

**JOINT ACTON PUBLIC (APSC) and ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL (ABRSC)
and ACTON-BOXBOROUGH TRANSITIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (ABTSC)
MEETINGS minutes (approved 5/1/14)**

Library
R.J. Grey Junior High School

April 3, 2014
7:00 p.m. Joint ABTSC/ABRSC/APSC Meeting
Followed by Joint ABRSC/APSC Executive Session

Members Present: Brigid Bieber, Mary Brolin, Dennis Bruce, Michael Coppelino, Kim McOsker, Maria Neyland, Paul Murphy, Deanne O'Sullivan, Kristina Rychlik
Members Absent: none
Others: Don Aicardi, Marie Altieri, Deborah Bookis, Liza Huber, Steve Mills, Beth Petr

JOINT APSC/ABRSC/ABTSC OPEN MEETING

1. The Acton-Boxborough Transitional and Regional School Committees were called to order at 7:01 p.m. by Chairperson Maria Neyland. The Acton Public School Committee was called to order at 7:01 p.m. by Chairperson Dennis Bruce.
2. **“The Impact of Food Choices on Climate Change and the Environment”**
R.J. Grey Junior High School students Anmol Sakarda and Gaurav Asthana did an excellent presentation for the Committee that they have done for several local committees and organizations. They asked for more vegetarian options, including hot entrees, in the lunchroom and urged AB to be an example for other schools.
3. **Chairmen’s Introduction**
Maria Neyland and the Committee thanked Kim McOsker for her dedicated service, and presented her with flowers and a chair.
4. **Statement of Warrant**
APS Warrant #201420 dated 4/1/14 in the amount of \$174,771.24 was signed by the Chair and circulated to the Committee for signatures. ABRSD Warrant #14-020 dated 4/3/14 in the amount of \$1,780,963.19 was signed by the Chair and circulated to the Committee for signatures. Meeting minutes will be done at the next meeting.
5. **Public Participation - none**
6. **Leary Field Track Update**
JD Head reported that the bad winter has had some effect on the project, although the schedule is still on time and graduation will not be impacted. The project is expected to be about \$1000 over budget. Kristina Rychlik thanked all of the track coaches for being so flexible and understanding about explaining the project to their athletes.
7. **Recommendation to Approve ABRHS Field Trip to Norway**
Brigid Bieber moved, Paul Murphy seconded and it was unanimously,
VOTED: to approve the field trip to Norway during February 2015 vacation.
8. **Response to Sped PAC concerns from 3/20/14 School Committee meeting**
Liza Huber thanked the School Committee for supporting the special education needs for next year. She emphasized that the ongoing advocacy for the 6-8th grade Coordinator that

was not ultimately funded, should not take away from the importance of and gratitude for the addition of the full time assistant principals. She noted that the assistant principals provide and will continue to provide support for all children, including those with special needs. Liza expects to be back next year to discuss a request for this coordinator again.

Liza and Lynne Newman met with Nancy Sherburne and Bill Guthlein of the Sped PAC to elaborate on their concerns for next year, including the need to keep the bar high enough with special education staff given how much time they have to spend doing observations and evaluations. Liza is confident that the staff consider the work load a shared burden and they will make it work. Liza thanked Bill and Nancy for their years of strong ongoing support and effective advocacy on behalf of the children. Mike Coppolino thanked Bill and Nancy for their extremely dedicated service to the kids stating, "They make us a better district."

9. **FY15 Budget Update**

1. Acton Town Meeting FY15 Proposed ABRSD Budget Booklet
 - i. Revised page 2 and 3 (FY15 Budget Summary by Character Code and Table 6 Analysis of Assessments)
2. Letter of Agreement – Middlesex Retirement Board Assessments (*fyi only*)
3. Revised Superintendent's School Budget Process memo, 3/21/14

Dr. Mills stated that one of the biggest difficulties for this budget process has been trying to compare next year's budget to what it might have looked like if we were regionalized fully this year. He stated that this is virtually impossible given the 3 distinctly different budgets this year (Acton Public Schools, Blanchard School and the ABRSD). He noted that since the Budget Books for Town Meeting were printed, the Table of Assessments (Table 6 on page 3) has changed. He noted the many positive achievements recently including Free Cash being replenished more than used since he arrived, the emphasis on understanding OPEB and funding it for the past three years, and the overall tightening of the budgets. Regarding sustainability, Dr. Mills understands the concern, but stated that it will be up to Superintendent-elect Glenn Brand and future School Committees to make the decisions that will determine sustainability. The Selectmen set the tax rate for future years and then those School Committee members can set their priorities and cut expenses or consider an override if needed. He is proud that Standard and Poors has given the District their best AAA bond rating, and that he leaves the District in very good standing.

10. **ABTSC PreK – 12 Regionalization Update**

1. **Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee VOTE**
The Committee considered the proposed documents posted with the 4/3/14 meeting materials on <http://ab.mec.edu/about/meetings.shtml>

Brigid Bieber moved, Dennis Bruce seconded, and it was *unanimously VOTED*:

1. To approve that certain Intermunicipal Agreement (the "Agreement") between the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District (the "District") and the Town of Acton (the "Town"), with its Exhibits, in the form presented to the Committee at its April 3, 2014 meeting.
2. To authorize the Chair of the Committee to execute the Agreement on behalf of the Committee.
3. To approve that certain Memorandum of Understanding (the "MOU") between the District and the Town in the form presented to the Committee at its April 3, 2014 meeting.

4. To authorize the Chair of the Committee to execute the MOU on behalf of the Committee.
5. To authorize the Superintendent of Schools to take all actions on behalf of the Committee that are reasonably necessary, in the judgment of the Superintendent of Schools, to complete the acquisition of various properties and the conveyance of various easements in accordance with the Agreement, including without limitation executing all deeds, easements, a bill of sale, assignments of contracts, closing forms, closing documents, and settlement statements.

2. **Acton-Boxborough Transitional School Committee VOTE**

The Committee considered the proposed documents posted with the 4/3/14 meeting materials on <http://ab.mec.edu/about/meetings.shtml>

Dennis Bruce moved, Mary Broolin seconded, and it was *unanimously VOTED*:

1. To approve that certain intermunicipal Agreement (the "Agreement") between the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District (the "District") and the Town of Acton (the "Town"), with its Exhibits, in the form presented to the Committee at its April 3, 2014 meeting.
2. To authorize the Chair of the Committee to execute the Agreement on behalf of the Committee.
3. To approve that certain Memorandum of Understanding (the "MOU") between the District and the Town in the form presented to the Committee at its April 3, 2014 meeting.
4. To authorize the Chair of the Committee to execute the MOU on behalf of the Committee.
5. To authorize the Superintendent of Schools to take all actions on behalf of the Committee that are reasonably necessary, in the judgment of the Superintendent of Schools, to complete the acquisition of various properties and the conveyance of various easements in accordance with the Agreement, including without limitation executing all deeds, easements, a bill of sale, assignments of contracts, closing forms, closing documents, and settlement statements.

3. **Acton Public School Committee VOTE**

The Committee considered the proposed documents posted with the 4/3/14 meeting materials on <http://ab.mec.edu/about/meetings.shtml>

Michael Coppolino moved, Paul Murphy seconded, and it was *unanimously VOTED*:

1. To approve that certain intermunicipal Agreement (the "Agreement") between the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District (the "District") and the Town of Acton (the "Town"), with its Exhibits, in the form presented to the Committee at its April 3, 2014 meeting.
2. To authorize the Chair of the Committee to execute the Agreement on behalf of the Committee.
3. To approve that certain Memorandum of Understanding (the "MOU") between the District and the Town in the form presented to the Committee at its April 3, 2014 meeting.

4. To authorize the Chair of the Committee to execute the MOU on behalf of the Committee.
5. To authorize the Superintendent of Schools to take all actions on behalf of the Committee that are reasonably necessary, in the judgment of the Superintendent of Schools, to complete the acquisition of various properties and the conveyance of various easements in accordance with the Agreement, including without limitation executing all deeds, easements, a bill of sale, assignments of contracts, closing forms, closing documents, and settlement statements.

4. **Beneficial Interest Disclosure Statement, Acquisition of Real Property**
This is exhibit R in the Acton MOU and will be signed by the Superintendent.

Brigid Bieber and Maria Neyland thanked everyone who had worked so hard to get our communities to this point. Brigid asked about the contents of the schools and how that would be transferred. Mary Brolin confirmed that anything over \$5000 in value will be listed. Boxborough's Agreement will be considered and voted at the May 1 School Committee meeting. It will be similar to Acton's except for the property transfer.

11. Long Range Strategic Plan (LRSP) Update

Kristina Rychlik and JD Head have joined this Committee headed up by Dr. Mills. A capital committee has been added, chaired by JD Head. The goal is to update the Plan before the end of June so the table is set for next year. Next meeting is April 15.

12. School Committee Member Reports

1. Boxborough Leadership Forum (BLF) – Brigid reported that they went through the budgets, warrants, CPA and Minuteman Tech.
2. Health Insurance Trust (HIT) – Mary Brolin is the new SC representative.
3. Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) Task Force– Dennis reported that the TF has not met recently but there was a presentation on recent legislation that Steve Noone and Dave Clough attended. They will present at Town Meeting next week. Maria asked about the new report that is coming. This will be for the two years ending 2014, but won't be received until after next year's Town Meeting and the FY16 budget is done. The liability for the District will not be known until this time next year.
4. Acton Finance Committee - Dennis reported that FinCom was meeting to revote the new updated Table 6.
5. Acton Board of Selectmen – Paul reported that the Selectmen approved JD Head as a member of the Kelley's Corner Steering Committee. They voted not to recommend the ABRSD Assessment Article but will recommend the three regionalization transfer articles.

13. Acton and Boxborough Local Election/Town Meeting

Dennis thanked Paul Murphy for continuing for another term and Amy Krishnamurthy and Maya Minkin for becoming new Acton School Committee members. Amy will be sworn in after Acton Town Meeting next week. Maya's term begins on July 1st.

Maria explained that Boxborough will vote the revolving accounts transfer, but not the land transfers because they feel the IMA allows the Selectmen to do that. Boxborough's Town Meeting begins May 12 and their election is May 19.

14. Annual Superintendent's Evaluation

Maria Neyland spoke with Dr. Mills about his annual evaluation. Due to his retirement, he would be happy with a written statement from the Committees, instead of the formal process. Maria asked if this was acceptable to everyone. She asked that statements be sent to her by April 18th so she and Dennis can write something for the May 1st meeting.

15. Demographics Survey Results Presentation

Caitlin Hogue, a Doctoral Candidate from Boston College presented her team's findings on the Changing Demographics Survey done by our school district in 2009. Generally, participants believed school is not just academics. There should be a focus on extracurricular activities and developing students into critical thinkers instead of just standardized assessments. Social and emotional support for students is also important, as well as supporting creativity and encouraging citizenship. The study found differences in beliefs between newcomers and long-term residents, but a member wondered whether this could be related to parents having older vs. younger children.

Brigid appreciated that someone outside the district did the review. She noted that she would answer the questions very differently now, based on where her kids are now five years older. She echoed the consensus that while it would be great to do another survey, it is very time consuming. It was agreed that a clear goal and time frame would be needed if it is done again. The Committees agreed to add a discussion of whether and when to do a follow up survey to the Summer Workshop agenda.

The ABTSC was adjourned at 8:44 p.m.

16. JOINT ABRSC/APSC EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 8:45 p.m., it was moved, seconded and unanimously

VOTED by role call: that the **Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee** go into Executive Session (Joint School Committee) to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining.

(YES – Bieber, Brodin, Bruce, Coppolino, McOsker, Murphy, Neyland, O'Sullivan, Rychlik)

Maria Neyland declared that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the Board and the Committee would return to open session for the sole purpose of adjourning.

At 8:45 p.m., it was moved, seconded and unanimously

VOTED by role call: that the **Acton Public School Committee** go into Executive Session (Joint School Committee) to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining.

(YES - Bruce, Coppolino, McOsker, Murphy, O'Sullivan, Rychlik)

Dennis Bruce declared that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the Board and the Committee would return to open session for the sole purpose of adjourning.

The ABRSC and APSC were polled to go out of Executive Session at 10:10 p.m. and were adjourned at that time.

Respectfully submitted,
Beth Petr

List of Documents Used: see agenda