

IPSWICH SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING  
**THURSDAY, MAY 2, 2019**  
**7:00 PM**  
**MS/HS Ensemble Room, 134 High Street, Ipswich**

**MINUTES**

<b>I. OPEN SESSION</b>
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**CALL TO ORDER**

Ms. Player called the meeting to order at 7:09PM

Committee Members Present: Ms. Player, Chair; Mr. Hopping, Mr. Whitten, Mr. Nylen, Ms. Kneedler, Ms. Kneedler and Dr. O'Flynn

Also Present: Dr. Brian Blake, Superintendent of Schools; Joanne Cuff, Director of Finance and Operations

**READING OF DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT**

Mr. Hopping read the District Mission Statement

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- The next School Committee meeting is Thursday, May 16th at 7:00pm in the MS/HS Ensemble Room
- The Mutual Concerns Subcommittee will meet on Wednesday, May 15th at 7:00pm in the MS/HS Guidance Conference Room
- The Policy Subcommittee will meet on Monday, May 13th at 7:00pm in the Town Manager's Conference Room at Town Hall

**CITIZENS' COMMENTS**

None

**SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

Shelia Taylor, Council on Aging, along with six members of the Ipswich Council on Aging, presented a letter and flowers to Becky Slawson, thanking her, the IHS administration, the School Committee and the Feoffee Grant Committee for the opportunity to join Ms. Slawson's "All the World's a Stage" course. This course was offered for the first time this year, funded by a mini grant. Participants attended six plays at the Huntington Theater in Boston and met prior to the show and after the show to discuss the themes and issues embodied in the play.

Dr. Blake acknowledged Winthrop School Kindergarten teacher, Kerry Zagarella, who has been selected to participate in the national Teacher Leadership Institute. This program is a joint endeavor of the National Education Association and the Massachusetts Teachers Association.

**HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT**

**Stuart Geller, High School Student Representative**

Mr. Geller was not present at this meeting. He submitted a report to the Committee prior to the meeting.

- Junior Prom was a nice event and though rainy, the promenade was outside.

- The Engineering Projects team competed in the Ten80 STEM International Championships over the weekend. Mr. Geller’s team placed 7th in the world.
- There were new installments hung in different locations at the high school that appeared to be a student protest. These posters depicted different rules and problems in society in a “in your face” kind of way.
- The performance of “Anything Goes” is premiering at the PAC this weekend
- Freshmen and Sophomore Semi-Formal is taking place on May 11th

Dr. Blake explained the installation. It was an art project done by one of the art teachers. Art is supposed to make a statement, make you think. Each piece of art comes with a social justice write up with it. This was done as a way to make the students think about the issues and make you think about your surroundings and what is going on. Administrators were aware of this installation prior to them being hung.

## **A. SUPERINTENDENT REPORT**

### **Dr. Brian Blake, Superintendent of Schools**

Over the course of three weeks, Dr. Blake was involved in a variety of activities, meetings and events. Included in his report: his weekly meeting with the Facilities Director, several conference calls with legal counsel and the Ipswich Education Foundation, a meeting with YMCA staff to discuss potential new programming, several planning and TA negotiations meetings, the Steam Showcase, wrapping up Educator Evaluation Committee meetings, a CREST Collaborative Board Meeting, monthly meetings with both the Athletic Director and Technology Director, numerous phone calls with legal counsel regarding grievances and personnel issues, school vacation week, interviewed and hired a new payroll coordinator, met with the IEA presidents, led an Administrative Team meeting, discussed the PAC Director position and offered a part-time job, attended a NSSRT breakfast to discuss social and emotional learning, participated in a DESE webinar of Disproportionality, and lastly, attended the Ipswich Aware Fair at the YMCA.

<h2><b>II. SCHOOL COMMITTEE PRESENTATIONS</b></h2>
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### **B. FIELD TRIP REQUEST- WASHINGTON, D.C.**

#### **Jeff Krieger, High School Teacher**

Mr. Krieger spoke to the Committee about his overnight field trip request to Washington, D.C. as part of the Close Up tour. This will be Mr. Krieger’s seventh time taking the students to Washington. The trip will take place on Sunday, March 8-Friday, March 13, 2020. The cost of the trip per student is \$1,800 which is an all inclusive fee. There will be some fundraising efforts made by students. Should there be more than 15 students who register for the trip, Scott Ames will accompany Mr. Krieger. This has been a successful trip in the past and a great experience for the students of Ipswich. The trip is open to all High School sophomores, juniors and seniors interested in attending.

*Mr. Hopping moved to approve the Close Up Washington, D.C. overnight field trip as presented, seconded by Dr. O’Flynn. The motion passed unanimously.*

## C. GREEN COMMUNITIES UPDATE

**Tony Marino, Town Manager**

**Mike Johnson, Ipswich Climate Committee**

Mr. Johnson and Mr. Marino presented a slideshow to the Committee discussing/explaining the possibility of Ipswich becoming a Green Community. They are asking for School Committee support prior to bringing this to the Select Board. The presentation covered the following topics:

*What is a Green Community (GC) Program?*

1. Authorized by the MA legislature through the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2008
2. Established by the state to provide energy reduction grants to towns and cities through energy conservation programs
3. The Program reviews applications, designates GCs, provides start-up grants, and competitive annual grants for which designated GCs may apply

*What is required for Ipswich to become a GC?*

1. Meet all five GC Program criteria
2. Prepare a GC Program application
3. The Select Board must vote to approve participation in the Program
4. Ipswich must commit to working toward a plan to reduce energy use by 20% in a 5-year period
5. Ipswich must levy a special charge on electric rate-payer bills which helps fund the Renewable Energy Trust Fund managed by the Clean Energy Center

*Five Criteria of the GC Program*

1. Provide zoning in designated locations for the “as-of-right siting” of renewable or alternative energy generating and/or manufacturing facilities (**Ipswich completed in 2010**)
2. Adopt an expedited application and permitting process under which Criterion 1 facilities may be sited, and the permitting process shall not exceed one year from the date of initial application. Requires letter from Town Counsel to verify (**already included in the Ipswich Zoning By-law**)
3. Establish an energy use baseline inventory for all municipal buildings and adopt a comprehensive five-year Energy Reduction Plan to reduce the baseline by 20% in five-years (**in preparation**)
4. Prepare a Fuel-Efficient Vehicle Purchase Policy which commits to purchasing fuel-efficient vehicles, whenever commercially available and practicable (**completed**)
5. Adopt the MA Stretch Energy Code (**accomplished at STM 2018**)

*Who are the GCs?*

1. There are over 240 GCs in MA – 68% of all municipalities in the Commonwealth
2. Of these municipalities, 17 are Municipal Light Plant (MLP) communities like Ipswich
3. Of the 17 MLP communities, two became GCs by levying the \$0.0005/kWh charge (as is done for all municipalities served by Investor Owned Utilities)

*What are the costs of being a GC?*

1. Ipswich would need to contract with and remit an annual fee to the Renewable Energy Trust Fund to remain in the GC Program
2. The fee would be paid via a \$0.0005/kWh electricity sales to Ipswich ELD customers. The average residential customer uses ~670 kWh/month, so average monthly charge would equal \$0.34 or about \$4/year/customer
3. At the current time, this charge on all electricity sold by the ELD is \$55,000/year

*What are the benefits of becoming a GC?*

1. In year 1, Ipswich would receive an initial grant (about \$146,000) that would be used to begin implementing energy conservation measures identified in the Energy Reduction Plan (ERP)
2. In subsequent years, Ipswich can apply for up to \$250,000/year to pay for additional conservation measures identified in the ERP (10% of each grant can be used for administrative costs)

3. An initial assessment of costs/benefits of the GC Program conservatively estimated the grants received and energy cost savings for Ipswich and projected net annual financial benefits in the first 20 years, and a cumulative estimate in the range of \$1 million
4. After GC designation, the Town, its residents, and businesses will have access to the resources of the Clean Energy Center (CEC) to fund clean energy and renewable energy projects
5. Funds from GC and CEC resources can address conservation of all energy uses (not just electricity), unlike those currently funded by the Ipswich ELD Sustainability Fund
6. Reducing municipal energy use and costs frees up funds in the budget for other important needs, like schools, fire and safety, and climate change adaptation
7. Access to the CEC will enable residents and businesses to reduce their energy use and costs

#### *Clean Energy Center Program Areas*

- Residential Examples
  - Clean heating and cooling (e.g., up to \$10k rebate on ground-source heat pumps)
  - Low-interest solar PV loans
  - Woodstove change-out (replaces old, inefficient stoves with EPA-certified woodstoves)
  - HeatSmart Mass (competitive solicitation process aggregates homeowner buying power to lower installation costs)
  - Solar Access/Affordable Home Heating (incentives for middle- and lower-income residents)
- Government/Non-profit Examples
  - Innovations at wastewater treatment plants
  - Wind energy development
  - Deploy clean energy and infrastructure to support MA business development
  - Solar for municipalities
  - Clean heating and cooling
- Business
  - Many of the above programs

#### *What success have other GCs had?*

1. Other GCs in the region have had the following successes through 2017:
  - a. Hamilton – \$620,000 in grants (since 2010)
  - b. Wenham – \$705,000 in grants (since 2010)
  - c. Manchester-by-the Sea – \$294,000 (since 2013)
  - d. Topsfield –\$213,000 (since 2011)
  - e. Beverly –\$1,224,892 (since 2011)
2. Hanover, a municipality with a population similar to Ipswich, became a GC in 2011, and received a total of \$1,877,011 in grants since then. Hanover estimated annual savings in energy costs of \$189,000/year in 2017

Questions were asked by the Committee with regard to the cost to the school based on the kwh per based determined by the usage currently. Also, the Committee asked if the Ipswich would be penalized should it not meet the 20% energy reduction in the five year period. Mr. Johnson responded that no, Ipswich would not be penalized. The 20% is a goal. There is a better chance to meet that 20% in a town like Ipswich because the buildings are older and will require upgrades that can be made more energy efficient. It was also explained that based on a recently executed energy audit, most of the grants received would target the MS/HS.

Discussion also included the impact of the current school fleet of vehicles, the administrative cost and the status/opinion of the other boards. Mr. Marino explained that the Select Board has positive feedback on the proposal and the Finance Committee had some lingering questions.

*Mr. Nysten moved to recommend that Ipswich participate in the Green Community designation, seconded by Ms. Zito. The motion was amended to include the authorization of Ms. Player to sign the drafted letter*

*to the Ipswich Select Board in support of becoming a Green Community. Ms. Kneedler seconded the amended motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

The School Committee also discussed the Town of Ipswich Fuel Efficient Vehicle Policy. The purpose of this policy is to reduce the Town of Ipswich's fuel consumption and energy costs. By adopting this policy, the School Committee would purchase only fuel efficient vehicles to meet this goal. This policy is a requirement of the Green Community Program and the effective date of this new policy would be upon approval.

*Mr. Nysten moved to adopt the Town of Ipswich Fuel Efficient Vehicle Policy, seconded by Mr. Whitten. The motion passed unanimously.*

## **D. SUPERINTENDENT GOALS**

### **Dr. Brian Blake, Superintendent of Schools**

As part of his annual evaluation, Dr. Blake read his End of the Year report to the Committee. The Committee was reminded that their individual evaluations were to be submitted to Ms. Player no later than Monday, May 6th. At the May 16th School Committee meeting, Ms. Player would read the final evaluation for the year.

Dr. Blake's End of Year Report is included here:

*LINCOLN STATEMENT: "If both factions or neither shall harass you, you will probably be about right. Beware of being assailed by one and praised by the other".*

*This is my self-reflection on the past year. Looking back through my notes, we completed this process last year in late June, so this is quite early and although I've completed my goals satisfactorily, there is still work to be done.*

*Every decision I make has detractors, and mine is a very public position. I will continue to make decisions in what I believe is in the best interest of our students, as that is whom we are here to serve.*

- *Overall, I think it was a very successful year.*
- *It's difficult to capture an entire year in 20 minutes.*
- *Certainly not an exhaustive list of what I've been up to all year.*
- *We negotiated and settled contracts with the Clerical unit, Custodians/bus drivers, and most recently the TAs (although the Custodians and TA contracts have not been ratified yet.*
- *I've established a regular schedule of meetings with the facilities director, tech director and AD to stay informed about those departments in addition to now meeting weekly with the Town Manager.*
- *Continued to address numerous grievances filed by the IEA. More in two years than I have had my entire career.*
- *My leadership team meetings continued to be productive opportunities for the team.*
- *I Continue to work on School District Policy as well as School Safety issues.*
- *I try to make it to as many events as possible throughout the year.*
- *I think I've established myself as someone who researches things and is not afraid to make tough decisions.*
- *I finally I feel like I have my feet solidly under me and understand the dynamics at work in Ipswich.*

*In terms of the Standards/Goals that I am being evaluated against:*

#### *Standard 1. Instructional Leadership 1D: Evaluation*

*Throughout the year I worked with the Educator Evaluation Committee to revise the Educator Evaluation system in use throughout the District. The committee has finalized our work and we are in the process of editing the document for final approval by both the Teachers and the School Committee. Our goals for the Ed eval. committee were to review the process, identify strengths and weaknesses, and streamline the process when possible. I believe that the committee has fulfilled its' mission and that I will have successfully completed this goal by the end of the year.*

#### *Standard 2 Management and Operations: 2A.*

*This goal centered around the consolidation of HR, Payroll and the facilities departments. All of the hiring has been completed and the transitions are moving forward. Of course, there are growing pains and we are all trying to understand our new roles and responsibilities. To use Jim Collin's analogy from "Good to Great", I believe we*

*have the right people in the right seats on the bus now. I continue to meet with the Town Manager and HR director to help them learn the intricacies of how the school District functions. In addition to the personnel changes and consolidation, we have successfully implemented a new payroll system. I believe that this goal has been completed at an Exemplary level.*

*Standard 3. Family and Community Engagement 3A Engagement*

*This goal centered around my desire to re-engage the community in a discussion of the capital needs of the school District. This goal is still a work in progress. To date, I have worked with the Facilities Department and the Town manager to put together a facilities study being conducted for School Dude. Additionally I have been an active participant on the Elementary Alignment Subcommittee which is currently finishing up our work. In terms of engaging the community around the future of our elementary schools, I have had conversations with the town manager and select board, but have not organized a forum to date. Although not listed in the actions for this goal, I have also completed a course on Sheltered English Immersion for our ELL population, looking at our programs and procedures for including those families in our educational community. Overall, I believe that I have completed this goal at a proficient level.*

*Standard 4. Professional Culture: 4A Commitment to High Standards*

*This goal focused on the development and refinement of the Strategy for District Improvement. As of this date, the goal has been completed at a Proficient level and is being implemented District wide. In addition to the Strategy for District Improvement, I have also included my calendar and administrative team meeting agendas as further evidence of high expectations and standards.*

*I've provided a binder of evidence at the Central office with back up documentation in support of each of these goals in addition to my bi-weekly Superintendent reports provided at each School Committee meeting.*

*In addition to the above goals, I've also continued my personal development continuing to learn the "MA way" of doing business around laws, working with the various unions, and finance. This year I think I have developed a much deeper understanding in all of these areas. I also continued to participate in the Induction program for New Superintendents.*

*Next year, I would like to work on the development of a long term strategic plan for the District that builds on our Strategy for District improvement, the facilities studies, our Philosophy of Education, and our future financial outlook.*

**E. VOTE ON NEW PAYNE GRANT COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

**Sarah Player, School Committee Chair**

Ms. Player explained to the Committee that there are currently four openings for the Payne Grant Allocations Committee. Those position are: 1 Elementary School Parent, 2 Business Owners, 1 At- Large Community Member. Applications were submitted by seven community members. Those applications were distributed to Committee members prior to the meeting. After some discussion about the background of the current members of the Payne Grant Committee and what makes a good member, the School Committee voted on the open positions. The Committee recognized the quality of candidates that applied and that it was difficult to choose from such a good candidate pool.

*Mr. Hopping moved to appoint Binni Hackett and Jen Donahue for the two positions of Community Business Owner members for the Payne Grant Committee, seconded by Mr. Whitten. This motion passed unanimously.*

*Ms. Player moved to support Emily Cannon for the position of Elementary School Parent for the Payne Grant Committee, seconded by Dr. O'Flynn. The motion passed unanimously.*

*Mr Hopping moved to support Heather Leonard for the position of Community Member At-Large for the Payne Grant Committee, seconded by Dr. O'Flynn. The motion passed unanimously.*

Each newly elected committee member will serve a three year term and will be notified of their appointment. Ms. Player asked that all applicants be thanked for their interest in serving and those who were not chosen be notified of other open seats on other committees should they become available.

**F. SCHOOL CHOICE NUMBERS**

**Sarah Player, School Committee Chair**

At their meeting on April 25, 2019, the School Committee voted to open the School Choice program for the 2019-2020 school year. During that discussion, recommended openings at each school were introduced. It was decided that the vote on numbers would be delayed to this meeting and any questions that Committee members had for building administrators would be directed to Dr. Blake.

At this current meeting, Dr. Blake addressed the questions that were asked of the Committee. He discussed why neither elementary school is opening choice seats in kindergarten, stating that there is an uncertainty of incoming Ipswich students at this grade level. Dr. Blake talked about the rationale behind the recommended numbers, explaining that 14 choice students were graduating this year and these open slots would help to fill the void. Lastly, the recommendation for a significant number of middle school choice openings is to maintain the middle school model as is.

The recommended Choice openings at each school are as follows:

	1	2	3	5
<b>Winthrop</b>	4	0	2	3
<b>Doyon</b>	0	2	0	0

	6	7	8
<b>Middle</b>	25	33	0

	9	10	11	12
<b>High</b>	12	12	12	0

*Dr. O’Flynn, moves to support the administrator recommended openings at each grade level, Mr. Nysten seconded that motion for the sake of discussion.*

Mr. Nysten would prefer to discuss each grade recommendation at a more granular level. Mr. Whitten added that he was disturbed by the recommendation from the Middle School.

*Dr. O’Flynn amended his first motion and moved to support the administrator recommendations for choice openings at the Elementary and High School, seconded by Ms. Zito. The motion passed with 5 in favor, 1 not in favor and 1 abstention.*

A lengthy discussion took place about the Middle School Choice recommendations. Committee members talked about the middle school model, stating that the Middle School philosophy cannot be to right size using Choice. Rather than asking for unrealistic numbers, the Middle School needs to rethink the model.

Mr. Hopping stated that he felt the Committee has been ignoring the bigger problem. The Committee continues to vote to participate in the Choice program, but Ipswich is not getting the numbers. He

believed this is a bad reflection. He continued, stating that the Committee has not done their due diligence in learning why Choice numbers are going down and also, that the Committee, by participating in Choice, is just putting off the discussion about a reduction in force.

It was also discussed that the timing of when seats are opened and advertising these openings should change.

*Dr. O'Flynn moved to open 10 6th grade slots, 5 7th grade spots, and 0 8th grade Choice seats at the Middle School for 2019-2020, seconded by Ms. Kneeder. The motion passed with 4 in favor, 2 not in favor and 1 abstention.*

Mr. Nylen opposed opening seats at the Middle School, believe this will be a forcing factor to consider looking at the middle school model with a better plan about the future. He stated that he believed this opens up the hope that the model fixes itself.

## **G. 2019-2020 ACADEMIC CALENDAR APPROVAL**

### **Dr. Brian Blake, Superintendent of Schools**

At a previous meeting, the School Committee voted to use the 2019-2020 calendar that had a start date of August 28th, before Labor Day. Because this start date is earlier than what is stated in the Ipswich Educators' Association contract, the IEA needed to take a formal vote of approval. That vote was taken and the IEA has approved a start time before Labor Day. The School Calendar now needed a final vote from the School Committee.

*Dr. O'Flynn moved to support the 2019-2020 School Calendar option 2, with a start date of August 28, 2019, seconded by Mr. Nylen. The motion passed with 5 in favor and 2 opposed.*

## **H. FINANCE UPDATE**

### **Joanne Cuff, Director of Finance and Operations**

Joanne announced that the district is still in good position to finish the year within budget.

The Feoffees' Grant Committee have announced their 2019 annual distribution. The total grant distribution is \$766,682. Joanne then explained that the School Committee would need to take a vote on the split of that money between Payne and Mini Gants, as well as how much they would like to put back into the corpus. After some discussion, it was decided that the Budget Subcommittee would discuss the Feoffees' distribution at their upcoming meeting and present a recommendation to the full Committee at the May 16th meeting.

Joanne discussed the Budget Transfer Log and highlighted the \$20,000 transfer for utility charges and the transfer of \$10,900 to cover amendments made to the SOAR Payne Grant.

Lastly, Powers and Sullivan were at Town Hall for a preliminary audit. Both the School and Town have been busy preparing. The audit went well and they were able to provide all the necessary documentation.

## **I. RE-VOTE ON ATM WARRANT ARTICLES**

### **Sarah Player, School Committee Chair**

At the April 25, 2019 meeting, the School Committee voted to take a position or RATM several warrant article for Town Meeting. Because two members, Mr. Whitten and Dr. O'Flynn, were not in attendance,

the Committee has asked to hold another vote for these two members. These votes will not be officially recorded in the printed warrant for Town Meeting.

Below are the results of those votes:

1. **2-0 in support**
2. **2-0 in support**
3. **2-0 in support**
4. **2-0 in support**
5. **2-0 in support**
6. **2-0 in support**
7. **2-0 in support**
8. **2-0 in support**
9. **No vote**
10. **No vote**
11. **RATM**
12. **2-0 support**
13. **2-0 support**
14. **No vote**
15. **No vote**
16. **No vote**

Dr. O'Flynn joined the prior School Committee meeting where the below warrant articles were discussed. His vote was recorded at the April 25th meeting. The following votes were from Mr. Whitten only.

17. **0-1 oppose**
18. **1 support**
19. **No vote**
20. **RATM**
21. **No vote**
22. **No vote**
23. **Opposed 0-1**
24. **Oppose 0-1**
25. **RATM**

<b>III. SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORTS</b>
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- A. **VOUCHERS/BILLS Done**
- B. **SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORTS**
  1. **ATHLETIC SUBCOMMITTEE-no**
  2. **BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE-no**
  3. **GRANT SUBCOMMITTEES-no**
    - a. **Payne Grant Subcommittee-no**
    - b. **Instructional Mini-Grant Subcommittee-no**
  4. **OPERATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE-no**
  5. **POLICY SUBCOMMITTEE-no**
  6. **TURF FIELD SUBCOMMITTEE-no**
  7. **WORKING GROUPS**

Formal updates of each working group will take place at the next meeting.
  8. **NEW BUSINESS\***

Dr. O’Flynn asked to discuss the IEF letter at the next meeting.

**IV. CONSENT**

**A. CONSENT AGENDA**

*Ms. Player moved the Ipswich School Committee to approve the Ipswich School Committee Open Session Meeting Minutes from the following meetings: April 4, 2019 and April 25, 2019, seconded by Mr. Hopping. The motion passed unanimously.*

**V. ADJOURNMENT**

*Mr. Hopping moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:54 PM, seconded by Mr. Nysten. The motion passed unanimously.*