

EASTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
EASTON, MA

EASTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE WORKSHOP MINUTES
Friday, October 20, 2017

Minutes of School Committee Workshop Meeting, October 20, 2017, 50 Oliver Street, Upstairs Conference room, convened at 6:00 pm Present: Jacqueline Weisman, Nancy DeLuca, Jane Martin, Caroline O'Neill, Michelle Durrance, Dr. Cabral and Christine Pruitt.

Also in attendance: Ken Fernandes, Colleen Less, Jennifer McFarland and Kyla Bennett

Call Meeting to Order:

Chair Weisman called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and welcomed guests.

Meeting With a Group Proposing the Naming of the OA Auditorium After Charlene Dalrymple and Discussion of Possible Next Steps:

Ms. Less explained to the Committee that she had run a survey on Facebook to help determine what amount of money the group would be able to raise for the naming of the auditorium. She said she would send the survey results to the Committee. She said the group thought \$75,000 would be the most they could raise. She noted that the group who would be most likely to donate would be teachers, students and recent graduates. She did not think it was likely to get a big donor or a corporate donor.

Mr. Fernandes noted that the group does not want to make a commitment to raise a dollar amount that they do not believe is feasible. He also noted that he thinks raising this amount will be an uphill battle. Mr. Fernandes said that if the group is able to raise more than \$75,000 they would donate the additional amount to the school district.

Ms. O'Neill stated that she understands this group is looking to name the auditorium for service alone, with the money being seen as an honorarium. Ms. O'Neill noted that although the Campaign for Oliver Ames has not been very active, it is still in place. Ms. O'Neill reiterated that Ms. Dalrymple has made a great contribution to our district, but this is about being equitable. Ms. O'Neill acknowledged that there are many groups raising funds these days, but she did not think the School Committee should make an unreasonable accommodation for one group.

Ms. Martin also noted that allowing for a naming of a space at the high school outside of the OA Campaign is not fair to the people who went through the campaign in the past. She stated that the Committee did not allow others who named a space for service to do

so outside the campaign. In fact, every donation that has been made for a naming at the high school since the Campaign was begun was through the Campaign.

Chair Weisman agreed that any potential agreement to name a space at the high school has to come through the OA Campaign.

Mr. Fernandes stated that each point of view has been discussed quite extensively but the fact is that these are tough times for fundraising and he does not want to commit to more than what he believes can be raised.

Ms. DeLuca agreed with Ms. O'Neill's statement about being equitable, but she is willing to support the \$75,000 offer.

Ms. O'Neill said she couldn't support the \$75,000 offer. She noted that FEEE did an online campaign during the summer and raised over \$20,000 in just 6 weeks, so she believes this group could raise more. She noted that the School Committee already has made a major concession by reducing the amount asked for to \$125,000. Ms. O'Neill stated that she thinks after the initial \$50,000 is raised to place the sign, this group should be able to raise \$7,500 a year for the next 10 years considering there will be new graduates every year.

Ms. Durrance stated that she believes it would be a stretch to raise \$125,000.

Ms. Less stated that she had spoken to Mr. Lee Williams who said he thought businesses would not be likely to contribute unless the name of the business would be on the sign.

Ms. Bennett stated that she thinks the School Committee is punishing the group for not just asking that the auditorium be named for service alone. Ms. Bennett also stated that the School Committee has a fiduciary duty to the school department and \$75,000 is a lot of money.

Mr. Fernandes, Ms. Bennett, Ms. Less and Ms. McFarland exited the meeting at 6:40 p.m.

The Committee continued to discuss the information presented by Mr. Fernandes and his group. Dr. Cabral reminded the Committee that other districts have had auditorium seat naming fundraisers and she thought that this group could do such a fundraiser to reach the \$125,000 goal. Chair Weisman said she would contact attorney Rebecca Bryant and Mr. Wes Paul to make sure the School Committee could allow the group to run such a fundraiser. Chair Weisman also said she would contact the districts that have run such fundraisers.

The members of the Committee agreed that any offer to the group to allow them to raise funds through the naming of seats in the auditorium would be contingent on their committing to a \$125,000.00 contribution to the schools.

Adjournment:

On a motion by Ms. Durrance, seconded by Ms. De Luca, with a 5-0 roll call vote, the School Committee adjourned at 8:03 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jacqueline Weisman
Secretary