

Swampscott School Committee
Regular Session Minutes
January 26, 2023

A meeting of the Swampscott School Committee was held in Room B129 at Swampscott High School in Swampscott, MA commencing at 6:02 p.m. with the following members present: Mr. Glenn Paster, SC Chair, Mr. John Giantis, SC Vice Chair, Ms. Amy OConnor, Ms. Carin Marshall and Ms. Suzanne Wright. Also present: Pamela Angelakis, Superintendent of Schools, Cheryl Herrick-Stella, Director of Finance, Martha Sybert and Student Representatives Afia Bottari and Jessie Goodwin. SHS Principal Dennis Kohut participated remotely.

The public will be able to attend virtually in accordance with the Executive Order issued by Governor Baker on March 12, 2020, and extended through March 31, 2023, suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law G.L. c. 304, Section 20. The meeting was recorded and broadcast live on the local cable station.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was none.

COMMITTEE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. OConnor reported she was happy to be back and working on a second round of bargaining with the teacher's union. She also stated she forwarded a presentation that was given to the Board of Selectmen regarding assessments and encouraged all to take a look at it as there were significant increases in assessments.

Ms. Wright encouraged all to attend the Hawthorne idea exchange meeting on Saturday at 10:00 a.m.

Ms. Marshall - None.

Mr. Giantis - None.

Jessie Goodwin - None.

Afia Bottari spoke about the end of the first semester at the High School and internships are starting next week.

SUPERINTENDENT

Ms. Angelakis invited Mr. Kohut to speak on the internships before the presentation on dues/expenses. Mr. Kohut explained that senior project was still on hiatus but that they were working on bringing that back. He explained that most of the internships were within the District and were kids who were interested in education.

A. [Financial support to families for dues/expenses](#) - Mr. Kohut

Mr. Kohut explained that the issue was raised last spring with families who struggled paying for class dues and explained that the issue came up at the end of the year and families reached out seeking financial assistance with class dues when it was discovered there was no written hardship policy covering dues. Ms. Angelakis referred to the equity questions used District wide and there was conversation around what class dues pay for and how they affect activities and graduation. Ms. Wright stated she felt a policy might be out of the Committee's purview, similar to that of PTO/PTF operations as the dues weren't set by the District. There was a lengthy discussion around a potential policy and the subject of the dues. Ms. Angelakis stated the Committee has given her enough guidance and that she and Mr. Kohut would go back and work on the issue at the building level.

B. [NEC Annual Report](#)

Ms. Angelakis reviewed the annual report from the NEC Consortium. She explained that as a member District a fee is paid and we receive a lower daily rate for programs versus a non-member District. Ms. Angelakis highlighted the programs offered at each of the NEC facilities and reviewed Swampscott's enrollment in each program. She encouraged the Committee to look through the report in more detail. Ms. OConnor questioned the

daily rate growth for tuition. Ms. Sybert stated it had been nominal yearly to date. There was discussion regarding proposed OSD increases.

DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

A. FY 24 Budget Presentation

Ms. Sybert explained that when she tendered her resignation she committed to presenting the budget. She explained that she has worked along with Ms. Herrick-Stella, who is also present, to transition through the budget. Ms. Sybert reviewed the history of reductions as well as town contribution increases to the budget. Ms. Sybert gave an overview of the FY23 budget and stated that the budget stayed within the recommended increase from the Town Manager. Ms. Sybert moved on to the FY24 budget which has an overall increase of \$823,294. She explained there was more work to be done with the Superintendent and the Leadership Team within the budget. Ms. Sybert reviewed each of the cost center categories which the budget covers. Ms. Angelakis explained the work that needs to be done before Town Meeting is to come up with \$675,000 in reductions on top of a significant number of \$735,743 increased use of circuit breaker funds. She explained that she has been working closely with her team and that there was no secret that years ago we looked at elementary school level, and last year we targeted reductions at the High School. She explained she has been working since October closely with Middle School leadership to look at scheduling and programming. Ms. Marshall expressed frustration that the Committee and District is not ever part of determining the budget number from the town side and that the District is always backing into the number rather than designing the budget around needed programming. There was a discussion around student enrollment and Ms. Sybert stated that enrollment does not equal student needs. There was a lengthy discussion regarding circuit breaker funding and Mr. Paster expressed his concern about the possibility of running out of money. Ms. Herrick-Stella explained the options of going back to the Finance Committee or to town meeting for additional appropriation. There was discussion regarding having a special education reserve fund. Mr. Paster thanked Ms. Sybert for her contributions to the budget as well as her work beyond her employment. Mr. Giantis stated he felt that carrying the circuit breaker forward created stability throughout the fiscal year which was certainly one of the Committee's goals. Ms. Wright expressed her concern in not having the special education reserve fund and stated she would look into other towns to see best practices and there was discussion on putting forward a warrant article relative to a reserve fund. Mr. Paster expressed that he felt the \$675,000 number was not the true number and not utilizing circuit breaker really puts the District \$1.4 million in the negative. He added he felt the budget put forward should be what is required to educate each student in the District and did not feel it was appropriate to look at circuit breaker. Mr. Paster added he would reach out to the town side in advance of the budget hearing. Ms. OConnor stated she would love to see a comparison between years past and how much of the budget is special education knowing that costs have changed and needs have changed as well. Ms. OConnor also suggested a joint meeting with the Finance Committee and inviting them to the public hearing.

CHAIR

A. Updates

Mr. Paster stated the budget was a large part of their responsibility and he looked forward to presenting more in the coming weeks.

B. Tri-Chair Report

Mr. Paster stated he would be meeting with the Tri-Chair group on Monday morning and would report back at the next meeting.

SUBCOMMITTEE

A. SBC Meetings Update

Ms. Wright stated blasting has been happening for a week and a half and a lot was happening at the site but that the project was on track and on schedule.

CONSENT AGENDA

The consent agenda is designed to expedite the handling of routine and miscellaneous business of the District. The School Committee may adopt the entire Consent Agenda with one motion. At the request of any committee member, any item(s) may be removed from the Consent Agenda and placed on the Regular Agenda for discussion.

- A. Regular Session Minutes – [December 15, 2022](#)
- B. Budget Subcommittee of the Whole Minutes - [October 13, 2022](#)
- C. Budget Subcommittee of the Whole Minutes - [November 28, 2022](#)
- D. Donation – [Eastern Bank Foundation - Sponsorship Community Grant for SHS Robotics Team](#)
- E. WARRANT # 23-25, 23-27, 23-29

Mr. Paster read the list of the consent agenda items, reviewed the donation and thanked Eastern Bank Foundation for their support of the Robotics Team.

Motion: To approve the consent agenda by Ms. OConnor and seconded by Ms. Marshall. The motion passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: At 8:09 p.m .it was moved by Ms. OConnor to adjourn and seconded by Mr. Giantis. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Pamela R.H. Angelakis, M.A., M.Ed.
Superintendent of Schools
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Date: 2/16/23

Supporting Documents:

	FY24 Budget 01.26.2023 Overview, Admin and SE Cost Centers 
	NEC Annual Report 21-22.pdf 
	November 28, 2022 Minutes of Mtg Budget Subcommittee Session.docx 
	October 13, 2022 Minutes of Mtg Budget Subcommittee Session.docx 
	Not Approved Minutes October 13, 2022.pdf 
	Not Approved Minutes November 28, 2022.pdf 
	Donation - Eastern Bank - Robotics.pdf 
	Not Approved Final minutes December 15, 2022 