

Winchester Public Schools
Winchester, MA 01890
May 3, 2005

Roll Call

Notice having been given in accordance with the requirements of law, a meeting of the School Committee was held at 7:14 p.m. on Tuesday, May 3, 2005, in the Lynch Elementary School Library. Present were Ms. Bodie, Ms. Swiger, Dr. Kounaves, Mr. O'Connor, Mr. Shindelman, Director of Finance Mr. Rippin, Assistant Superintendent Dr. Kerble, and Superintendent Marini.

Public Comment

Ms. Carolyn Hintlian, Co-Chair of the Winchester Special Education Parents' Advisory Council (PAC), spoke to the committee with concerns regarding what had transpired at the April 26th school committee meeting. The PAC requested that the FY06 special education budget be revised to reflect the expected increase in next year's Circuit Breaker funding. Ms. Hintlian stated that the Circuit Breaker money is intended to defray the high costs of educating special education students is being used to cover deficits in food service and transportation, two programs that should be self-supporting because they are supported by user fees. If the Circuit Breaker money was applied to the \$250K special education cut slated for FY06 the money would be applied to personnel, which will assist in allowing our special education students to remain in their home school, reducing the out of district costs.

Ms. Bodie stated that it seemed appropriate to respond to PAC's concerns. Mr. Rippin described the Circuit Breaker inception and how the claims are calculated. Mr. Rippin stated that what we submit for FY04 is the basis for FY05 and follows through in consecutive years.

Student Representatives

Meg MacCaughey and Brett Howley joined the committee to report on the recent events at Winchester High School. The first annual Youth Service Day is this Saturday from 2-6 p.m. with many students signed up for the Youth Center and Connect and Commit activities. There will be a toga car wash from 1-4 p.m. this Saturday, sponsored by the sophomore class. There will be a PAL meeting next Thursday at 2:30 p.m. The program is designed for upper classmen to mentor incoming freshman and assist them in the transition from middle to high school. The Strawberry Pops will take place on May 19th under the prom tent at Manchester Field.

Mr. Gwin sent home a letter to parents regarding a junior semi and senior prom bomb threat. The police are actively investigating the threat and the general morale of the students is fine. The junior semi was moved up to Friday, May 13th due to low ticket

sales. This was due in part because many of the students were partaking in out of state field trips on the initially scheduled date. Also, the senior prom will go forward.

Dr. Marini reported that the investigation is active and Dan Perinick, the school resource officer, has been working closely with STARS, who have been very helpful in this matter.

Superintendent's Report

Bob O'Connor introduced Bob Belicki, President of the Youth Soccer Club, along with Paul Austin and Coach Scanlon. The Winchester Soccer Club has made an offer to donate lights for the Little Lynch Field to allow players to practice in the early evening hours. With the increase in population of youth and the limited number of fields, having lights on the field would allow for practice time which would otherwise not be available. The field would be shared with lacrosse and field hockey. The lights would not be used for games because the field is geared for youth soccer. The Soccer Club asked school committee permission to install four 40' light poles with two lights on each pole at the Lynch field. The Club would pay for the installation of the lights and care would be taken during installation to not harm the field. If approved by the school committee the Youth Soccer Club would contact all of the abutters to the field to inform them of the proposal.

On a motion by Mr. O'Connor, seconded by Ms. Swiger, the committee unanimously

VOTED to approve the plan for the Winchester Soccer Club to address the abutters for a public hearing at a future date on the proposed installation of four light poles on Little Lynch Field.

Update on The Promise Fund

Dr. Marini invited Ms. Caron Connolly to join the committee. Ms. Connolly stated that \$330,000 has been collected to date. At Monday's town meeting it was announced that there was a potential \$3M in revenues that would be applied to the town's budget. The Promise Fund believes that the town is responsible for public funds and they will continue to reach their goal of \$660,000. The school committee asked for the money in good faith with the knowledge that there was no additional money in the town budget available. The Board of Selectman, the school committee, and Fincom are reviewing the additional funds. Ms. Bodie stated that the issue the committee is facing is what should be the request to the town for additional funds that are now available.

Proposed FY06 Budget

Dr. Marini provided the school committee with an overview of the budget beginning with a historical perspective of the 2002 override vote, the reduction in state aid, and the budget needs of the school system. Dr. Marini continued with a detailed description of

the reductions that took place in FY04, FY05, and FY06. Dr. Marini outlined the programmatic impact to the system which includes larger class sizes, reductions in foreign language, exploratory subjects, music and art, supplied and materials, special education staff, and increased user fees.

In light of the \$3M revenue now available the committee discussed how to determine the amount to ask town meeting for. The Promise Fund was considered in the discussion as well.

On a motion by Ms. Swiger, seconded by Dr. Kounaves the committee

VOTED to request \$642,500 from the town meeting for additional appropriations for the FY06 school budget.

The **motion was withdrawn** after a discussion regarding funding for the school resource officer.

On a motion by Ms. Swiger, seconded by Dr. Kounaves, the committee

VOTED to ask town meeting for \$26,254,312 as the school budget for the FY06 school year for a \$657,500 increase over the town Manager's recommended budget for FY06.

Mr. Schindelman voted in the negative, the motion passed 4-1.

There was a brief recess.

Retaining Students in Winchester

Robert Belmont, Administrator of Pupil Services, presented an overview of the school committee and school district's responsibilities to special education programming. Mr. Belmont stated that each student with a disability has the right to a "free and appropriate public education" per the Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 71B, Special Education Regulations at 603 CMR, Section 28.00, chapter 766, and the federal special education law for individuals with disabilities, known as IDEA-2204. A "free and appropriate public education" includes general education and special education and when appropriate related services such as speech therapy, physical therapy, occupational therapy, assistive technology services, school psychology services, and special education transportation at public expenses and under public supervision.

Mr. Belmont reviewed the placement considerations, and the costs associated with day programs as well as residential programs. Mr. Belmont discussed the positive interventions used to return students with disabilities back to the Winchester Public Schools. Mr. Belmont also provided an overview of the programs now offered in

Winchester to assist students in being educated in their neighborhood schools having access to the general education curriculum and special education.

Mr. Belmont reviewed the importance of the early childhood program. He indicated the need for a language based program. Without such a program many parents will be requesting out of district placements. However, space for such a program is an issue. The Lynch school would be able to accommodate such a program for one year.

Transportation costs for this year is approximately \$450,000, and were not included in Mr. Belmont's figures.

EFPBC Vacancy

Ms. Bodie stated the need to solicit applications for the EFPBC school representative. Interested candidates may indicate their interest by forwarding a letter of interest and resume to the superintendent's office at 154 Horn Pond Brook Road, Winchester, MA 01890. The notification will be included in school newsletters as well as cable television.

School Committee Reports

Ms. Bodie stated that a Fund the Future rally will take place on Tuesday, May 10th at 11:30 a.m. at the state house, Nurses Hall. The rally is to support education financially and all are invited to attend and support the education of our children.
One hour rally

Next Meeting Date

The next meeting of the school committee will take place on Tuesday, May 10, 2005.

Calendar – 3rd Reading

Dr. Kerble presented the calendar for the 2005-2006 school year. Dr. Kerble had suggestions of including additional dates such as MCAS testing dates, SAT dates and other holidays on the back of the calendar. This information would not need to be approved by the school committee.

On a motion by Ms. Swiger, seconded by Mr. O'Connor, the committee unanimously

**VOTED to accept the Winchester Public School calendar
as presented for the 2005-2006 school year.**

Approval of Minutes

On a motion by Ms. Swiger, seconded by Dr. Kounaves, the committee unanimously

**VOTED to approve the minutes of the April 26th
School committee meeting as presented.**

On a motion by Ms. Swiger, seconded by Mr. O'Connor, the committee unanimously

**VOTED to approve the executive session minutes
of the April 9th school committee as presented and
place in the confidential file.**

Roll Call

Executive Session

There was a brief executive session for purpose of negotiations.

Adjournment

The committee voted to adjourn at 11:16 p.m.

V. James Marini