

# School Committee Meeting Retreat

August 11, 2022

Town Hall Meeting Room 2-B

## MINUTES

Meeting called to order at 6:08pm by Greg Stevens.

In attendance: Greg Stevens, Kate Eliot, Pav Kneedler, Emily Cannon, Jeff Poirier, Jen Donahue, Dianna Freehan, and Dr. Brian Blake.

### 1) School Inspection Assignments;

Chair Greg Stevens explained that School Committee members tour each of the four schools every year before school starts with the administrators of each building to prepare for opening of the school year. The following SC members will contact the respective school and send out a schedule to the group:

Emily-Winthrop

Pav-Doyon

Jeff-Middle/High

Requested by Brian Blake to schedule tours during the week of August 22<sup>nd</sup> so the representatives can report at the August 25<sup>th</sup> SC meeting.

### 2) School Committee Goals - draft ideas, to be finalized over next couple of weeks

- **Budget:** Focus on developing FY24 budget to assure it stays in line with override projections. Address projected Chapter 70 and federal funding sources.
- **Elementary Building SOI:** Work toward submission of SOI for Elementary schools. Create a separate Elementary Building Working Group to focus on School Building SOI. Emily said we need to pay attention to timing in relation to the Town's Strategic Plan. Brian to check on MSBA window for SOI submission for 2023, possibly February.  
Working group to gather data and share with the wider community in a user-friendly, discussed website and social media. Pav noted the information needs to be referenced, ideally with links to full data. Discussion around not re-doing work that was already done. Awaiting results of first round of listening sessions and survey results before going to Select Board and FinCom to gauge support.
- **Vision 2030:** Revisit this goal as it was set aside during COVID. Awaiting results of DESE review/audit that occurred Spring 2022
- **Communications:** Discontinue office hours from last year as they weren't well attended. Newsletters will continue in 2022-2023, Brian to ask Keith Borgen to pull analytics on newsletter readers. This Subcommittee will work closely with the Elementary Building working group on community outreach. Discussed Brian doing periodic videos with updates to post/send out to the community. Also discussed a potential blog on SOI process.

### 3) Superintendent Goals:

Brian Blake listed his drafted ideas for SC feedback, and will present his draft goals at August 25<sup>th</sup> SC Meeting. Ideas include

- Refocus on improving post-pandemic test scores (MCAS, local benchmarks)
- DEI, No Place for Hate
- HR Manager - hiring practices
- Increase expectations for all staff
- Review DESE review guidance when it comes in

- Update Safety & Security systems
- Create a welcoming environment for all students
- Continue collaboration between 2 elementary schools

Kate and Jeff talked about having goals be measurable and detailed. Jen asked about adding Superintendent to oversee Principals of the elementary schools to ensure a balance of Paine grants coming from each school.

#### **4) Review and Discussion on Policy DDA: Principle Elements for Future Feoffees' Distributions:**

Greg reviewed past distributions, started at \$23M in 2012, now at \$35M with a \$942,000 distribution this year. Distributions have increased every year, it is a challenge to use it all. Discussion about our current policy and is it too restrictive. How best to leverage the money to benefit the most students and stay true to the spirit of the trust. Reviewed feedback from the Paine Grant Committee and their recommendations about the application process, timing, and working to get more submissions from more staff members. Also discussed having a tutorial at the beginning of the year for staff on how to apply for a grant. Discussion around types of grants available in Ipswich (FRIES, IEF, Feoffee) and making sure we provide clarity about the differences. It was decided to create a Feoffee's Working Group to evaluate current policy for distribution to work on this this coming school year: Greg, Jeff, Pav.

#### **5) Discussion on the Future of the Elementary School Buildings**

Continue Community Outreach, form Elementary Building working group to work on SOI process. Gather data/facts from the former project website. Ultimately -facts need to be decided on by current school committee members.

Goal of educating the community of what has been done (such as enrollment study, overview of MSBA process, site work from last project, etc). Attend Tri Board Meeting in September to gauge support of other boards. Goal is to await data from listening sessions and surveys from Logue group, and pair this with existing data to identify possible paths forward.

#### **6) Public Safety Building Re-Use Committee Update-Jeff**

Gordon Harris and Committee created an SOI Form to be voted on August 30<sup>th</sup> by that committee. SOI period will be open for 6 weeks, likely starting September 6th. Ipswich YMCA and Ipswich Aware are writing a proposal, other proposals may be for an art center and housing. Should the School Committee be submitting SOI for Fire House and/or parking use. Fire Station and Winthrop are both town plot at 65 Central Street.

#### **7) New Business**

Unanimous vote on School Committee Meeting Calendar for 2022-2023.

Tri Board date suggestion September 15<sup>th</sup>

Kate added to Brian to include teachers in feedback for Elementary School Building. Brian confirmed that they will be part of the process.