

**IPSWICH SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
THURSDAY, MARCH 17, 2011
MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL ENSEMBLE ROOM**

OPEN SESSION

CALL TO ORDER

H. O'Flynn, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. with the following members present: J. Loeb, B. Hopping, E. Traverso, L. Dietz, and S. Gresh. Also present were R. Korb, Superintendent; J. Cuff, Financial Director; and Principals Archambault, Cahill and Forster-Cahill.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dr. O'Flynn read the following announcements:

Executive Session will not be held this evening.

Budget presentations to the Fin Com are as follows:

March 22, Central Office/SPED, 7:30 p.m., Meeting Rm. A, Town Hall

March 23, Middle and High Schools, 7:30 p.m., Meeting Rm. A, Town Hall

March 24, Doyon and Winthrop Schools, 7:30 p.m., Meeting Rm A., Town Hall

Support Staff Negotiations Team will meet on March 23, Payne School, as follows:

1 p.m.: Food Services; 2 p.m.: Custodians; 3 p.m.: Clerical; 4 p.m.: Bus/Van Drivers

TriBoard meeting will be held on March 31, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall Meeting Rm. A

Policy Subcommittee will meet on April 4, Payne School, 4:30 p.m.

Athletic Subcommittee will be held on April 5, 6 p.m., Room B229, Middle/High School

Tentative TriBoard Working Group meeting will be held on April 6, 7:30 p.m., Middle/High Ensemble Room

School Committee will meet on April 7, 2011, 7 p.m., Middle/High Ensemble Room

Bean Counting will be held on April 9, 9 a.m., Town Hall Meeting Room A.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

Various citizens expressed concern for teacher cuts, fees for all-day kindergarten, an alternate bell schedule, and \$300,000 for Feoffee litigation off the top of the budget.

RULE OF NECESSITY

Dr. O'Flynn read the School Committee member conflicts and Mrs. Dietz moved, seconded by Mr. Traverso, to invoke the Rule of Necessity. UNANIMOUS.

I. SCHOOL COMMITTEE PRESENTATIONS

A. FY11 FINANCIAL REPORT UPDATE

Ms. Cuff, Financial Director, updated the Committee on three areas in the negative; i.e., Doyon's unanticipated out-of-placement tuitions, MS/HS operations overages in personnel (custodians) for medical leave, and building equipment repair and water damage, some to be reimbursed by insurance. An internal audit of school and activity accounts in the four schools and policies/procedures are being formatted in anticipation of the Coordinated Program Review by DESE.

B. SCHOOL CALENDAR FOR 2011-2012

Mr. Korb reviewed the one option for the school calendar which is recommended by the administration and ITA. After brief discussion, Mr. Hopping moved, seconded by Mrs. Dietz, to accept the calendar for school year 2011-2012 as recommended. UNANIMOUS.

C. SCHOOL CHOICE ENROLLMENT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2011-2012

In reviewing the principals' recommendations for "0" Choice students at Doyon and Winthrop Schools, Middle School's 7th grade, and High School's 10th, 11th and 12th grades, members and Mr. Korb discussed sibling acceptance in all cases for Choice students already enrolled.

After discussion regarding Mr. Hopping's suggestion for a Middle School change of model to "humanities" because of the small incoming class of 146 sixth graders and a comment by Mr. Loeb that a change should be teacher driven, Mr. Loeb moved, seconded by Dr. O'Flynn for discussion, for 3 Choice slots at the 9th grade level. Vote IN FAVOR - Traverso, Gresh, O'Flynn, Loeb, Dietz; OPPOSED - Hopping (who commented that he has never favored "Choice" for several reasons).

Mr. Loeb moved, seconded by Dr. O'Flynn, for 14 Choice slots at the 6th grade and 4 Choice slots for the 8th grade. IN FAVOR - Traverso, Gresh, Loeb, O'Flynn; OPPOSED - Dietz, Hopping.

D. FINANCE COMMITTEE REQUEST FOR OPEB AND CAPITAL FUNDING

Dr. O'Flynn explained the request by the Finance Committee for a plan to fund the \$23 million obligation for Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB). The Municipal Department and the Utilities Department have funded some of this obligation. Mrs. Dietz commented that, while the Committee wants to work with the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee, she has a problem that an advisory board demands that the School Committee appropriate funds "off the top" for OPEB and capital funding. Mr. Loeb agreed, stating that Wellesley is the one community in the State which has fully funded this liability (with an override) and, in conversation with accountants during audits of two different years, Ipswich would be the exception rather than the rule over other towns/cities if it paid more than the current normal payment of \$67,000, the schools' share of the OPEB.

Mr. Loeb moved, seconded by Mrs. Dietz, that the school budget NOT reflect any additional OPEB payments. UNANIMOUS.

Dr. O'Flynn explained the \$100,000 for Capital expenses requested by the Finance Committee. Mr. Hopping asked Mr. Bedard, Head Custodian, who has worked with his custodial staff in the long-standing practice of maintaining and upgrading with energy-saving measures, thus saving the Town thousands of dollars, whether there were any critical areas of need in the near future, and Mr. Bedard answered that there were not. Mr. Korb agreed, saying that current needs in energy saving can wait.

Mrs. Dietz moved, seconded by Mr. Loeb, that the school budget NOT include \$100,000 in Capital. UNANIMOUS.

E. SCHOOL DEPARTMENT REVENUE-GENERATING OPTIONS

Transportation Fee

With the \$392,000 transportation costs for the FY12 budget, Mr. Korb distributed a sheet of area towns which charge bus fees and School Bus Fee Considerations where ridership figures, which had been compiled last week of Ipswich students, were combined with a suggested fee schedule. After discussion, Mr. Loeb moved, seconded by Mr. Traverso, to accept a transportation fee for Grades 7-12 of \$250 (one rider), \$250 (second rider), with a family cap of \$500 and to explore the possibility of moving the pickup policy in a ½ mile (from the two-mile policy) with the idea that more students would be eligible to ride and pay a fee, without adding a bus. IN FAVOR - Traverso, O'Flynn, Hopping, Loeb, Dietz; OPPOSED - Gresh.

Full-Day Kindergarten Fees

Mr. Korb provided a sheet of kindergarten fees in neighboring areas and fee/projection data on Ipswich's kindergarten. The State Department mandates that the half-day option be provided free of charge, and Ipswich receives a \$63,800 kindergarten grant. After an emotionally charged philosophical discussion, Mrs. Dietz moved, seconded by Mr. Hopping, to rescind the idea of charging fees for full-day kindergarten. UNANIMOUS.

Student Parking Fees

After discussion among School Committee members and Principal Cahill, the item was tabled until April 7 when more information will have been obtained regarding internal costs and procedures.

Alternate Bell Schedule

Mr. Korb reviewed the sheet from Salter Transportation to discuss reducing buses by changing school starting times for a \$100,000 saving. Many negative factors are involved and two School Committee members recalled that two votes against the idea had previously been taken. After heated discussion, Mr. Loeb moved, seconded by Mr. Hopping, NOT to consider changing school bell schedules. IN FAVOR - Dietz, Loeb, Hopping, Gresh, Traverso; OPPOSED - O'Flynn.

Override

The pros and cons, timing, support for, and lessons learned on previous tries were discussed at length and consensus was to hold a place on the Warrant for an override.

Mr. Traverso left the meeting at 11:05 p.m.

F. OTHER REVENUE GENERATING OPTIONS FOR COMMUNITY DISCUSSION

Increase Base Funding from 2.5% to 3.25%Increase Percentage of Total Revenue to the SchoolsInstitute Meals TaxEliminate Electric Charges to Town/SchoolsParking Meters Downtown

The meals tax (\$200,000 possible income), the electric charges to the Town and Schools eliminated (\$100,000 possible income), and the installation of parking meters downtown

(\$40-50,000 possible income) were discussed as revenue options, but the base funding increase from 2.5% to 3.25% and the percentage increase of total revenue to the schools appear to be unpopular with other Boards.

G. FEOFFEES OF THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Dr. O’Flynn reported that the Feoffees’ annual meeting will take place at 6 p.m. on March 23, at the VFW, County Road. All bills incurred in litigation have been paid except one. Discovery by School Committee lawyers will cost \$30-40,000/month over the next two months.

II. SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. VOUCHERS/BILLS

B. SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORTS

- 1. ATHLETIC SUBCOMMITTEE
- 2. ATHLETIC FIELD STUDY COMMITTEE
- 3. AD HOC TOWN/SCHOOL COLLABORATION COMMITTEE
- 4. COMMUNICATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE
- 5. DAY CARE CENTER SUBCOMMITTEE
- 6. EARLY CHILDHOOD SUBCOMMITTEE
- 7. FEOFFEES SUBCOMMITTEE
- 8. NORTH SHORE COALITION FOR SCHOOL FUNDING

9. OPERATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

Mr. Loeb reported a meeting held at 6:30 p.m. He will speak with Mr. Traverso and Mr. Sheppard and may propose to hold off a final evaluation of the Superintendent until June. He requested an Executive Session be scheduled for April 7 for discussion.

10. POLICY SUBCOMMITTEE

11. PUBLIC SAFETY FACILITY COMMITTEE

12. SPECIAL EDUCATION PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SEPAC)

13. WIND TURBINE SUBCOMMITTEE

14. SCHOOL COMMITTEE/ITA HEALTH INSURANCE COMMITTEE

Mr. Korb reported a positive meeting with the ITA President. A strong consensus exists for urging the Town to hire an outside broker to assist in working through the health insurance process.

15. IPSWICH HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

16. OTHER

III. SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

A. SUPERINTENDENT’S ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Mr. Korb has received a request from the Finance Committee regarding a replacement for Edmund Traverso on its Long Range Planning Committee. Dr. O’Flynn indicated interest and was appointed. “Day on the Hill” will be discussed with Mr. Traverso.

IV. CONSENT

A. CONSENT AGENDA

Mr. Hopping moved, seconded by Mrs. Dietz, to approve the Consent Agenda as follows:

Acceptance of Minutes of March 3, 2011, Open Session

UNANIMOUS.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Hopping moved, seconded by Mr. Loeb, to adjourn at 11:35 p.m. **UNANIMOUS.**