

**NEWBURYPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE
SPECIAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Thursday, June 2, 2011**

**Newburyport High School
Meeting Convened at 7:17 PM**

**Room 118
Bruce Menin Presided**

Present: Steve Cole, Cheryl Sweeney, Bruce Menin, Mayor Donna Holaday, Stephanie Weaver, Nick deKanter, Dan Koen

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Mayor Donna Holaday called the meeting to order at 7:17 PM. A Roll Call of members showed all members present. All those present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

READING OF MISSION STATEMENT:

Mayor Holaday read the Newburyport School Committee Mission Statement.

At this point Bruce Menin took over chairing the meeting and explained the purpose of the meeting.

REVIEW POTENTIAL BUILDING PRESENTATION FOR JUNE 6 PUBLIC HEARING:

Mayor Donna Holaday stated, at a meeting yesterday with the School Building Authority, she received the notebooks, which were distributed tonight to School Committee members.

Assistant Superintendent Deirdre Farrell stated she has received good feedback from the community regarding SOI's. She proceeded to review and explain the notebook "Building With Us" from the School Building Authority to the Committee.

Discussion:

Bruce Menin inquired as to when we would know what the actual reimbursement rate will be. Assistant Superintendent Farrell explained.

Mayor Holaday stated the role of the School Committee and the School Building Authority.

Stephanie Weaver stated, if possible, we should get some teachers to make site visits to get their feedback.

Bruce Menin inquired as to what were the opinions of the differences in procedures some of the members of the Building Committee who have served on a building committee before. Assistant Superintendent Farrell explained.

Cheryl Sweeney asked regarding the sheet detailing costs – are these for model schools? Assistant Superintendent Farrell explained.

Discussion ensued at this point regarding model schools.

Cheryl Sweeney asked when will we know our configuration. Assistant Superintendent Farrell explained. Superintendent Dr. Marc Kerble stated that enrollment dictates cost. He said that if the configuration is 1 – 3 the enrollment will be 500; if the configuration is pre K – 3 the enrollment will be 700.

Dan Koen asked what is the size of the Bresnahan/Brown schools. - 55,000 and 35,000

Nick deKanter said this is our first opportunity to sell this to the community. His concern is that we need to strike a balance on what to sell. What are the characteristics of a model school – why would we want

to get involved in it? It is about the kids. We should provide a simpler calendar to the public. This is our opportunity to show the community how excited we are.

Mayor Holaday said we should show the positives as well as the negatives.

Superintendent Dr. Kerble said there are two things going on – we must make sure the Committee understands and we must make a powerful presentation to the public.

Dan Koen said he was looking at pictures of sample classrooms – how do they compare to what we have. Discussion ensued on this point.

Bruce Menin summarized what must be done:

- Do a summary on SBA and how it works – point out to the public the significantly different process from the High School project. Give a brief explanation of the Model School Program.
- Give an abbreviated time line.

Cheryl Sweeney said it will be important to explain the history of the SOI background.

Stephanie Weaver said pictures are important.

Steve Bergholm said we could possibly find other schools and show before/after pictures.

Discussion ensued as to what should be presented.

Bresnahan School Principal Kristina Davis spoke of common space – gym/cafeteria.

Discussion ensued as to the value of a new Bresnahan School.

Dan Koen spoke of the money we spend on feasibility – we get something for this even if we do not go forward with the new school.

Stephanie Weaver thanked Assistant Superintendent Farrell and Steve Bergholm for all their hard work on this project.

Nick deKanter said we should use figures based on the Superintendent's recommendation.

Dan Koen inquired if the Brown School is sold will the money go on the Bond issue. Mayor Holaday explained.

Dan Koen questioned the figures. Assistant Superintendent Farrell explained.

Nick deKanter said we should go with the higher number.

Mayor Holaday said we should keep it simple. She spoke about the Senior Center.

Assistant Superintendent Farrell said she met with a group of seniors today and toured the Bresnahan School and they exhibited a great deal of positive energy.

Superintendent Dr. Kerble spoke regarding the playing fields at Bresnahan, and losing a baseball field – how will we replace fields?

Discussion ensued regarding playing fields.

Assistant Superintendent Farrell said MSBA is trying to look at saving fields in their study.

Cheryl Sweeney inquired as to information regarding playing fields at the Nock School.

Superintendent Dr. Kerble said this is a tremendous opportunity to transform the city. There will be a beautiful building we can be proud of. He supports a pre K – 3 building and supports a new Bresnahan School. He supports looking at new fields in the city. He supports a 4 – 8 building (a school within a school). When all is done all students will be in new facilities. Seniors are in favor of an education Mayor.

Assistant Superintendent Farrell said she couldn't agree more – this is a wonderful opportunity.

Dan Koen said MSBA is pretty well thought out – we will be in a process that is smoother than what has happened in the past. He is very comfortable with it.

Stephanie Weaver said we have discussed Pre K – 4 – it changes the size of the building. The Brown School staff and community feel part of the community.

Nick deKanter said he envisioned a new campus to be a school within a school format. He spoke of the elimination of an administrator.

Mayor Holaday spoke of the format for Monday night.

Discussion ensued regarding the Monday night format.

Dan Koen inquired if there would be more Public Hearings. Mayor Holaday said yes, a lot more. Nick deKanter said we need conversation regarding the senior center/fields – how to rebuild what goes on in schools to a level of excellence – a long term finance committee is a high priority. Steve Cole said our numbers are going down – a significant number of private schools are attracting our students. Having new facilities will help us maintain our enrollments. We need to sustain our programs and take advantage of building a new school and renovate another. He supports both to bring kids back to our schools – this will show our commitment. Mayor Holaday said she would ask MSBA if they have any data on private schools back to public schools after a building project. Assistant Superintendent Farrell said she has 10 years of data on this and will forward it to the Committee. Dan Koen inquired if MSBA uses choice numbers in their data. Assistant Superintendent Farrell said yes they capture these figures. Stephanie Weaver inquired if we have a backup plan if Pre K – 3 is not approved. Bruce Menin inquired if they say no to Pre K – 3 are not approved maybe we could put Pre K, K in the old Bresnahan School. Mayor Holaday said we need a Plan B. Dan Koen spoke of Pre K – K. Mayor Holaday said we are getting ahead of ourselves. We will ask for Pre-K – 3 together and if they say no then we will come up with a plan B. Discussion ensued on this subject.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Dr. Ralph Orlando, 4 Wm. Hall DR. **CONCERN:** Regarding the feasibility study on the Nock School – make sure you have enough room for what you need - it is bulging at the seams now. Focus on the model school. The community needs to know the facts – selling the Brown, playing fields, etc.

Dominique Dear, Warren Street **CONCERN:** This was an impressive meeting. Your task is in presenting the information Monday evening. She is impressed that senior citizens are behind this too.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion

On a motion by Stephanie Weaver and seconded by Mayor Holaday it was

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting at 9:54 PM.

Motion Passed Unanimously