



NEWTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE

RUTHANNE FULLER– EX OFFICIO	
Newton School Committee Members	
WARD	
I	Bridget Ray-Canada
II	Margaret Albright
III	Anping Shen
IV	Diana Fisher Gomberg
V	Steven Siegel, Vice-Chair
VI	Ruth Goldman, Chair
VII	Kathy Shields
VIII	Matthew Miller

DRAFT Minutes

Date November 14, 2018

Location Education Center, 100 Walnut St., Rm 304 and Rm 210, Newton, MA 02460

Meeting Called by Chair Goldman at 6:00pm in rm 210 for the purpose of voting to enter into Executive Session in rm 304 to discuss strategy related to Collective Bargaining with the NTA. The School Committee will reconvene in open session.

Members Present: Ray-Canada, Shen, Fisher Gomberg, Siegel, Goldman, Shields, Miller, Fleishman, Mayor (late @7:20)

Students Present: Maya Mathews, Nayleth Lopez Lopez, Serena Jampel, Cristian Gaines, Ross Halpern, Lucy Chae

Staff Present: Toby Romer, Assistant Superintendent for Secondary Education, Liam Hurley, Assistant Superintendent/Chief Financial and Administrative Officer, Julie Kirrane, Business and Planning Director, and Jill Murray, City Attorney

Chair Goldman moved for the School Committee to enter into Executive Session to discuss strategy with respect to negotiations with Newton Teacher’s Association (NTA). Chair Goldman called for a roll call vote. All in favor of entering into Executive Session for this purpose:

ROLL CALL:

Ray – Canada	Y	Shen	Y	Goldman	Y	Shields	Y	Mayor (absent)
Albright	Y	Fisher Gomberg	Y	Siegel	Y	Miller	Y	

The vote was unanimous to convene in Executive Session. The Committee reconvened in regular session at 7:05 pm

Presentation and Vote – Newton Schools Foundation (NSF) Donation

Document: [Newton Schools Foundation video](#)

Marcia Tabenken, Diane Geer and Bruce McVittie played a video illustrating the many ways NSF funding has helped provide assistance to the NPS. They then presented a donation in the amount of \$155,000 to NPS. Dr. Fleishman thanked NSF for their donation and continued support.

Chair Goldman asked for a motion to accept the generous donation from NSF.

Motion: Fisher Gomberg

Second: Shen

Vote: 8-0-0 (Mayor absent for vote) to accept the NSF donation of \$155,000.

Public Comment

(The Committee is not required to hear from every person, but it is required to hear every topic. Newton citizens have preference. Maximum of 30 minutes, three minutes per person, no sharing of time and please be respectful of those in the room). The Committee heard from the following 10 people:

- 1) Leon Mintz – Acton: He believes schools are teaching the same lies about anti-Semitism that Soviet Union propagated in 1971 by putting students forward as puppets to praise the schools.
- 2) Boris Jacobs – Westford: Progressive anti-Semitism is dangerous because it whitewashes the actions of Israel’s enemies. Dr. Fleishman’s email contains half-truths by defending the anti-Semitic curriculum and he asks that the School Committee fire him.

- 3) Jim Epstein – Newton: He states that on 10/11/18 Dr. Fleishman participated in a rally with NNHS students and teachers to support teachers and his group was labeled as a hate group, with a hateful agenda. He thinks the rally breached the Superintendent’s duties because it was not welcoming to Israel-supporting students. He threatened litigation.
- 4) Jerry Tuite – Hopkinton: IAC published statement on steps that NPS will take to work with them but the fact that such work is needed demonstrates the schools failures and constitutes admission of system’s failure to protect Jewish students.
- 5) Susan Toochin – Newton: Dr. Fleishman has ignored communications concerning curriculum and added insult when he wrote to families claiming that curriculum promoted critical thinking. She is also upset that Dr. Fleishman supports teachers who will not be objective. She thinks the Ismail film is inaccurate and propaganda.
- 6) Norman Greenburg – Newton: His kids went through Newton schools. He’s been following issues about biased curriculum for the past 6-7 years. He thinks that schools are encouraging anti-Jewish sentiment and the refusal to change the biased curriculum, just because a large group of citizens have complained. He recommends the CAMERA book.
- 7) Leslie Alger – Newton: She doesn’t understand why the curriculum materials for the Middle East unit are not publicly disclosed. She says the CAMERA book concerns her and she’s concerned that the curriculum hasn’t been changed after years of concern, which harms Newton’s reputation.
- 8) Richard Salter- Newton: He thinks Dr. Fleishman should not be retained. He thinks critical thinking isn’t applicable because there have been factual misrepresentations about Israel. He read the IAC report and thinks that unbiased classrooms are safe space for everyone.
- 9) John Fitzpatrick- Newton: Ligerbots team coach. He is supporting the CTE program and thinks that precision manufacturing experience should be increased in NPS and would give Newton students a competitive edge.
- 10) Nir Maimon- Newton: He recognizes anti-Semitism and cancer. His opinion is that Dr. Fleishman not lead NPS because he is not good at excising anti-Semitism. He thinks NPS is not welcoming or inclusive for his children.

(Chair Goldman called for a 2 minute recess so those who wanted to leave could do so.)

Chair Goldman introduced Anne Larner and Ted Hess-Mahan co-chairs of the 225 Nevada Street Naming Committee.

Discussion: 225 Nevada Street Naming Committee (Horace Mann/Carr)

Document: [225 Nevada Street Memo](#)
[225 Nevada Street Report](#)

Anne Larner introduced other members of the Committee; Dan Kunitz, Marcia Tabenken and Bob Smith. She explained that the Committee formed in July and after much research and community input the Committee recommends that 225 Nevada Street be named the Horace Mann Elementary School. They further recommend that in the future, the naming of buildings, playgrounds, etc. should consider women and people of color.

Questions, answers and discussion

Career and Technical Education Update

Documents: [CTE Memo](#)
[CTE Presentation](#)

Dr. Fleishman introduced and welcomed Kathleen Duff, now in her second year as Director of Career and Technical Education, but her first time presenting to the School Committee. Kathleen gave a brief historical overview of the program, one of the first technical education programs to be offered in 1924. Its purpose is to offer college and career opportunities to students. She explained the difference between the exploratory and major programs and the requirements necessary to meet both Chapter 74 and Perkins regulations. She then provided enrollment numbers, including male/female ratios for the various programs offered. Newton South initiatives were discussed as well as possible new programs and goals for the future.

Questions, answers and discussion followed.

Update by Arrowstreet: Educational Program for Lincoln-Eliot/Newton Childhood Education Program (NECP)

Documents: [NECP/LE Arrowstreet Space Summary](#)
[NECP/LE Arrowstreet Presentation](#)

Liam Hurley was joined by Larry Spang and Meryl Nistler from Arrowstreet Architects and Mary Mahoney from Hill International to present a summary of their observations conducted at 150 Jackson Rd (NECP), 687 Watertown St. (Horace Mann) and visioning workshops held regarding space and programming needs for Lincoln-Eliot and NECP. Preliminary recommendations include the number of classrooms needed to accommodate the projected number of students for each program as well as pros/cons of Lincoln-Eliot and NECP sharing the same space versus two separate spaces. The next step is a feasibility study including necessary improvements, co-location or separate, traffic and parking impacts, best use of auditorium and convent space at 150 Jackson Rd. and the scope, schedule and budget for the proposed project.

Questions, answers and discussion followed

Fiscal & Operations and Facilities Update

Documents: [Fiscal and Operations Update](#)
[Facilities Update](#)

Liam Hurley presented the first Fiscal and Operations update of FY19. As of October 31, 2018 the district has spent \$63.7 million, or 28% of the annual budget. The current financial forecast projects a positive balance of \$485,000. This forecast includes a projected positive balance in staffing, and negative balances in benefits, utilities, maintenance, contracted services, transportation and supplies and equipment. Overall, the district is in good shape and Liam and his office will closely monitor these areas.

The Facilities report included:

- Cabot School project, which is on schedule
- MSBA Accelerated Repair Program (ARP) which is being administered by Public Buildings with guidance from NPS Facilities
- Future planning for the Lincoln-Eliot/NECP project at 150 Jackson Road
- Lincoln-Eliot heating and building envelope project is progressing with all required abatement and removal of the existing boiler done with a goal of final completion of the boiler in April 2019
- Cabot/Horace Mann dual moves will occur in June and August 2019, while the Cabot move is pretty straightforward, the Horace Mann move is more complex. Todd Tsiang and Associates has been hired as a Furniture/Fixtures/Equipment (FFE) consultant.

Discussion and Vote: Term Increase Food Services Contract

Document: [Food Services Contract Length Memo](#)

Liam Hurley presented a memo to the Committee requesting approval to change the Food Services Contract bid from a One Year contract with 2 renewable terms years to a One Year contract with 4 renewable terms in order to attract more vendor interest.

Motion: Fisher Gomberg

Second: Miller

Vote: 9-0-0 to approve the Food Services contract from a One year with 2 renewable terms, to a One Year with four renewable terms.

Student Transportation Steering Group (STSG) Update

Document: [School Transportation Steering Group \(STSG\) Memo](#)

A School Transportation Steering Group has been formed to conduct planning that addresses safety, health, traffic congestion, district initiatives and elementary district boundary changes related to transportation. The group is comprised of school department personnel, school committee members, and city councilors. This committee has been meeting monthly and gave a brief update on their work to date.

Questions, answers and discussion followed.

Consideration and Deliberation on the Modification of the Superintendent's Employment Contract

Document: [Superintendent's Employment Contract 7-1-17 to 6-30-2021](#)

Chair Goldman reviewed the historical background regarding the process of hiring Dr. Fleishman as NPS' superintendent. She informed the Committee that after a year-long search, the superintendent hiring committee - made up of school department personnel, parents and residents unanimously recommended Dr. Fleishman. His original contract was a four year contract from July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2014 with annual performance reviews by the School Committee in June/July. The terms of the contract stated that notice for any successor contracts would begin one year prior to the expiration of the contract. The second contract, a three year contract began July 1, 2014. In the summer of 2016, one year prior to the expiration of Dr. Fleishman's contract, the Committee and Dr. Fleishman's engaged in negotiations that resulted in the modified contract which kept the terms contract, but extended it four years through June 30, 2021. This contract modification, which the Committee reviewed in Executive Session and discussed, voted and approved in Open Session on September 16, 2016 reflects, and takes into consideration the Committee's performance evaluations of Dr. Fleishman from 2014 through 2016. Chair Goldman then asked each member to reiterate this Committee's most recent (July 2018) evaluations/assessments of Dr. Fleishman's performance. Each member then reflected on their performance evaluation/assessment of Dr. Fleishman, and as their comments indicated, unanimously supported the contract modification that expires in 2021. Chair Goldman stated that Dr. Fleishman is 15 months into his current contract and in the summer of 2020 the Committee will begin discussions of any future contract with Dr. Fleishman.

Vote to Approve 1-day Liquor Licenses for Cabot PTO and GELF

Document: [GELF Memo](#)

Chair Goldman explained that each year, The Jennifer Price Global Education Leadership Fund (GELF) and the Cabot PTO's annual fundraiser request approval for 1-day liquor licenses for their annual fundraisers.

Motion to approve the GELF and the Cabot PTO 1-day liquor license requests:

Motion: Fisher Gomberg

Second: Ray-Canada

Vote: 9-0-0 to approve the GELF and Cabot PTO 1-day liquor licenses.

Vote to Approve EDCO Articles of Agreement

Document: [Articles of Agreement](#)
[Quarterly Report](#)

Ruth called for a motion to approve the EDCO Articles of Agreement.

Motion: Shen

Second: Albright

Vote: 9-0-0 to approve the EDCO Articles of Agreement

Vote to Approve Field Trips:

Document: [Field Trips](#)

Motion: Shields

Second: Ray-Canada

Vote: 9-0-0 to approve Field Trips.

Vote to Approve 10-22-18 Minutes

Document: [10-22-18 Draft Minutes](#)

Motion: Siegel

Second: Fisher Gomberg

Vote: 9-0-0 to approve the 10-1-18 minutes.

Communications

Diana and Matthew reminded everyone that they can tune into Virtual Office Hours at 8:00 on Sunday, November 18, 2018. They will be joined on screen by Margaret, Kathy and Anping during this session.

Adjourned: 10:15 pm

Lisa A. Mazzola Date: 10/29/18

Lisa A. Mazzola
School Committee Secretary