

EASTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
EASTON, MA

EASTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE WORKSHOP MINUTES
Friday, January 20, 2017

Minutes of School Committee Workshop Meeting, January 20, 2017, 50 Oliver Street, Upstairs Conference Room, convened at 9:03 a.m. Present: Laurie Han, Caroline O'Neill, Nancy DeLuca, Jackie Weisman, Jane Martin, Dr. Keough, Dr. Cabral, Marilyn Gordon and David Twombly.

Call Meeting to Order:

Chair Han called the workshop meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

On a motion by Chair Han, seconded by Ms. De Luca, with a 4-0 vote, the Committee agreed to change the agenda and move the "Approval of Ameresco Solar Panel Contract" to the first order of business.

On a motion by Ms. Martin, seconded by Chair Han, with a 4-0 vote, the Committee agreed to move the "2017-2018 Calendar Question" to the first order of business.

2017-2018 Calendar Question:

Dr. Cabral said that although the 2017-2018 calendar had been approved by the School Committee, Administration felt that an important omission was made. She continued that March 22nd and 23rd were approved as early release days for grades PK-5 for parent conferences, however, Administration would like to ask the Committee to use one of those days in March as an early release day for grades 6-12 as well. Dr. Cabral said the Science Olympiad at Richardson Olmsted School will be held during one of these half days. She continued that this is a tremendous STEAM program, a wonderful community event as the young students work with the high school students. Dr. Cabral said that Laura Ayasse, teacher at Oliver Ames High School, organizes this event and that the half day for grades 6-12 would be for educational purposes. Dr. Cabral said that the current calendar has this event scheduled for half a day and was erroneously omitted from the 2017-2018 calendar.

Ms. Weisman entered the meeting at 9:10 a.m.

On a motion by Ms. Martin, seconded by Ms. O'Neill, with a 5-0 vote, the Committee approved to amend the 2017-2018 calendar as either March 22nd or March 23rd to a half day for the 6-12 grade levels as determined by the educators.

On a motion by Chair Han, seconded by Ms. Weisman, with a 5-0 vote, the Committee agreed to move the "Approval of the Ameresco Solar Panel Contract" as the next order of business.

Approval of Ameresco Solar Panel Contract:

David Twombly, Director of Operations, said that the Board of Selectmen already approved their part of the Ameresco Solar Panel Contract and because the solar panels at the high school and middle school are property of the School Committee, the School Committee needs to approve the contract as well. He continued once the contract is approved and signed by the Superintendent and the Chair of School Committee, the contract will be notarized.

Chair Han said that this includes the license agreement from last year that Fred Isleib, former School Committee Chair signed.

On a motion by Ms. Weisman, seconded by Ms. O'Neill, with a 5-0 vote, the Committee approved the consent for Ameresco to get financing through Crestmark Bank.

On a motion by Chair Han, seconded by Ms. Weisman, with a 5-0 vote, the Committee approved the Ameresco Solar Panel Contract.

Open Meeting Law Complaint Against the Academic Subcommittee of The School Committee:

Chair Han said on Friday, January 13th, as Chair, she received a complaint under the Open Meeting Law, and as required, everyone had received copies of this complaint. She continued that the Committee has fourteen (14) days to respond, which would be by February 3rd. Chair Han said the violation describes concerns about posting the agenda. Chair Han recommends that the School Committee meet during an Executive Session to respond to the complaint. Chair Han said that the Committee takes their obligations very seriously and she appreciates when people reach out to them. The Committee agreed to meet before February 3rd to respond to the open meeting law complaint.

Acceptance of Dr. Keough's Resignation Letter:

Dr. Keough said it is important that the Committee formally accepts his resignation letter. Chair Han read Dr. Keough's resignation letter. Dr. Keough thanked the Committee. Ms. O'Neill wished Dr. Keough well in his hometown position as Superintendent.

Dr. Keough said it is an exciting opportunity, and that he knows it creates a challenge for Easton but he is confident that the School Committee is well informed about what the Administration had been working on and that the district is in great shape. He continued that a true testament to a leader's success is how it runs after he leaves.

On a motion by Ms. O'Neill, seconded by Ms. Weisman, with a 5-0 vote, the Committee accepted Dr. Keough's resignation letter with regret.

Discussion of Steps to Address the Superintendent Vacancy and Consideration of a Focus Group to Review District Needs:

Chair Han said they spoke in regards to Dr. Keough leaving the district prior to Dr. Keough's official resignation letter, and steps they would consider in filling his vacancy. Chair Han suggested moving forward with a group of parents, teachers, Central Office and organize thoughts towards moving forward with a plan.

Ms. De Luca said that she agrees with Chair Han and agrees with what Mr. Erickson said at the last meeting about having faculty on a search group if there would be a search group.

Ms. Martin said to clarify, within the past six (6) years the Easton Public Schools had done two (2) separate searches for a new Superintendent and both were done with quite an extensive amount of pre work which included the needs of the district, the characteristics that they look for in a Superintendent and what the Town needs. She continued that Chair Han is suggesting to dust off what was done in the previous searches, validate it, change it, and prioritize it.

Ms. Weisman questioned the timeline of this plan and how to approach getting volunteers.

Ms. O'Neill said the ideal group size is nine (9), large groups are ineffective, and inefficient. She continued that to go through a full blown search would be stopping our momentum. Ms. O'Neill said ultimately the decision is the School Committee's and that they will do what is best for the students of Easton and Easton Public Schools. Ms. O'Neill confirmed that the paths would be a full blown search, an interim, an interim and re-evaluate the need for a search and appoint Dr. Cabral.

Chair Han said that they realize that they do have a highly qualified person within the district with Dr. Cabral. Chair Han continued that it is important to hear other ideas and be on top of this and get going.

Ms. Martin suggested having one of the members of the School Committee take the responsibility of trying to develop the scope of work for this subcommittee. Chair Han suggested having a meeting next week partial open to discuss the next steps related to the

vacancy and partial Executive Session to discuss next steps related to the Open Meeting Law complaint. Ms. O'Neill offered to take the charge of this assignment with the focus group.

Capital Improvement 5 Year Plan:

David Twombly introduced John Sousa, Director of Technology and Todd Texeira, from the DPW who works very closely with the School Department. Mr. Twombly referred to the "Capital Improvement 5 Year Plan" handout that was in the packets. He discussed the need of a Special Education School Van. He continued that majority of the work for facilities will be done by the DPW. Ms. Martin questioned the replacement of carpet and painting of floors in the Performing Arts Center at OA that are listed under fiscal years 2020 and 2021. Mr. Twombly said over winter break, they cleaned the carpets, they had a vendor come in, and that this project can wait until 2020 and 2021, as it is in decent shape. Mr. Twombly said that we do have a rental revolving account and Charlene Dalrymple will contact him when in need of equipment or repairs and those can be taken out of this revolving account. He continued that a gym specialist is scheduled to come in and assess all the gym equipment and to make sure we meet the regulations. Chair Han noticed items that are on the list that go back to 2001 at the elementary schools. Mr. Twombly said that some of the items are not big ticket items and that with the help of the DPW we may be able to start to chip away at some of those items. Mr. Twombly noted that some items listed under the elementary schools were not included under the 2018 budget as in anticipation of the MSBA project. Dr. Keough said that when MSBA comes out they will make note of those items, it will influence them however, if you fix it they won't see it. He continued that we want to sell them on our need, we want them to acknowledge that those buildings are in trouble however, it is a tricky balance. Dr. Keough said he wants everyone at home to know that we are doing everything we can and that these buildings are suitable and are healthy environments for the students to learn in. He continued that anytime they have available money in the budget it goes into the schools. Chair Han said that the Town recently had the Town wide facility audit and the comments were that the buildings are aged but maintained well.

John Sousa, Director of Technology, is asking for 160,079 to upgrade and maintain our network system including upgrades to network infrastructure, additional computers, two firewall licenses and projectors. Mr. Sousa continued that he has assigned a life cycle to each item. Dr. Keough said he would like to emphasize the importance of the firewall and the malware attack. Mr. Sousa said the local police station was attacked by a ransomware. Mr. Sousa said our defense to these attacks are backups, as the virus can't access the backups. He continued that daily, weekly and once a month, files are moved to different locations. Dr. Cabral said she was impressed on how quickly Mr. Sousa was able to retrieve our documents and get us back online after a recent virus.

On a motion by Ms. O'Neill, seconded by Ms. Weisman, with a 5-0 vote, the Committee approved the recommended Capital Improvement 5 Year Plan.

On a motion by Ms. O'Neill, seconded by Ms. Weisman, with a 5-0 vote, the Committee agreed to move the Executive Session Regarding a Non-Union Benefit Question to the next order of business.

On a motion by Ms. O'Neill, seconded by Ms. Weisman, with a 5-0 vote, the Committee agreed to table the Executive Session Regarding a Non-Union Benefit Question to the next scheduled Executive Session.

2016-2017 Attendance Patterns:

On a motion by Ms. Martin, seconded by Ms. De Luca, with a 5-0, the Committee tabled the 2016-2017 Attendance Patterns to the next scheduled workshop in February.

Superintendent Notes:

Dr. Keough said he went to a great conference yesterday, the speaker was Bill Daggett. He continued that it was frightening to hear some of Mr. Daggett's research about the pace of technology. Dr. Keough said for example, the sensors that are now in cars that allow a car to stop or warn you of a car in another lane, those sensors are the future of the driverless car. He continued that the impact this will have on our economy is profound. He continued that the statistics that Mr. Daggett shared on college graduates showed that they can't find jobs because the jobs that they pursued are becoming obsolete. Dr. Keough said the jobs are going to be in technology, programming and engineering. Dr. Keough said Mr. Daggett is from New York and enjoys traveling to Massachusetts. He continued that he signed up to be contacted to possibly have him speak at a Professional Development Day for the staff. Dr. Keough said Mr. Daggett works for the International Center for Leadership in Education.

Ms. O'Neill left the meeting at 10:04 a.m. due to another commitment.

Assistant Superintendent Notes:

Dr. Cabral said that on Wednesday, February 1st the screening of Screenagers will take place at the Richardson Olmsted School, the times will be 4:00 pm for the staff and 7:00 pm for the community. Dr. Cabral said the film is from the perspective of a doctor who was concerned about the amount of screen time her children spent on social media and video games. She continued that it is an interesting film for educators and parents and after the film they will hold an hour long discussion. Dr. Cabral said John Sousa and Jessica Garbowski will lead the discussion, and this is a free event.

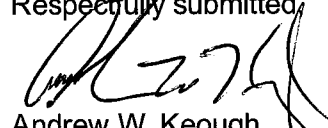
School Committee Notes:

Ms. De Luca said that Lanie Clement Holbrook had been chosen to coach high school kids in Chicago on March 29th for the McDonald's All American game. She continued that it is quite an honor and that she is so proud of her. Ms. Martin said that no kids from New England were picked however, Lanie was picked to coach.

Adjournment:

On a motion by Ms. De Luca, seconded by Ms. Weisman, with a 4-0 roll call vote, the Committee adjourned at 10:11 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew W. Keough', written over the typed name below.

Andrew W. Keough
Secretary