

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE STOUGHTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE
HELD ON TUESDAY, JULY 26, 2016
TELEVISION STUDIO, STOUGHTON HIGH SCHOOL**

A regular meeting of the Stoughton School Committee was held on Tuesday, July 26, 2016 in the Television Studio at Stoughton High School at 7:30 p.m.

Present were Katie Pina-Enokian, Chair, Molly Cochran, Vice Chair, Joaquin Soares, Anita Hill, Joseph McDonough, Dr. Marguerite Rizzi, Superintendent, and Jonathan Ford, Deputy Superintendent

Pledge of Allegiance

Public Comment – None

Request for Waiver – South Shore Theatre Works – Richard Bento

Mr. Bento from the South Shore Theatre Works is requesting a waiver of the school fee. They are a new community theatre group and doing a production of Annie Jr. This is for young performers (under the age of 18.) There are approximately 50 performers and about 30 of those are from Stoughton. Mr. Bento said they understand some of the fees cannot be waived, but since school is not in session at this time, they are seeking a waiver of the rental fee.

Mr. McDonough asked how long the theatre group been together. Mr. Bento said they started in April of this year. This would be the first production.

Mr. McDonough asked if there is precedence to waive fees for non-profit organizations. Dr. Rizzi said there was as long as it is a Stoughton based non-profit. Mr. Bento said it was.

Mr. Soares asked where the proceeds would go? Mr. Bento said they would go back into the theatre company for future shows. They have an ambitious schedule over the next year. They are hoping to put on five shows. Some will be for adults and some are junior productions.

Ms. Cochran said she was acquainted with Mr. Bento since he was involved with a production of Annie at the Starline her daughter was in. She spoke highly of Mr. Bento and said she is hopeful this Committee supports this request.

Mr. Soares made a motion to request that Mr. Bento not pay fees for this production. Ms. Cochran clarified that the rental fee would be waived but not the custodial fees. Mr. Soares said that is correct. Ms. Hill seconded the motion. Motion unanimously passed.

Dr. Robert G. O'Donnell Middle School Handbook – Mr. Colantonio

Mr. Colantonio went over some of the changes being made to the Middle School Handbook. He said the principals of the other schools, from the high school to the elementary schools, collaborated together. He mentioned some things in the handbook are not necessarily new procedures to the Middle School.

He said they are particularly concerned about keeping “School Forms” up-to-date with appropriate telephone numbers, custody issues, etc. Also a “chain of command” guideline for parents to follow has been inserted into the handbook. This is almost identical to the elementary schools language.

Chaperones/Volunteers language has been clarified regarding CORI forms, fingerprinting, etc. In the past this was sent as a separate letter. However, they felt it would be helpful to parents to have it in the handbook.

Mr. Colantonio said they have addressed the Parent Portal in the handbook. It was not made part of the handbook in the past but this year they felt it should be addressed. The Portal is a powerful tool used to link school and home together. He said that grades are posted electronically to the Portal. Student report cards will still be mailed home, but most parents will know their child’s grades by checking the portal.

They are moving to trimesters this year so the word semester has been replaced with trimester. Mr. McDonough asked if they students would be taking end of trimester exams and would they be required to remember an extra 15 days of material. Mr. Colantonio said yes they would. However, each department would be responsible for administering their own exam schedules. The science department will move in that direction immediately.

As the evolution of the handbook grows they have added language regarding the responsibility student have for school issued technology. They are starting a program next year where each student would be issued a Chrome Book for use through out the day and returning them at the end of the school day.

The language regarding the dress code has been cleaned up and clarified to be more in line with today’s fashions.

Mr. Colantonio said some language and subsections have been included prohibiting the use of tobacco in any form or possessing drug and/or tobacco paraphernalia.

The code of conduct has been revised extensively. They have added the possibility of out of school suspension for type 3 offenses. The goal is to limit out of school suspensions as much as possible.

The School Council added a list of student and family resources to the back of the handbook for parental use. Mr. Colantonio felt this was going to be a helpful resource for parents and students.

Dr. Rizzi thanked all of the principals at each level who worked together on these handbooks for presentation to the School Committee.

Elementary Handbook – Maureen Mulvey

Ms. Mulvey started her presentation by acknowledging the work performed by Lynne Jardin on this handbook.

Ms. Mulvey stated this draft of the handbook has been reformatted to make it clearer. There are five sections and all of the sections were taken from the previous school year with the exception of three additions to the handbook.

The first addition to the handbook is communication. The draft clarifies the policy for parents to contact classroom teachers for issues relating to classroom policies and expectations, a student's individual grade, etc.

The second addition being proposed is clarification of the no school/delayed opening procedures. The former handbook references viewing the TV or listening to the radio but now we send a one-call blast to notify parents of school delays.

The third addition is the fingerprinting policy. Ms. Mulvey said letters are sent to parents at the beginning of the school year with information about CORI applications and now advising parents that if they have unsupervised contact with students, they must be fingerprinted. The handbook will now provide them with the proper information to accomplish this.

Mr. Soares asked that Page 17 of the handbook reads "School District to comply with the requirements FERPA." It should read, "School District to comply with the requirements of FERPA."

Ratification of Custodians Contract – 2016-2019

Dr. Rizzi said the School Committee discussed this in executive session; the union has ratified the contract, so it is now back to the School Committee for a vote.

Mr. Soares questioned Article XXIV as regards the sick leave donation. He wanted to make sure the change from 3 years to 1 year was correct and not a typo. Dr. Rizzi said it is correct and no one had a problem with it.

Motion made by Anita Hill, seconded by Joaquin Soares to accept the Memorandum of Agreement between the Stoughton School Committee and the Custodian Union. Motion passed unanimously.

Ratification of Unit B Contract – 2016-2017 & 2017-2020

Motion made by Joseph McDonough, seconded by Molly Cochran to accept the Memorandum of Agreement between the Stoughton School Committee and Stoughton Teachers' Association Unit B for the period of July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Joseph McDonough, seconded by Joaquin Soares to accept the Memorandum of Agreement between the Stoughton School Committee and Stoughton Teachers' Association Unit B for the period of July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2020. Motion passed unanimously.

Summer Meeting Schedule

Ms. Pina-Enokian advised the Committee members that they no longer have a recording secretary. She asked Dr. Rizzi if it would be possible to forego an August meeting and focus on finding a permanent recording secretary solution. Dr. Rizzi said that would be okay because they handbooks have been presented and the contracts ratified. The administration has no more issues to bring forward this summer. Should there be a presentment of a special town meeting, the administration would bring that to the attention of the School Committee, but they do not foresee that at this time.

Ms. Pina-Enokian stated that the next scheduled meeting will be held on September 13, 2016 and is hopeful the recording secretary issue will be resolved.

Correspondence

Ms. Cochran read a letter from Joyce Hussein to the School Committee, Dr. Rizzi, and the School Principals dated July 26, 2016 regarding the Safe Routes to School presentation at the State House. Ms. Hussein acknowledged the Gibbons Elementary School receiving the Exemplary Program Award as well as Sally Borges receiving the Superhero of the Year Award. Ms. Hussein specifically acknowledged Moss Lynch, the School Outreach Coordinator for his commitment to Stoughton's Program.

Old Business

a. Various Meeting Reports

Ms. Pina-Enokian informed the other members that since their last meeting the School Building Committee has met to discuss design features of the new high school. The Building Committee will meet again on August 14, 2016.

Dr. Rizzi said the architects immediately got to work after the Town vote to draw specific plans that a builder could utilize.

Ms. Hill said she had an update on North River Collaborative. During the orientation they were told that the current Executive Director is leaving. North River is set to begin interviewing candidates for this position next week.

Open Meeting Law Complaints – Mr. Soares

Ms. Hill read the open meeting law complaint filed by Joaquin Soares on July 1, 2016 which references the Stoughton School Committee meeting of June 7, 2016. The Complaint reads as follows:

Agenda posed for the June 7, 2016 meeting of the Stoughton School Committee listed three topics to be discussed in executive session: (1) “Open Meeting Law Complaints,” (2) “Acceptance of Executive Session Minutes,” and (3) Update on Stoughton Teachers Association Grievances.”

During the executive session, item (3) entailed a brief update from the superintendent.

Item (2), was in response to the four OML complaints I had submitted to the School Committee highlighting serious deficiencies in the four sets of executive session minutes Committee had approved earlier, despite my objections. At June 7 executive session, I stated that I was not satisfied with the proposed changes.

The bulk of the time in executive session was spent to put me on trial for filing the 7 OML complaints to date. Superintendent Rizzi, and my fellow school committee members took turns attacking and scolding me for not being a team player, for spending district money to evaluate my OML complaints, and for wasting everyone’s time during public meetings. Superintendent spent executive session time criticizing even the former school committee chair who is no longer on the committee.

Open Meeting Law permits executive sessions for narrowly defined specified topics. Stoughton School Committee abused the executive session to intimidate and to tame me, an elected member. Since this is not one of the topics permitted by OML, I assert Stoughton School Committee violated the Open Meeting Law on June 7, 2016.

Additionally, as Count 2, I submit that the agent failed to contain enough detail and accuracy about the difference between the OM Law complaints (item a) and the acceptance of the Executive Session minutes (item b) which are on and the same. Therefore a member of the public who did not attend the meeting could read the minutes and not have a clear understanding of what occurred. It would assume that there were two topics, one an OML complaint and two, acceptance of minutes of four distinct dated meetings. Document #1 Minutes of June 7 ,2016.

What action do you want the public body to take in response to your complaint?

1) The SC should acknowledge that it violated the OML by abusing executive session privilege.

1) The SC chair and superintendent (creators of the agenda) should acknowledge that they violated the OML on June 7, 2016 by intentionally misleading the public with a confusing meeting notice.

2) The Committee and the superintendent should pledge to create accurate minutes/agendas in the future, and pledge not to abuse the executive session again.

Ms. Pina-Enokian said she is speaking only for herself but feels this Complaint should go forward to the Attorney General's Office because she feels that what is being said is not factual.

Ms. Cochran stated she had no comment.

Motion made by Anita Hill, seconded by Joseph McDonough, "To leave the executive session and agenda of the June 7, 2016 as they are and to go forward to the Attorney General's Office. Motion passed 4-1.

Dr. Rizzi clarified by saying some members of the School Committee did not wish to take any action and wanted it to go to the Attorney General's Office for an opinion.

Ms. Hill read the open meeting law complaint filed by Joaquin Soares on July 1, 2016 which references the Stoughton School Committee meeting of June 21, 2016. The Complaint reads as follows:

Agenda for the June 21, 2016 meeting of the Stoughton School Committee included, as item 10, "Superintendent Goal Setting Discussion."

During the meeting, a discussion was held. However, the school committee went beyond the properly posted agenda and voted to accept the superintendent's goals, despite my objections. Before the vote was taken, I objected on the grounds that the vote would violate the Open Meeting Law because the agenda did not say there would be a vote. Superintendent Marguerite Rizzi assured the School Committee members that the vote would not violate the OML.

Therefore, I assert the Stoughton School Committee violated the Open Meeting Law twice on June 21, 2016, because the meeting notice failed to inform the public that the Chair intended to take a vote on the goals proposed by the Superintendent as well as voting on Charms Collaborative which is also not noted on the agenda.

I am appalled that our highly paid superintendent (Dr. Rizzi) misled the Committee to violate the Open Meeting Law. Considering the facts that this particular vote was to accept the goals proposed by Dr. Rizzi, and that superintendents are required to be knowledgeable about the Open Meeting Law, I conclude that the Superintendent's act as deliberate.

I am also appalled that my fellow Committee members failed to err on the safe side, when I brought the OML violation issue to their attention, before even a motion was made.

Document #1, June 21 ,2016 agenda

What action do you want the public body to take in response to your complaint?

- 1) The Committee should void the votes taken on 6/21 on agenda item 10 and 8.
- 2) The vote for these two items should be posed “properly” I a future meeting.
- 3) Superintendent Rizzi should publicly admit that she misled the School Committee to violate the OML on 6/21/16.
- 4) It is important that the rules of the OMLaw are followed properly. This will make the 8th OML complaint I have instituted.

Ms. Pina-Enokian stated that when reading the Open Meeting Law an agenda is prepared for the Board to be able to take any action on the agenda so again she feels this should go forward to the Attorney General’s Office because they were not in violation of any Open Meeting Law.

Ms. Hill agreed with Ms. Pina-Enokian and went on to say that votes can be taken on items discussed on the agenda. This has always been the practice.

Motion made by Anita Hill, seconded by Molly Cochran, “To not amend the June 21, 2016 meeting minutes and continue on to the Attorney General’s Office.” Motion passed 4-1.

Other Matters

Approval of Minutes – Regular Meetings March 22 and April 12 & 26, 2016

Ms. Pina-Enokian reiterated the need for a recording secretary for the School Committee if anyone is interested.

Ms. Pina-Enokian said the next item on the agenda is approval of the March 22, 2016 Regular Meeting Minutes. Mr. Soares said he had changes he would like to have made in these Minutes. He directed the Committee’s attention to Page 5 of the Regular Meeting Minutes where it states, “Mr. Soares proceeded to name a number of policy points that may be of interest to the audience: J: FABD. J:ICFB and J:KAA.” He would like the actual titles to be inserted. J:FABD is Homeless Student Enrollment Rights and Services. J:ICFB is Intervention Plan. J:KAA is Physical Restraint of Students. He then directed the members to the bottom of that page and asked that title K:F is Policy Covers the Use of School Facilities and K:LG is Relations With Police Authority be inserted.

Mr. Soares directed the member’s attention to Page 7 of these Minutes where it says, “Goal 1:Professional Practice Goal: Met. Mr. Soares objects to the language “the Committee as a whole believes that Dr. Rizzi had met this goal.” He stated he is part of the whole and he does not believe she has met this goal and feels this should be changed. Ms. Pina-Enokian suggested putting in “the majority of the Committee”

instead of “the Committee as a whole.” Ms. Hill and Mr. Soares agreed with this language.

Mr. Soares asked where could the “See 2016-3-16 Disagree with Dr. Rizzi’s Formative Assessment Report” be found. Ms. Hill said she did not recall the Report being at that meeting. She went on to say these were goals from the top of the page from the comments made by the members and Ms. Pina-Enokian included the quotes as a whole. These were written on an evaluation sheet, which is open for public comment. Mr. Soares said, “okay.”

Motion made by Anita Hill, seconded by Molly Cochran, “To accept the amended School Committee Minutes of March 22, 2016.

Mr. McDonough asked Mr. Soares before the vote was taken if he was amending these Minutes as if the Report in question was at the meeting. Mr. Soares felt it should be made a part of the Minutes. Mr. McDonough said it is just being quoted. Mr. Soares said since it is quoted, it should be in there. Mr. McDonough felt the referenced report should not be part of the Minutes because it was not at the meeting. Only the quote was referenced not the report it was from. Mr. Soares said he would accept that the document was not there at the meeting.

Vote: Motion passed 4-1.

Ms. Cochran requested clarification that Mr. Soares requested many amendments, that the School Committee voted to approve the minutes as amended, but Mr. Soares voted against the adoption of the minutes as amended.

Acceptance of Regular Meeting Minutes of April 12, 2016

Ms. Pina-Enokian advised the members that CPAC is spelled wrong. It should be S-SEPAC and this change will be made through out the document.

Ms. Hill said Pat Basler’s name is spelled incorrectly and should be amended.

Ms. Hill directed the committee members’ attention to “Other Matters” where it says, “accusations that the Stoughton Public Schools administration is ”deception and corruption” is not grammatically correct. Ms. Cochran said it is important to get that right even if we are paraphrasing.

Ms. Hill also requested the sentence starting with “She wanted to make sure the audience is aware that those were **his** words”. Ms. Hill would like it to read, “Those were **the candidate’s** words.” Ms. Cochran agreed and went on to say the rest of the sentence should be: “and there were never any facts **to** substantiate that.”

Ms. Cochran also felt it would be helpful if the new recording secretary number the pages on the minutes in the future.

Motion made by Anita Hill, seconded by Molly Cochran, "To accept the Regular Meeting Minutes of the Stoughton School Committee of April 12, 2016 as amended." Motion unanimously passed.

Motion made by Joseph McDonough, seconded by Anita Hill, "To accept the Regular Meeting Minutes of the Stoughton School Committee of April 26, 2016 as amended." Motion unanimously passed.

Financial Warrants – To be signed.

List of Documents/Exhibits

Email from Richard Bento of the South Shore Theatre Works
Draft Copy of Robert G. O'Donnell Middle School Student and Parent Handbook
Draft Copy of Elementary Schools' Student and Parent Handbook
Memorandum of Agreement between Stoughton School Committee and Custodians
Memorandum of Agreement between Unit B, July 1, 2016
through June 30, 2017 and July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2020.
Open Meeting Law Complaint of Joaquin Soares – for June 7, 2016 meeting
Open Meeting Law Complaint of Joaquin Soares – for June 21, 2016 meeting
Draft of March 22, 2016 Minutes
Draft of April 12, 2016 Minutes
Draft of April 26, 2016 Minutes

Executive Session

Acceptance of Minutes-Executive Session April 12 & 26, 2016

- a. Stoughton Teachers Association – Level Three Grievance**
- b. Update on various STA Grievances**
- c. Negotiations with non-union employee - Superintendent**

Motion made by Anita Hill, seconded by Joseph McDonough, to go into Executive Session to discuss: Acceptance of Minutes-Executive Session April 12 & 26, 2016; a. Stoughton Teachers Association – Level Three Grievance; b. Update on various STA Grievances; c. Negotiations with non-union employee - Superintendent. A unanimous roll call vote was taken. The meeting will not reconvene in open session and will adjourn from Executive Session at the conclusion of the above-stated business. Minutes of Executive Session are separate in accordance and compliance with Chapter 303 of the Acts of 1975, which permits the votes and proceedings in Executive Session may be kept private as long as privacy will serve the purpose for which the Executive Session was called.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Next Regular Meeting – September 13, 2016
Respectfully submitted by Joanne Lurette

ACCEPTED AS AMENDED SEPTEMBER 13, 2016 MEETING