

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

(Official Report)

Regular Meeting

Tuesday, April 3, 2007

Members Present: Mr. Fantini, Mr. Grassi, Mr. Harding, Ms. Nolan, Mr. Schuster, Ms. Walser,
Mayor Reeves

Mayor Reeves in the Chair.

Also present: Student Representatives Tsion Girum, Marilyn Paschal, Daneiris Heredia-Perez

A quorum of the School Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

Presentation of the Records of Previous Meetings

On a motion by Mr. Harding, seconded by Mr. Fantini, it was voted to accept the Minutes of the following meeting as presented:

- Regular Meeting – March 20, 2007

Public Testimony on School Committee Agenda

There being no one signed up, the Chair closed public testimony.

Reports and/or Comments from Student School Committee Members

Ms. Girum announced that the Junior Prom will be held on April 27 at the Cambridge Marriott.

Reconsideration of Votes Taken at Previous Meeting: None

Unfinished Business

On a motion by Ms. Walser, seconded by Ms. Nolan, it was voted to pass over unfinished business.

On a motion by Mr. Grassi, seconded by Mr. Harding, it was voted to suspend the Rules to bring forward Recommendation **#07-60, School Safety and Security Consultant**. Mr. Maloney spoke to the recommendation and introduced Lori Thompson, Vice President and James Hyslop, President of Standing Stone Consulting, the firm selected to provide a comprehensive review of our security and safety policies and practices in all school facilities. The Superintendent, Mr. Maloney, Ms. Thompson and Mr. Hyslop responded to some of the following questions, comments and concerns raised by Members:

- When will recommendations come back to the District
- Will the report come back to the Superintendent or to the School Committee
- Who will be responsible for the project
- Will discipline infractions over the past year be reviewed for trends
- Will equipment loss be looked at in terms of prevention
- Will our private security contract be looked at
- How much of work is typically overseeing staff and students as well as outsiders
- What are best practices for ways to reduce the need for security

Mr. Fantini in the Chair.

- Will the report include school-based events
- Will transportation be reviewed
- Look at a preventive model
- We are being proactive, not reacting to any problem
- Has Standing Stone worked with any schools in New England
- What standards are recommendations based on
- Is there an association that specializes in best practices for safety in schools
- Our buildings are safe but are they secure
- Would like recommendations based on Standing Stone's expertise
- Will the report differentiate between a disciplinary infraction and a crime

On a motion by Mr. Grassi, seconded by Mr. Harding, on the following roll call, it was voted to adopt **#07-60, School Safety and Security Consultant**: that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for School Safety and Security Consulting Services, funds to be provided from projected unexpended balances in the FY06-07 General Fund Budget, Chapter 30B, of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

1. Standing Stone Consulting, Inc., 708 Mifflin Street, P.O. Box 389, Huntingdon, PA, for the period April 1, 2007 to December 31, 2007, in the amount of \$64,520.00.

Mr. Fantini YEA, Mr. Grassi YEA, Mr. Harding YEA, Ms. Nolan YEA, Mr. Schuster YEA, Ms. Walser YEA, Mayor Reeves ABSENT.

New Business

On a motion by Mr. Harding, the Chair returned to the Agenda.

The Superintendent introduced and welcomed Dr. Aida Ramos.

Mr. Grassi in the Chair.

Dr. Ramos shared some of her experiences and responded to questions and comments from the Members.

Mr. Fantini in the Chair.

The Chair thanked Dr. Ramos and declared a two-minute recess.

Mr. Fantini in the Chair.

The time for recess having expired, the Chair reconvened the meeting and turned it over to Mr. Schuster who walked Members through a slide presentation, "Research on Effective Service-Learning", including:

- What is Service-Learning?
- Service-Learning vs. Community Service
- Why Service Learning?
- National Study of the Impact of Service Learning
- Methodology
- Measures
- Sample
- Site Characteristics
- Mixed Results
- So What Makes the Difference?
- Other Essential Elements
- How do we Institutionalize Service-Learning?

- Conclusions

Mr. Schuster responded to questions and comments raised by his colleagues. The Superintendent was heard. The Chair thanked Mr. Schuster for his presentation and returned to the Agenda.

B. Action Items

Ms. Walser moved, seconded by Ms. Nolan for adoption of items #07-57 through #07-74 with the exception of #07-60 that was adopted earlier. Mr. Grassi removed #07-64 and #07-73. Ms. Walser removed #07-66 and #07-68. Ms. Nolan removed #07-59. Mr. Fantini removed #07-74. On the following roll call, the remaining items were adopted:

#07-57, Montessori Instructional Supplies and Materials: that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for instructional supplies and classroom materials for the Montessori Program at the Tobin School, funds to be provided from the General Fund Budget, Chapter 30B of the Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

1. Nienhuis Montessori USA, 140 E. Dana Street, Mountain View, CA, for the period April 2007 - June 2007, in the amount of \$49,875.65.

#07-58, Statutory Transfer of Funds for Debt Stabilization Fund: that the School Committee approve a transfer of funds in the amount of \$450,000 from the General Fund Budget to the Debt Stabilization Fund in the Statutory Categories specified. This amount was planned in the FY06-07 Budget to be allocated to the Debt Stabilization fund to help offset future capital and debt costs:

A. <u>General Fund</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>
Extraordinary Expenditures	0	\$450,000
B. <u>Debt Stabilization Fund</u>		
Extraordinary Expenditures	\$450,000	0

#07-61, FY06-07 General Fund Budget Statutory Transfers: that the School Committee approve the following statutory transfers of appropriation within the General Fund Budget for FY2006-07:

	<u>Statutory Coding</u>	<u>Increase Amount</u>	<u>Decrease Amount</u>
51000	Salaries, Wages and Benefits		(\$333,358)
52000/55000	Other Ordinary Maintenance	\$333,699	
57000	Travel and Training	10,479	0
58000/59000	Extraordinary Expenditures	<u>0</u>	<u>(10,820)</u>
	Total	\$344,178	(\$344,178)

#07-62, Academic School and School Committee Meeting Calendars SY2007/2008 and Academic School and School Committee Meeting Calendars SY2008/2009: that the School Committee approve the recommendation of the Superintendent for the Academic School and School Committee Meeting Calendars for SY2007/2008 and Academic School and School Committee Meeting Calendars for SY2008/2009.

#07-63, Security Monitoring Services: that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for Security Monitoring Services, funds to be provided from the General Fund Budget, Chapter 30B of the Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

1. SAS Security Systems, Inc., 67 Pleasant Street, Watertown, for the period April 1, 2007 to March 31, 2008, with option for two 1-year extensions, in the amount of \$65,750. This is a 1-year amount. SAS Security Systems, Inc. was the only bidder.

#07-65, Grant Award: that the School Committee accept and approve the Grant Award in the amount and for the period indicated:

1. Cambridge Community Foundation-Physical Education Crew Program, for the period March 14, 2007 to March 14, 2008, in the amount of \$5,530.00, project/grant SC07836. A grant to support increasing the Crew program in the Physical Education Department at CRLS. The funds were from the Regatta and will be used to purchase an additional shell so that more students will be able to participate.

CPS Target Population: Approximately 30-40 students, both girls and boys who participate in the Crew program at CRLS.

Outcomes and Measures of Effectiveness: Additional students will be able to participate in Crew, a sport which has health benefits and which can also serve to increase student involvement in school.

#07-67, Motion by Mr. Grassi that the School Committee adopt a policy that the Superintendent of Schools provide the Committee, each February, with a yearly report of Cambridge Public Schools credit card expenses for the previous calendar year.

#07-69, Report of the March 6, 2007 Meeting of the Sub-Committee on the Budget (Committee of the Whole):

Called for the purpose of the Superintendent's presentation of the proposed FY2007-2008 Budget.

Members Present: Mr. Grassi, Mr. Harding, Co-Chairs, Mr. Fantini, Ms. Nolan, Mr. Schuster, Ms. Walser, Mayor Reeves

Mr. Grassi in the Chair.

A quorum of the Sub-Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 8:53 p.m. and announced dates for the next meetings: Tuesday, March 13, 6:00 p.m., Budget Sub-Committee Meeting, Public Hearing on the FY2007-2008 budget. Tuesday, March 20, 6:00 p.m., Regular Meeting. Adoption of FY2007-2008 budget. Budget Sub-Committee decision on the FY2007-2008 School Department Budget.

The Superintendent gave a summary of the proposed 2007-2008 budget and made a presentation "Building on Progress", including":

- 3-Year Comparisons
- FY07-08 Budget Allocation by Area
- Budget Allocation by Area – Fiscal Years 03-04 and 07-08 Compared
- Elementary Classroom Staffing

Building on Progress

1. Redirecting Resources to students and schools
 - FY07-08 Budget Comparing Proposed Initiatives & Improvements with Restructuring/Reductions
 - 3-Year realignment of Budget
 - Changing Circumstances Limit Flexibility
 - FY02-03 to FY07-08 Percentage Change in Positions
 - Facilities Improvement and Debt Stabilization
2. Providing a creative, rigorous, and rewarding educational environment
 - Redesigning the CRLS educational environment
 - CRLS Civics Education
 - Creation of the High School Extension Program
 - Renaissance of RSTA
 - Creation of the Tobin Montessori School
 - First Cycle – Kindergarten Registration
 - Expansion of and redesign of school-based programs
 - Expansion/improvement of CPS partnerships
3. Increasing achievement for all students
 - Expansion of AVID and ISP
 - CPS Literacy Collaborative
 - AP and Honors Courses expanded at CRLS
 - Math Initiatives
 - K-12 Science Initiatives
 - Special Education Improvements
 - Special Projects
4. Closing the achievement gap
 - Implementation of Benchmarks
 - Expanded Literacy Programs
 - Implementation of Junior Kindergarten
 - SAT and MCAS prep courses
 - Communicating with families
5. Developing a diverse and committed staff of educators
 - Cambridge Leadership Network (Elmore Program)
 - Recruiting and retaining highly qualified educators
 - Comprehensive staff development
 - Improved evaluation tools
 - Increased school funding
6. Building a brighter future
 - Improving MCAS scores
 - Improving graduation rates
 - Improving proficiency
 - Improving college admissions
 - Building Cambridge pride

The Chair thanked Dr. Fowler-Finn for the presentation and invited public comment, of which there was none.

The Superintendent and staff responded to some of the following questions, comments and concerns raised by Members:

- What are the implications in this budget for construction over-costs and when will the actual amount be known
- Is there money in this budget to support the Elmore project
- What is being done around science in the classrooms
- How might we capitalize on some of the information in the Market Survey
- Move forward quickly on collaboration with Simmons
- How does this budget impact K-5 Math coaches
- What is proposed in grades 5-8 music and how was the process determined
- How often will 7th and 8th graders participate in music
- What will the K-3 music program look like
- Was the existing faculty including the high school involved in music discussions
- What is under the media arts umbrella
- Are there other partnerships besides Biogen-Idec
- What is the status of discussions with Broad

On a motion by Mayor Reeves, seconded by Ms. Walser, it was voted to suspend the Rules to continue the meeting past 10:00.

- Identify a staff member or Community School Volunteer to focus on partnerships
- Are there any reductions in out-of-district placements
- Is there an increase in math coaches and are they hired by each school
- Would like to see a one-page summary on money for the Literacy Collaborative
- Provide a breakdown of staff reductions and where they came from
- Why is there one teacher at Amigos for a class of 28
- What is included in the 3-year alignment of the budget
- Would like to see a chart on classroom aides
- Is a recommendation on middle schools being worked on
- Is the issue of schools in corrective action being addressed
- Would like more information on funding we are losing
- Is the Governor's budget helping us with circuit breaker funds
- Should we be more aggressive in recruiting charter school students
- Why are classroom and specialty teachers proportionately smaller than comparable districts
- Would like to hear more about how service learning will be incorporated into the classroom
- This budget maintains focus on quality teaching and curriculum and shows a lot of thought and creativity

The Chair thanked the Superintendent and staff for the work done on the budget and reiterated the dates for the next meetings.

On a motion by Ms. Walser, seconded by Ms. Nolan, it was voted to adjourn (10:25 p.m.).

Adjourned
Marilyn Y. Bradshaw
Executive Secretary to the School Committee

#07-70, Report of the March 13, 2007 Meeting of the Sub-Committee on the Budget (Committee of the Whole):

Called for the purpose of a Public Hearing on the FY2007-2008 budget.

Members Present: Mr. Fantini, Mr. Grassi, Mr. Harding, Ms. Nolan, Mr. Schuster, Ms. Walser

Mr. Harding in the Chair.

A quorum of the School Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

The Chair acknowledged receipt of a letter from Jim Monteverde as part of public comment.

The Chair turned the meeting over to the Superintendent for the budget presentation. The Superintendent walked Members through the proposed FY2007-2008 Budget:

- FY2006-07 Current Budget
- Proposed FY2007-08 Budget
- Net Increase
- Percentage Increase
- Redirecting Resources
- Building on Progress
- Increasing Achievement
- Closing the Gap
- Developing Educators
- Brighter Futures

The Superintendent, Dr. Turk, Mr. Maloney, and Mr. Conry responded to some of the following questions, comments and concerns raised by Members:

- Status of expansion of middle school project
- Why the assignment system is as it is, based on educational rationale
- Why is King Open receiving less in funding
- Excited about continuing work connecting with youth programs and after school programs under the Federally Funded 21st Century Grant
- Are there any plans to expand King Open extended day
- What are the general guidelines used to distribute funds
- Is there a list of funded programs
- What are Department goals and plans in curriculum areas
- Do we want to compare ourselves to other districts
- Promote that we have services that are free whereas other districts pay
- What changes are in the budget for next year re instrumental and chorus
- Is music part of school day
- Will money be dedicated to professional development for staff and parents for Edline
- What are the effects of reallocating money away from science
- Will high school promotion model be replicated in middle schools
- How does our budget compare to a comparable group of budgets across the State

The Chair and Members thanked the Superintendent for the presentation.

On a motion by Ms. Walser, seconded by Mr. Fantini, it was voted to adjourn (7:18).

Respectfully Submitted,
Patricia A. Berry
Secretary

#07-71, Report of the March 20, 2007 Meeting of the Sub-Committee on the Budget (Committee of the Whole):

Called for the purpose of a decision on the FY2007-2008 School Department Budget.

Members Present: Mr. Grassi, Mr. Harding, Co-Chairs, Mr. Fantini, Ms. Nolan, Mr. Schuster, Ms. Walser, Mayor Reeves

Mr. Grassi in the Chair.

A quorum of the Sub-Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 8:30 p.m. Members raised the following questions, comments and concerns:

- What is the status of the Special Education teaching position at CRLS
- Look at supporting librarians
- Would like to have information on comparison to other districts
- Why isn't comparison to other districts in the budget documents
- Need information on why we are spending so much per pupil
- Need educational rationale for programs and projects we are funding and expanding
- Need explanation for inequities in specialist staffing in larger elementary schools
- Feels better about answering the question: is this huge budget justified
- Happy that we are doing cutting edge work in connecting our schools to the community
- Keep eye on the question: are the dollars we spend reaching our students
- Resources we spend on our children are an asset
- It's just a matter of time before we see an increase in registration at the high school
- Looking forward to seeing how this budget improves achievement across the board
- This budget does represent continuous improvement over the past several years

On a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Ms. Walser, on the following roll call, it was voted to refer to the full Committee **#07-50, Fiscal Year 2007-2008 Recommended Budget**: that the School Committee receive and approve the FY2007-08 General Fund Budget of the Cambridge Public Schools in the following Statutory Categories:

Salaries, Wages & Fringe Benefits	\$ 95,804,010
Other Ordinary Maintenance	24,266,040
Travel & Training	1,851,950
Extraordinary Expenditures	<u>5,768,960</u>
Total	\$127,690,960

Ms. Walser YEA, Mr. Fantini YEA, Mr. Grassi YEA, Mr. Harding YEA, Ms. Nolan YEA, Mr. Schuster YEA, Mayor Reeves YEA.

The Chair thanked Co-Chair Harding, Superintendent Fowler-Finn, Mr. Conry, Mr. Maloney, Dianne Johnson and staff for the time spent in preparing the budget, as well as the City Manager and City Council for their support.

On a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Mr. Grassi, it was voted to adjourn to the Regular Meeting.

Adjourned
Marilyn Y. Bradshaw
Executive Secretary to the School Committee

#07-72, Report of the March 23, 2007 Meeting of the Buildings and Grounds and Long Range Planning Sub-Committee:

Called for the purpose of meeting with consultants about the possibility of incorporating a Co-Gen project at the high school, along with considering a solar installation at one of the schools.

Members Present: Ms. Walser, Chair, Ms. Nolan, Mr. Schuster

Also present: Mr. Maloney, Chief Financial Officer, Mr. Ham, Manager, Plant Maintenance, Councillor Davis, Mr. Valaes, HMFH Architects, Inc., Mr. Lin, HMFH Architects, Inc.

Ms. Walser in the Chair.

A quorum of the Sub-Committee being present, Ms. Walser called the meeting to order at 9:14 A.M.

Questions and comments were addressed to Mr. Valaes and Mr. Lin:

- Cost and feasibility of Co-Gen system
- How practical is Co-Gen
- Feasibility of Co-Gen
- Involve War Memorial and library

Mr. Maloney explained that the War Memorial is going to bid and the library is a City project. Any questions or discussion regarding including them in a Co-Gen project should be referred to the City Manager.

Mr. Lin offered a brief explanation of how Co-Gen works:

- On-site generator saves energy costs
- Cost and benefits of unit
- Emission unit is complicated
- Key factor is what to do with wasted heat
- Backup unit
- There needs to be an agreement with NStar re backup
- 2/3 cost is electricity; 1/3 is transmission
- Benefits of making our own electricity
- Want project to move forward and to be a success
- Different issues at play for different systems
- HMFH will come back with recommendations before going ahead with the study
- 70% of heat is already being wasted

Other questions and comments:

- Cost issue
- Ways to make building energy efficient
- Noise issues
- Size of unit
- Space issues
- Need to enter into conversation with NStar
- What is City's energy project
- Regulatory approval issue
- Sooner is better to get underway

Ms. Nolan moved, seconded by Ms. Walser, that the School Committee conduct a roundtable discussion this school year on the topic of high performance sustainable buildings, with an emphasis on schools.

Ms. Walser moved, seconded by Ms. Nolan, that a forum be scheduled for CRLS students to inform them about the upcoming high school renovation project and to get their input.

Ms. Walser asked that Mr. Valaes and Mr. Lin return with a pros and cons list to the next Sub-Committee meeting on Monday, April 23, at 9:00 A.M.

On a motion by Ms. Nolan, seconded by Ms. Walser, the meeting adjourned at 10:24 A.M.

Respectfully Submitted,
Patricia A. Berry
Secretary

Mr. Grassi YEA, Mr. Harding YEA, Ms. Nolan YEA, Mr. Schuster YEA, Ms. Walser YEA, Mayor Reeves ABSENT, Mr. Fantini YEA.

Non-Consent Business

Ms. Nolan raised a question on whether a public hearing is required on State School Choice. Ms. Bradshaw was heard. The Superintendent was heard. On the following roll call, it was voted to adopt **#07-59, 2007-08 State School Choice Program – Recommendation for Non-Participation**: that the School Committee vote not to participate in the Statewide School Choice Program for School Year 2007-08, for the following reasons:

1. the need to maintain the quality and integrity of the Cambridge Program of Controlled Choice; and
2. the need to maintain flexibility for appropriately sized classrooms in the public schools.

Mr. Grassi YEA, Mr. Harding YEA, Ms. Nolan NAY, Mr. Schuster YEA, Ms. Walser YEA, Mayor Reeves ABSENT, Mr. Fantini YEA.

On a motion by Mr. Grassi, on the following roll call, it was voted to adopt **#07-64, Consultant Agreements**: that the School Committee approve Consultant Agreements with the companies or individuals on the list, in the amounts set forth, funds to be provided as shown:

1. Huntington Learning Centers, Inc., Oradell, NJ, in the amount of \$30,450.00, account 53101, fund 25000, org. 859651 prog. 651, proj./grant SC06604.
2. Lesley University, Cambridge, MA, in the amount of \$53,500.00, account 53101, fund 15000, org. 899148, prog.148.

Mr. Grassi PRESENT, Mr. Harding YEA, Ms. Nolan YEA, Mr. Schuster YEA, Ms. Walser YEA, Mayor Reeves ABSENT, Mr. Fantini YEA.

#07-66, Motion by Mr. Grassi that the School Committee schedule the next roundtable discussion on middle schools in the Cambridge Public Schools. Further, that the Superintendent update the Committee on plans to review current practices as well as issues and data relevant to concerns with the middle schools as well as information on best practices from inside or outside the district. Ms. Walser moved that the motion be referred to the Superintendent pending receipt of information from the Marketing Study. Ms. Walser's motion was not seconded. Mr. Harding moved a friendly amendment that the Chair and Vice Chair appoint an ad-hoc committee on middle schools (committee of the whole). The Superintendent was heard. On a voice vote, **#07-66** was adopted as amended.

#07-68, Motion by Ms. Nolan that the School Committee convene a series of meetings about the Controlled Choice Policy with the goal of having recommendations for any possible changes presented in the Fall of 2007. Further, that the meetings include experts in controlled choice, and members of the community, in addition to the School Committee and administration. Discussion took place around controlled choice. Mr. Harding moved a friendly amendment that the Chair and the Vice Chair appoint an

ad-hoc committee on controlled choice (committee of the whole). On a motion by Mr. Harding, seconded by Mr. Grassi, it was voted to adopt **#07-68** as amended.

#07-73, Joint motion by Ms. Nolan and Ms. Walser that the School Committee conduct a roundtable discussion this school year on the topic of high performance sustainable buildings, with an emphasis on schools. Discussion took place around energy conservation issues. It was suggested that the Buildings and Grounds subcommittee meet with the Cambridge Energy Alliance to review energy issues. On a motion by Mr. Grassi, seconded by Mr. Harding, it was voted that **#07-73** be referred back to the Buildings and Grounds Sub-Committee to schedule a presentation at the second School Committee meeting in May.

#07-74, Joint motion by Ms. Nolan and Ms. Walser that a forum be scheduled for CRLS students to inform them about the upcoming high school renovation project and to get their input. On a voice vote, the foregoing motion was adopted.

Late Orders

On a motion by Mr. Grassi, seconded by Mr. Fantini, it was voted that the School Committee name the Network Operations Center the John Morgan Network Operations Center. Further, that the School Committee name the Computer Technician's Room the David Riley Computer Technician's Room. Mr. Fantini moved a friendly amendment that all Members be listed as sponsors of the motion.

On a motion by Mr. Harding, seconded by Ms. Nolan, it was voted that the School Committee send a letter congratulating Robert Wesley on being named to the *Boston Herald's* 2007 Boys Basketball All-Scholastics Dream Team.

On a motion by Mr. Harding, seconded by Ms. Nolan, it was voted that the School Committee send a letter congratulating Kyara Weekes on being named *Boston Herald's* 2007 Girls Basketball All-Scholastic.

On a motion by Ms. Walser, seconded by Mr. Grassi, it was voted to adjourn (9:22 p.m.).

Adjourned
Marilyn Y. Bradshaw
Executive Secretary to the School Committee