

**Ipswich School Committee Meeting
Combined with a Quad Board Meeting
(Board of Selectmen, Finance Committee, and School Building Committee)
November 16, 2017
Ipswich Town Hall, Room A, 25 Green Street
6:00pm**

I. OPEN SESSION

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Sarah Player called the meeting to order at 6:12 PM with the following School Committee members present: N. Zito, P. Kneedler, and C. Nylen. Also present were Superintendent Blake, Finance Director J. Cuff, and Student Representative C. Bergner.

READING OF THE MISSION STATEMENT:

C. Bergner read the Mission Statement.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Monday, November 20- Turf and Field Subcommittee Meeting
- Wednesday, November 22- Early Release for all schools.
 - 11:20 a.m. for Middle and High School students and
 - 11:55 a.m. for all Elementary School students
- Schools will be CLOSED on Thursday, November 23 and Friday, November 24
- The Thanksgiving Food Drive for the Ipswich Community Food Pantry continues at the Middle School through the week. More donations are needed to meet their goal of feeding 200 families.
- The Middle School will perform Peter Pan Jr. this Friday at 7 PM, Saturday at 7PM and Sunday at 1 PM in the Performing Arts Center. Tickets are selling quickly! It's sure to be a soaring night.
- Tuesday, November 28- Policy Subcommittee meeting at 7:00 p.m.
- Thursday, November 30- School Committee meeting at 7:00 p.m. at the MS/HS Ensemble Room

SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

S. Player mentioned the 7th Grade Probability Carnival, stating the event was well attended and very interesting with a huge variety of STEAM carnival games created by the students.

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT:

C. Bergner reported that the first quarter had ended and overall, students were happy with their grades. The high school ended Spirit Week with a talent show. Clubs were off to a slow start this year, but have since picked up. The High School is also looking forward to the Jingle Bell Walk on December 2nd. Girls cross country and the football team both have upcoming games.

A. SUPERINTENDENT'S ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Dr. Blake did not present an administrative report.

II. CONSENT AGENDA

S. Player moved, seconded by C. Nysten to accept the Consent Agenda as follows:

Move the Ipswich School Committee to accept the minutes of the November 2, 2017 Open Session Meeting.

Move the Ipswich School Committee to accept the Executive Session Minutes of the following Executive Sessions:

- March 3, 2016
- March 17, 2016
- March 24, 2016
- April 7, 2016
- May 5, 2016
- July 21, 2016
- October 6, 2016
- November 17, 2016
- January 19, 2017

Move the Ipswich School Committee to accept a check of \$1,397.01 from Hockmeyer Studios to Ipswich High School in conjunction with the sale of school photographs.

Move the Ipswich School Committee to accept a donation in the amount of \$4,000 for the Robotics Team from Analog Devices to be deposited into the High School Gift Account.

UNANIMOUS approval by all present members.

H. O'Flynn arrived at 6:18 PM.

III. SCHOOL COMMITTEE PRESENTATIONS

B. MASC CONFERENCE OVERVIEW

Pavica Kneeder presented on her experience at her first MASC (Massachusetts Association of School Committees) Conference the first weekend in November. She said her experience was interesting, exciting and informative. She discussed the seven MASC Resolutions that had passed which included the following topics: movement of the Chapter 70 funding enrollment date to March 15; reform of circuit breaker funding; litigation for fair school finance, privatization of public education and the oversight of public schools, including small and regional districts; use of federal funds; foundation budget; Affordable Care Act and Medicaid. Kneeder attended a discussion about the Massachusetts School Construction Process which talked about how to be successful in getting a school built. She stressed the fact that each year a low percentage of districts are given the opportunity to build a school and that oftentimes,

districts have applied multiple times before their project was accepted. If this project does not pass in Ipswich, it could likely be another 10 years before Ipswich is presented with this opportunity again. Kneedler also attended a workshop on the benefits of social-emotional learning and how to measure the whole child and saw the keynote speaker, Bill Daggett's presentation on "Educating for the Future". She thanked the School Committee for the opportunity to attend and reiterated how much she enjoyed the experience.

C. POLICY REVIEW

N. Zito explained to the Committee that the Policy Subcommittee, at their last meeting, looked at Policy Sections A, F, and H and the suggested revisions that were made by the administrative team at their last meeting. They reviewed the Nondiscrimination Policy and prepared it to present to the School Committee for final approval. Policy Sections A, F, and H will be presented to the School Committee on November 30th. Zito also noted that the subcommittee had reviewed Dr. Blake's policy project calendar.

Based on his calendar, they anticipate completing this policy manual update by May 2018. Each policy will be first vetted by the administrative team. Their recommendations will then be presented to the Policy Subcommittee for their approval. After approved by the Policy Subcommittee, the policies will be presented to the full School Committee for their final approval at which point Dr. Blake believes there should be minimal to no changes needed.

The new version of the Nondiscrimination Policy included language based on DESE requirements and Title IV to remain compliant with the Civil Rights Act.

N. Zito moved, seconded by P. Kneedler to accept the changes to the Nondiscrimination Policy and approve the policy. UNANIMOUS approval by all present members.

D. BUDGET SUGGESTIONS FOR ADMIN TEAM

S. Player discussed how the Budget Subcommittee worked to create a guide to help administrators develop their budget this year. They asked J. Cuff to create spreadsheets to include historical spending, budget growth trends, and stabilization fund budget projections all to help create practical budget guidelines. After reviewing the provided information, the Budget Subcommittee agreed upon the target budget increase of 3.09%. C. Nylén expressed that a 3% growth rate is actually quite good and is well within the appropriated budget. J. Cuff stated that the total budget for FY19 was created using the override calculator, factoring in a forecast of a 3% increase in town revenue and then adding the stabilization fund creating a total of \$32,329,091. N. Zito asked J. Cuff if it was realistic to not use the \$276,000 from the stabilization fund in the budget, to which she replied that she would not recommend voting to plan a budget without including the stabilization fund. With the anticipated increase in the cost of health insurance, the increase in cost of living and the upcoming negotiations, it is important to prepare accordingly.

S. Player motioned to advise the administrative team to stay within the target 3.09% increase. H. O'Flynn seconded the motion.

UNANIMOUS approval by all members present.

A brief recess was called by S. Player at 6:54 PM until 7:00 PM to wait for the arrival of the Board of Selectmen, Finance Committee and School Building Committee.

At 7:16 PM, the School Committee reconvened with the following groups present: the Board of Selectmen, the Finance Committee, the School Building Committee, as well as the team of architects.

E. SCHOOL BUILDING, FINANCE COMMITTEE AND BOARD OF SELECTMEN JOINT MEETING

a. Project Update with Discussion

1. MSBA Update

S. Player, Bob Bell, and Dr. Blake met with the MSBA on Wednesday, November 15th. S. Player mentioned that the MSBA was pleased with the new site plan and how the education plan, as well as the vision of the school remained unchanged. They discussed the difference in the spaces from being located downtown at Winthrop to being closer to natural resources at the Doyon site. They discussed the walkability issue and ways to improve the Doyon space to encourage parent congregation and to make it more walkable. The bottomline was that the MSBA believes that Ipswich has a “fantastic Ed. Plan”, a clear vision, and they are in support of the success of this project.

2. Project Schedule

Kevin Murphy handed out a schedule to each Committee member detailing the Schematic Design Timeline. Each of these scheduled meetings is designed to help develop enough detail in the design to determine the cost of the building going forward, including in that cost- materials, energy sources, room layouts, classroom design, and MEP. December 19th will be the final discussion on MEP systems and fuel source and January 11th will be the final discussion on interiors and exteriors. January 24th will be a check in with final questions and clarification for pricing including a discussion on what is in and what is out. On February 21st, the School Committee and School Building Committee will do a final review of the estimate and budget and finish with a vote for approval to submit the schematic design to the MSBA.

Along with several scheduled Schematic Design meetings, the School Building Sustainability Subcommittee will meet to continue to discuss integrated systems and envelope options. The architect would also like to meet with faculty/user groups, town and school staff to discuss the site use.

3. Faculty/Staff Meeting

Dr. Blake talked about the joint faculty/staff meeting that was held in October at Doyon to look at the site plans and drawings of the new building. Staff broke into smaller groups to discuss likes, dislikes, concerns and address questions surrounding the project. He felt that there was a lot of positivity surrounding the project and that many questions were answered through this process. Dr. Blake emphasized that the voice of the faculty was key in determining design and that they are the ones who can think of how the spaces will work best. He feels it is important to incorporate their feedback into the plans and would like to re-establish the Ed. Leadership team. In the next phase of planning, it will be important to consider how grades will be divided into particular spaces, how the cultures of two schools can be reflected in one building and to discuss the security needs of the school. He is looking forward to future conversations with staff and the architects.

4. Mechanical, Engineering, Plumbing Systems Subcommittee

The MEP Subcommittee met to discuss potential fuel sources for the Doyon site. K. Murphy explained that the building will be 100% air conditioned which tends to be the standard at this point. The subcommittee is exploring several options for heating and cooling distribution systems which include: chilled beams, variable air volume, heat pump systems and variable refrigerant flow systems. While looking at all these options, the subcommittee must take into consideration the cost to maintain each system, the efficiency of the system and the quality of air.

As well as examining HVAC systems, the subcommittee must also determine the type of fuel source to be used in the project. Sources that are being considered at this point are LP gas onsite, geothermal systems and heat pumps. Murphy explained that although geothermal systems require no fossil fuels, they are difficult to maintain and are less cost effective.

5. Site Subcommittee Architect Presentation with Discussion

The architect's presentation on the school began with a statement from Bob Bell explaining that although the site location has changed from Winthrop to Doyon, the vision, goals, educational program and space needs have remained the same. The Doyon site is slightly larger at 17.2 acres compared to Winthrop's 16.8 acres. The site is flat allowing for easier transitions and although the site is not linked to downtown, it is, however, linked to trails and outdoor natural space.

The architect's team continued to explain that the developing site plan includes a 60 car loop, room for 10 buses, Pre-K access at drop-off and 150 car parking lot. The plan also exceeds all targets for outdoor space. The Committee was presented with two layouts for

the land surrounding the school. Option #1 included separate bus and parent drop off, staff parking in the back of the building, pedestrian walkways, and an equidistant drop off for both buses and parents. The bus drop off could be closed off by either gates or cones during the school day to allow that space to be used for hard top play. Play spaces surrounding the building are connected with safe pedestrian walkways. This option also allows for the entire loop in front of the building to be used for weekend parking. Option #2 shows buses coming to the back of the building and parent drop off in the front. Both bus and parent drop off would use the same entrance into the building. The architect noted that the only negative to this design is the walking distance from the bus to the school entrance is longer. Staff parking is located closer to the fields. This design has play areas connected to the gym and parking next to some play areas. Some concerns from the committees included the potential for conflict with buses and cars in the morning and noise in the classrooms from the buses lining up in the afternoon. The conflict with buses and cars could be addressed by widening the driveway. Each plan did include several weekend parking options.

The architect went on to show the potential for various instructional play spaces, as well as green spaces throughout the site. She explained that it will be important to decide how the spaces will be used to determine where exactly the spaces will go. Again, each plan exceeds the target number of outdoor play spaces. Another aspect of the outdoor spaces include gardens near the kitchen/cafeteria and outdoor classroom amphitheatres.

Some questions to the architects included whether or not there will be handicap provisions in the site plan to which they responded yes. Another question arose regarding the distance from the school to road which the architects explained is roughly 1200-1300 feet. There was also concern raised about having just one entrance into the school building and whether that would create problems in the morning and afternoon. The architects replied that at this stage, there is a lot of flexibility in the plan and they can look at different options. Ideally, one main entrance is a more preferred option, but they will not rule out multiple entrances. It was asked if it is typically more common to have play spaces in the back of the building as opposed to the front to which they responded that there is a large mix of both. Having your open play and green spaces in front sets up a nice, aesthetically pleasing and functional approach to the school and also allows better sightlines to cars approaching the building. There was a discussion about the possibility of not having busses and cars co-mingle at drop off and from there someone had asked if the roads would have to be widened if both cars and buses used the same road. The fields would not be affected if roads were widened. Questions were also raised about the distance from the gym and outdoor spaces. The concern was that it may be too far for younger students to walk in the time allotted for gym class. The architects explained that

there is flexibility in the design and they will take that concern into consideration. The outdoor space has not yet been divided in great detail. Discussion about the different cultures of the two schools also raised questions about whether or not there will be enough parking for parents to park and congregate in front of the school like what is done most often at Winthrop, rather than just dropping off their children. Weekend parking could be used and again, the plan at this stage is flexible enough that the architects could accommodate that request. The developing site plan currently includes softball fields which raised the question- is there a need for them? Although still debatable, it was suggested that the fields will not be large enough for the over 30 leagues and they may not be necessary at this stage for town use.

Public comments and questions were addressed by the SBC/SC and the team of architects. One member of the public asked if the administrative structure of the school had been decided on yet and if so, what was it. She also asked if a two school model in the one building was being considered. It was explained that those decisions have not been made at this stage, but the building is designed to accommodate several different configurations and had the flexibility in the design to grow and change with different educational plans over time. Decisions regarding the administrative structure of the school will occur after input is received from the faculty and staff, as well as the administrative team and School Committee.

The architects also shared their interior feasibility plan, while stressing the importance of flexibility in the organization and structure of the building. The developing design includes community and shared spaces that can have their own separate entrance when school is not in session, a primary and controlled front entrance for visitors, pre-kindergarten located in the front of the building, outside green spaces visible through the cafeteria windows, a cafeteria in the front of the building and art and music spaces on the ground level. Classrooms facing north and south will be more conducive to learning and more energy efficient. The gym will have its own bathrooms and the music stage can open or close depending on its use. All aspects of the design will work with surrounding nature and light. Special education areas will be dispersed throughout the building. "Learning neighborhoods" will include enclosed small group classrooms and learning spaces outside of the rooms. Grades can have their own wings which will include large, medium and small work spaces. Maker spaces will also be dispersed throughout the building. This developing design allows for good visibility throughout the building and for security purposes, will have controlled access and the ability to block off different areas throughout the building. The administrative space in the building can be arranged to accommodate the needs of the school. This plan also provides universal access and will include two elevators.

S. Player stressed the importance of some of the design priorities including the use of light and where light will fall throughout the day, incorporating nature into the design of the building, building with the safety and security of students and staff in mind, and creating spaces that support learning.

The architect closed the meeting with a snapshot of trending MSBA construction costs which included what is being reimbursed by the MSBA versus what the actual cost of the project is.

P. Kneedler moved, seconded by B. Hopping to adjourn. UNANIMOUS approval by all present members.

9:27 Adjournment.