

IPSWICH SCHOOL COMMITTEE REGULAR AND BUDGET MEETING  
FEBRUARY 5, 2015  
MS/HS ENSEMBLE ROOM

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Hopping called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. Present were J. Bauman, S. Gresh, S. Player, F. Krason, H. O'Flynn, and C. Nylen. Also present were Superintendent Hart, Finance Director Cuff, Director of Pupil Personnel Services Hegedus, and all four principals.

READING OF DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT

C. Nylen read the Mission Statement

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Hopping read the following announcements:

No Executive Session will be held this evening.

Negotiations Subcommittee meetings will be held on February 9, 7 p.m. M/H School Ensemble Room; on February 26, 5:30 p.m., High School Room B105; and on March 4, 5:30 p.m., High School Room B105

School Building Committee will meet on February 12, 7 p.m. M/H School Ensemble Room

School Committee will meet on March 5 as a regular meeting and a Public Hearing on the FY'16 School Budget, 7 p.m., M/HS Ensemble Room

Mr. Hopping explained that the two Elementary budgets will be presented followed by the Central Office budget and taken under advisement. On March 5th a public hearing will take place at which time the School Committee will be voting on the district budget. He clarified the *IPSWICH CHRONICLE* (2/5/15) statement by saying that the School Building Comm. (SBC) is NOT a committee of the School Committee but appointed by the Board of Selectmen. School Committee representatives are B. Hopping, Vice Chair; S. Player, W. Hart and J. Cuff. The 270-day window closes on March 3. Representatives of the Mass. School Building Authority visit Doyon tomorrow to view the overcrowding at the school. SBC has not made a decision on the three alternatives for elementary schooling but is keeping all cards on the table.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

Dana Allen, B23 Family Center Director, again requested consideration of her budget when deciding on the priorities. Two mothers in the community spoke on behalf of the program for easing their early childhood needs.

Laurie Fab, music teacher, spoke on behalf of Gerry Dolan who is at Salem State University with a high school musical group. The programmatic plan for instruments to begin at the 6<sup>th</sup> grade is not a viable option. The activity periods at the Middle School do not allow proper choices for instrumental music and it will be the end of the stellar program. Choral music already isn't scheduled into the Middle School day. Ipswich has been a beacon for quality education.

**SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

Dr. Hart acknowledged Doyon Principal Conley who presented staff members who were responsible for the hard work and achievement of the NAEYC reaccreditation of the Doyon Elementary, a 5-year award which has come from collaborating with the Winthrop School.

**A. PRESENTATION AND ACCEPTANCE OF DONATIONS BY IPSWICH EDUCATION FOUNDATION**

Michele Wertz, President of the Ipswich Education Foundation, in explaining the non-profit group which raises private funds in an effort to aid the schools, presented a check for \$5,976.88 to the elementary and middle schools. Also, she had a check for the High School from the Connor Family Trust for \$750. Dr. O'Flynn moved, seconded by Mrs. Bauman, to accept the checks for \$5,976.88 to the elementary and middle schools from the Ipswich Education Foundation and for \$750 for the High School from the Connor Family Trust. UNANIMOUS.

**I. ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS AND CENTRAL OFFICE FY16 BUDGET PRESENTATION**

**A. DOYON AND WINTHROP ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS BUDGETS**

Doyon. Ms. Conley presented her budget with mixed feeling because of the \$213,250 cut which Doyon must take in 2016 to total \$3,016,249 (6% of which is actually funded by outside funding).

As presented by the other school principals, she presented the losses from 2014 and earlier, the 2015 cuts, and the proposed staffing without a library media specialist (again) and without band, strings and chorus. Doyon's goals are maintaining class size, providing high quality education focusing on core curriculum, increasing STEM instruction, continuing professional development through other funding, and assuring that the needs of all students are met with the support available. She presented the goals/accomplishments of the 2014-15 year with reading and writing collaboration with Winthrop, a Foundations curriculum for K-1 teachers, work with open-ended response questions in curricular areas, and technology integration. She credited Feoffee mini-grants with technology tools: laptops, Chromebooks, and iPads along with professional development. She celebrated the school culture and enrichment practices which volunteers have made possible with their time, support, and dedication. She was excited to announce a 50<sup>th</sup> year celebration for the Doyon School in September, 2015.

The Board thanked her for her presentation and asked pertinent questions. To Dr. O'Flynn's question of how the staff is coping, Ms. Conley replied that the wear and tear becomes more of a struggle every day but for the children, they give 110% of their energy. Mrs. Krason commented that the children will still be happy in school, but they will not know what they are missing without the music program.

Mr. Hopping asked Ms. Conley to speak to the mini-grants which have enabled instruction. Ms. Conley cited that over 50 mini-grants were approved across the district—almost 12 per school. Winthrop and Doyon have received \$5,000 grants per classroom for books over the past two years, which should have been in the appropriated budgets.

Mr. Nylen moved, seconded by Ms. Player, to take the FY'16 Doyon budget under advisement. UNANIMOUS.

Winthrop. Mrs. McAdams, Winthrop Principal, giving thanks to all who helped in the budget presentation, used the metaphor of an aged automobile and its history of adjustment. Her ongoing strategic goals are (1) maintaining class size for personalized learning and (2) shifting the special education service delivery model. In dealing with (2), professional special education teachers have been added and teaching assistants have been reduced. Her budget has been cut by \$137,821 to \$3,110,366. Staffing-cut history in the last two years is now like taking off the doors of that ancient car—losing instrumental band and strings, 3 teaching assistants, office clerical worker and speech/language therapist, co-curricular stipends (offerings) and special education summer offerings. Programmatic dismantling is taking place with the end of the music program and the insufficient Birth to 3 Program. All of the components are there about the positive impact that the music program has in its first and second years at the elementary level. Data supports the impact that B23 has on early childhood. Our accountability is the students who sit in front of us every day who trust us.

Board members were unanimous in commendation for her presentation. Dr. O'Flynn remarked that it makes a very clear picture of the deficiencies. He asked how the staff is dealing with the stress. She answered that the staff deals by tweaking and pushing. Mr. Nylen said he hoped priorities to build a new school aren't happening at the same time that we are dismantling what goes on inside that school. Dr. Gresh asked what she would like done and Mrs. McAdams replied that we must reinvest for a major overhaul. Mrs. Bauman sadly commented that the reality is that there is no more money. Mr. Hopping repeated his question to the administrators and now to Mrs. McAdams re her feeling now after several years in the system. She said as a young professional, great things were being done and students and visitors were coming. Now it is disheartening as we watch peers pull away and asks if there is hope of competing again.

Mr. Nylen moved, seconded by Dr. Gresh, to take the FY'16 Winthrop School budget under advisement. UNANIMOUS.

## B. CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION BUDGET

Dr. Hart introduced Beverly Hegedus, fulltime Director of Pupil Personnel Services, who is giving consistency now in site-based management and building-based autonomy with a program manager in each of the schools. The downside now

is that the system requires sustenance from school to school. Mrs. Hegedus BUDGET presented on Powerpoint several slides detailing program managers' duties, liaisons with service providers, stewardship of resources, creative initiatives, and effective decision making. Effective decisions are twofold: (1) based first and foremost on the needs of the students and (1) grounded in the knowledge of DESE requirements and best practices.

The Board thanked her for her presentation and asked questions. Mr. Nylen asked about the trend of increasing costs and if it will continue. She called it a partnership. Ms. Player asked about rethinking the students who are in out-of-district placement.

Dr. Hart continued with the other District budget segments. He reviewed past cuts and missing parts: professional development (PD), technology, and maintenance of buildings. "Vision" cuts currently are Compass, technology and professional learning community (PLC) stipends, part-time technology director, elementary curriculum specialist and STEAM positions. He reviewed the thinking that international educators advocate for change with Common Core and Successful Habits of Mind (SHOM). We create the environment, he said, for the innovators. Progress made on mutual fronts include the Payne grants (Feoffees) providing PLC, technology, PD, and student leadership. Also, the mini-grants, STEM, etc., the Winthrop School building study, capital projects, clean buildings with better management under Mr. Hodge, and technology infrastructure. Cuts in positions total FTE 9.77. This community wants, deserves, and has the capacity to be a model for the State.

Dr. O'Flynn thanked Dr. Hart for an inspiring and appropriate message and said that it is imperative that focus be on the general message of cutting music, Birth to 3, athletics—things that deserve to be replaced. Mr. Hopping remarked that 25 cuts were made a year ago, which were not restored because of the failed override, and now the schools are in trouble and people need to hear that. We have principals, staff, and kids who love what they are doing, get results, but "ok" is NOT good enough. Dr. Gresh urged emphasis to the townspeople on how students are learning in different ways from years ago, more of an apprentice type of happening.

Mrs. Bauman asked about the \$91,000 in integrated technology. Ms. Cuff explained that the Technology Director has her budget for current technology infrastructure which is looking at a three-year lease agreement so that there will always be transition in and out for new technology, replacement parts, and services for technology.

There was question about the Buildings/Grounds budget. In discussion, Ms. Cuff informed the Board that Mr. Hodge has each school tracked separately and suggested that he might come to a meeting to explain.

Dr. O'Flynn moved, seconded by Ms. Player, to take the FY'16 District Central Office budget under advisement. UNANIMOUS. Mr. Hopping thanked Dr. Hart and the building administrators, parents, and staff who attended the two-night sessions.

II. CONSENT

Mr. Hopping moved, seconded by Ms. Player, to accept the Consent Agenda as follows: Minutes of January 22, 2015, Open Session. UNANIMOUS.

III. ADJOURNMENT

Player moved, Nysten seconded, to adjourn at 10:26 p.m.