. Whitten, J. Bauman, C. Nylen, S. Player, and H. O'Flynn. Also present was Superintendent Hart.

REORGANIZATION OF CHAIR, VICE CHAIR, AND SECRETARY

Mr. Hopping accepted nominations for Chair of the School Committee. Mr. Hopping nominated Carl Nylen, seconded by Dr. O'Flynn. There being no other nominations, the vote was UNANIMOUS IN FAVOR.

Mr. Hopping nominated Sarah Player as Vice Chair, seconded by Dr. O'Flynn. There being no other nominations, the vote was UNANIMOUS IN FAVOR.

Mr. Hopping nominated William Hart as Secretary, seconded by Mrs. Bauman. UNANIMOUS. Dr. Hart then delegated Jean Emerson as the SC secretary, accepted by her.

READING OF DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT

Mrs. Bauman read the Mission Statement.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

August 3 – School Building Committee, 7 p.m., Town Hall

August 4 – School Committee, 7 p.m., M/HS Ensemble Room

Mr. Nylen introduced Dr. Hart who read the following letter to the School Committee:

July 21, 2016

Dear Ipswich School Committee,

It is with mixed emotions that I announce I will not be seeking an extension of my contract after June 30th, 2017. I am resigning from my position as Ipswich Public Schools Superintendent effective June 30th, 2017. It has been and, will continue to be, a great honor to serve as Ipswich Public School Department Superintendent of Schools. We have worked effectively as a team to put systems in place that will ensure continuous improvement in our district for the next several years. I am proud that we have solved our significant budgetary issues, developed a clear district vision, created a model curriculum development process, implemented a world-class technology integration system, addressed significant facilities deficiencies, improved the athletic program and created a system for on-going and embedded professional development. The work has continued at an exhausting pace for three years but, the tangible results are worth the effort and it is time for a fresh perspective on the next phase of growth for Ipswich.

In July 2013, when I accepted the Ipswich Superintendent position, the school system was in significant financial distress. Out of necessity, the school department depleted School Choice and Circuit Breaker Funds to avoid painful school budget cuts that would have included valuable personnel. As a team, we developed a comprehensive five year financial plan that was reasonable for local tax payers and ensured continuity in educational programming for several years. Our financial plan eventually won Finance Committee, Board of Selectman and ultimately local voter support after a grueling two year Proposition 2 ½ campaign. The successful Override's positive impact can be seen in every school and every classroom in the district.

Early in my tenure, I heard from school community members that the district lack a clear Educational Vision. Our work together to create and promote a strong District Vision included input from hundreds of school community stakeholders. We can all take pride in our new 21st Century vision which includes rigorous State Standards and Successful Habits of Mind supported by defined Powerful Learning, STEAM integration, Project-Based Learning and aggressive technology integration. Now, Ipswich Public Schools has a clearly defined path for student success.

Three years ago teachers identified curriculum development as a significant deficiency in the district. Subject Area Committees, according to staff, had out lived their effectiveness and curriculum aligned with new State Standards was a real problem. This issue was seen as particularly troublesome at the elementary level. Now the district has a clear curriculum development and review process we call Learning Cycles. Teachers are building 21st Century Curriculum that balances the Massachusetts Common Core Curriculum with our locally developed Successful Habits of Mind. Teachers have a specific peer review curriculum development process that ensures curriculum is vetted against best practice. Our two elementary schools regularly collaborate on curriculum resulting in common curriculum units and associated assessments. Two years ago, we launched an end of year public sharing of curriculum we call Curriculum Celebrations. Our Curriculum Celebrations are a tangible representation of the district's commitment to building a 21st Century curriculum within a professionally collaborative and reflective culture.

Today it is difficult to find a classroom in the district that is not effectively integrating technology into the learning process. This current reality is in stark contrast to the state of technology in the district just three short years ago. Leveraging Feoffee Funds, hiring a talented Director of Technology and introducing Technology Specialist teacher leader positions has transformed the role technology plays in student education in Ipswich. Together we have rebuilt our technology infrastructure and introduced over six hundred thousand dollars in technology tools. Our new technology teacher leader positions have supplied district teachers with on-going and embedded technology integration professional development. These systemic changes in combination have positioned Ipswich Public Schools to be a regional leader in technology integration.

Persistent budgetary challenges forced the district to forgo needed school building maintenance and repair issues for years. Three years ago our school buildings had significant systems and cosmetic problems. Our investment in a NESDEC comprehensive building maintenance audit

continues to inform decision-making in this area. Our work together has successfully secured State funding for a new elementary building to educate all Ipswich children. Over the past three years we have increasingly invested in building maintenance and repair district-wide. We have replaced boilers, carpeted classrooms, painted walls, fixed bathrooms, repaired roofs and much more. As a team, we have ensured that School buildings, the Ipswich Community's largest town asset, are well maintained.

Ipswich Athletic Department, long known for strong competitive program, was struggling three years ago. Sports teams, especially boys, were not meeting with significant success. There were questions about coaching and recruitment spawned by lack of success. Athletic facilities were in disrepair and considered by many to be subpar to other regional schools. Our three year focus on Ipswich Athletics has led to a significant program turn around. Our teams are meeting with greater success, facilities are significantly upgraded, uniforms are new and coaches are supported by the community.

Finally, the work we have done as a district to build systemic adult collaboration through Professional Learning Communities is what will support uninterrupted educational innovation for years to come. It is rewarding that teachers across the district are using structured professional dialog Protocols to collaborate with colleagues and openly share their work. Our reflective professional culture is having a positive impact on curriculum development, instructional methods and assessment practices. Teachers are increasing intellectual rigor at a rapid pace through Project-based Learning and technology integration. Professionally collaborative school communities are the lifeblood of highly effective school districts. Ipswich Public School Department is quickly becoming a leader in systemic professional collaboration.

Undoubtedly, Ipswich Public School Department is on a clear path to become a regional and state leader in education. We can all take great pride in our collaborative work to bring a systemic school improvement plan to fruition. I am confident that I will leave Ipswich Public Schools in June 2017 well positioned for the future. Unfortunately, I have concluded I am not a good long-term match for Ipswich due to differing leadership philosophies. I am committed to work with the Ipswich School Committee in any capacity to secure the best School Superintendent to continue our work. I want to thank the Ipswich Community for affording me the privilege to serve as your Superintendent.

Sincerely,
Dr. William I. Hart
Superintendent

Mr. Nylen followed up with prospects of the year of service yet to come, a thank-you from the Committee and the community at large for all the achievements mentioned in the letter. With a shared decision, the Board looks forward to continue to have a productive year. Dr. Hart confirmed that he is excited about this coming year, launching professional development. He was complimented on his professionalism.

Dr. O'Flynn thanked him for his outstanding work and his fully articulated vision so that achievements are now successes.

Ms. Player moved, seconded by Mrs. Bauman, to thank the Superintendent for his service and accept the letter of resignation, effective 6/30/17. UNANIMOUS.

A. SUPERINTENDENT'S ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Dr. Hart reported on summer project work where four district-wide professional opportunities for faculty are allowing 90 teachers to participate.

Survey results show that the faculty has a clear vision for the district, crediting curriculum development, technology, and Professional Learning Communities. Summer building maintenance is ongoing—the installation of the PAC Chiller, carpeting, painting, and HVAC at the M/HS.

Technology conference in Denver was such a success that there is intent to have the attendees present in early October at a School Committee meeting.

Dr. Hart will get back to the SC re electrical circuits and Choice slots taken by incoming students.

III. SCHOOL COMMITTEE PRESENTATIONS

B. TURF FIELD PLAN AND POLICY

Mr. Hopping reviewed the final copy of the Handbook for Use of Synthetic Turf Field. The Memo of Agreement is already in place. Ms. Player moved, seconded by Dr. O'Flynn, to adopt the policy in principal subject to the proposed changes by the Youth Groups. Dr. O'Flynn asked and Mr. Hopping was amenable to including a clause to welcome future youth groups. Mr. Nysten suggested the mention of borrowed equipment. Mr. Nysten and Ms. Player thanked Mr. Hopping for working on this. UNANIMOUS.

Dr. Hart reviewed the Institute for Savings Athletics Complex and Athletic Facilities Management and Maintenance document. Management, Maintenance, Athletics Complex Scheduler, Events Manager, and Marketing were reviewed. Dr. Hart spoke of a significant increase in the Athletic Director's duties. In maintenance, there is still advocacy for custodial support (half-time for the turf field) under the Director of Facilities, the Director of Finance/Operations, and the Athletic Director.

A Complex Scheduler will be working with the AD, initially ten hours/week to be paid from the Complex proceeds. The Events Manager could be from the staff, the go-to person, who would be paid out of proceeds. In marketing, Dr. Hart suggested hiring a firm to get this started to create a plan to promote the Complex; Ms. Player asked if that firm could also market the IPAC. Kevin Murphy offered a contracting solution where maintenance would be under contract citing examples where 5-year-old turf fields look brand new and others show considerable wear and tear.

Mr. Hopping moved, seconded by Ms. Player, to support the Management Plan and associated plans for the care of the turf field. Mr. Nysten asked how quickly a marketing plan could be accomplished; Dr. Hart will reach out to the Athletic Director. UNANIMOUS.

C. SCHOOL BUILDING UPDATE

Mr. Nysten gave the update that Bialek property does not have to go through a process with the State legislature, must be approved by the Board of Selectmen, and then a Town meeting vote taken from the municipal side to the schools at Fall Town Meeting. Transfers would make the Winthrop site provisional for a public safety complex. Work is progressing with MSBA. The architect seems very impressed.

Meanwhile, architects are “stacking” in Winthrop schematics, putting a gym on top. Mr. Nylen wondered why work continues on plans at the Winthrop site. Mr. Murphy feels that at the end of August a consideration of the program costs of the two sites should be developed to determine if Winthrop is wholly dead as a site. SBC has three meetings in August inviting neighbors of the Winthrop and Bialek sites.

Mrs. Wolters of Maple Avenue, Chair of the Against Bialek Park group, stating that she feels that a deficit to the Town would be to lose green space (at Bialek), asked that other sites be investigated. Mr. Nylen commented that, SBC and SC are very sensitive to the wants of others and not looking at a choice between a school or a park. The playground and two baseball areas would remain at Bialek. Working group meets on Wednesday night, July 26.

D. POLICY – MASC POLICY SERVICES

Ms. Player presented the MASC Policy Services options. After discussion, Mr. Whitten moved, friendly amendment made by Dr. O’Flynn to spend the money while the schools are not in a deficit, and seconded by Ms. Player, to overhaul the full policy manual for \$10,500 including a conversion to an online policy manual with link to the district’s website and an additional annual fee of \$950 for continued management of the online manual. IN FAVOR- O’Flynn, Player, Nylen, Whitten, Bauman (Hopping absent).

E. SUPERINTENDENT’S EVALUATION

Mr. Nylen remarked that, given the Superintendent’s previous announcement, consistent goal setting with a traditional goal-setting workshop with the SC and Sup’t would be in order. After discussion, August 30, 5-9 p.m., at a destination to be announced was chosen.

IV. SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. VOUCHERS AND BILLS

B. SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. ATHLETIC SUBCOMMITTEE

2. BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE – Mr. Nylen reported that they had just had a meeting with J. Cuff. FY16 has ended with a \$0 balance and the outlook is positive for FY17. A plan for regular reports to the SC, monthly budget meetings with input from SC, and an agenda item at SC meetings were discussed.

3. COMMUNICATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

4. GRANT COMMITTEES – Ms. Cuff was wondering how accounting for ongoing maintenance with grant monies is going; Mrs. Bauman commented that it needs a higher level discussion.

5. OPERATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

6. POLICY SUBCOMMITTEE - Meeting on August 2

- 7. TURF FIELD – Meeting on July 25 on scoreboard and equipment
- 8. SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE

9. NEW BUSINESS – Ms. Player questioned staffing for the new year, and Dr. Hart distributed a sheet in that regard. Mr. Hopping questioned the number of retirements.

IV. CONSENT

Mr. Nylen moved, seconded by Mr. Whitten, to approve the following Consent Agenda items:

Acceptance of Open Session Minutes of June 16, 2016

Acceptance of Tri-Board Minutes of April 13, 2016, and accepted by the Finance Committee on June 14, 2016.

Acceptance of Tri-Board Minutes of April 28, 2016, and accepted by the Finance Committee on June 14, 2016.

Acceptance of donation of \$5,000 from NE Biolabs to Birth to Three to fund summer staffing, storage costs, and programming.

Acceptance of the 2016 Feoffee distribution in the amount of \$716,204.

UNANIMOUS.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Hopping moved, seconded by Ms. Player, to adjourn at 9:30 p.m.
UNANIMOUS.