

STONEHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
STONEHAM, MASSACHUSETTS

**SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING  
HIGH SCHOOL LIBRARY  
MARCH 26, 2009**

The regular meeting of the School Committee was held at 7:00 P.M. on Thursday, March 26, 2009 in the High School library with the following members present: M. Christie, Chairman; S. MacNeill, and D. Maurer. Also present was L. Olson, Superintendent of Schools; A. Patriquin, Assistant Superintendent; and A. DiCologero, Administrator of School Finance.

Chairman M. Christie called the open session of the School Committee to order at 7:00 P.M.

**I. Consent Agenda**

**A. Action to Approve the Agenda**

**ACTION:** A motion was made by D. Maurer and seconded by S. MacNeill to approve the agenda. The motion carried 3-0.

**B. Action to Approve the Minutes of:**

March 12, 2009 Regular Meeting

**ACTION:** A motion was made by S. MacNeill and seconded by D. Maurer to approve the minutes of March 12, 2009. The motion was approved 3-0.

March 12, 2009 Executive Session

**ACTION:** A motion was made by S. MacNeill and seconded by D. Maurer to approve the minutes of March 12, 2009 to remain confidential. The motion was approved 3-0.

**II. New Business**

**A. Introduction: Sharon Bird, Principal of Central Elementary School**

Dr. Olson introduced Ms. Sharon Bird, new principal for the Central Elementary School. Ms. Bird is currently a teacher and the Assistant Principal of the Thomas Carroll School in Peabody, MA. The School Committee congratulated and welcomed Ms. Bird.

Chairman Christie announced a 10 minute recess.

**B. Public Hearing – School Budget**

Chairman Christie opened the Public Hearing on School Budget at 7:30 P.M.

Chairman Christie reported that Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 71, Section 38N, requires the School Committee to conduct a Public Hearing on their proposed budget prior to Town Meeting.

Dr. Olson announced the following developments that may impact the budget:

Assistant Superintendent Anne Patriquin has announced her retirement effective June 30, 2009. This position, and the position of Secretary to the Assistant Superintendent,

were recommended to be terminated and replaced with an extended year (200 day) Director of Elementary Education and secretarial positions.

The decrease in enrollment numbers for kindergarten registration, which has gone down approximately 70 students over the past four years, and is due to a statewide decrease in the birth rates. This will impact kindergarten staffing. Both Central School and South School have enough students to run a full day kindergarten program; parents from Colonial Park and Robin Hood have been notified that they may need to move out of district to attend a full day kindergarten program.

Class sizes at South grade 1, Robin Hood grade 2 and Colonial Park grade 3 all have 25 students. Average grade sizes across the district stand at 20-21. The first option would be to request voluntary out of district placements.

The American Recovery & Reinvestment Act provides stimulus money to be used to support education at the local level and may amount to approximately \$133,000 for Stoneham. The governor's proposal is currently held up awaiting House and Senate approval and the town probably will not know the dollar amount until mid June when the state budget is adopted. This money cannot be included in the budget, it must be used for strategic investments. The money will be available for two years and will be highly scrutinized by the federal government.

IDEA Grant, which is state education funds dedicated to special education, will be increased by \$383,000.

Title I Grant, which provides enrichment and support for the elementary schools, should have an additional \$60,000 available that will help in the implementation of the new math program.

Marie opened the discussion to the public.

Jeanne Craigie, Finance and Advisory Board member, speaking as a private citizen, expressed her concerns with the elimination of the Assistant Superintendent position.

Several parents of grade 2 students at Colonial Park voiced their concerns regarding the elimination of a third grade teacher in order to fund the replacement of the Middle School team concept, especially since they have no Title 1 support and are on warning two years in a row for adequate yearly progress in MCAS. The Committee explained the process of why the Middle School became a priority and why tough choices needed to be made.

Chairman Christie announced the Public Hearing on School Budget closed at 9:14 P.M.

### **C. 2009-2010 Final School Budget Approval**

**ACTION:** A motion was made by D. Maurer and seconded by S. MacNeill to terminate the position of Assistant Superintendent and Secretary to the Assistant Superintendent effective June 30, 2009. The motion was approved 3-0

**ACTION:** A motion was made by D. Maurer and seconded by S. MacNeill to approve the new position of Director of Elementary Education and a 200-day Central Office secretary. The motion was approved 3-0. The secretary position will not be filled until the elementary teaching positions are resolved.

Due to the absence of one of its members, the Committee tabled Items 3 and 4 regarding FY09 Budget approval and requested a meeting be posted for next Wednesday, April 1, 2009.

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**D. Bill Schedule #13**

**ACTION:** A motion was made by S. MacNeill and seconded by D. Maurer to approve Bill Schedule #13 in the amount of \$273,921.81. The motion was approved 3-0.

**E. Student Representatives to the School Committee**

Student Representatives had to leave the meeting due to a conflict with Junior Class College Information Night

**F. Acceptance of Policy 7-2 Retirement of Facilities, Revised 3.26.09**

Dr. Olson reviewed the modifications to Policy 7.2 *Retirement of Facilities* on surplus property and recommended the policy be approved as revised.

**ACTION:** A motion was made by S. MacNeill and seconded by D. Maurer to approve Policy 7.2 *Retirement of Facilities*, as revised. The motion was approved 3-0.

**G. Public Hearing – School Choice**

Chairman Christie opened the Public Hearing on School Choice at 9:26 P.M.

Dr. Olson reviewed the Department of Education's Chapter 76 School Choice Education Reform Act of 1993. This law requires every school system in Massachusetts to conduct a public hearing on School Choice before the School Committee can officially take action whether or not to participate in School Choice. The School Committee must notify the Department of Education by June 1<sup>st</sup> if they decide not to participate in School Choice. Any school system that does not take an action not to participate automatically becomes a School Choice community.

Due to uncertainty of enrollment issues, Dr. Olson recommended the School Committee vote to reject school choice for 2009-2010.

M. Christie opened the discussion to the public.

**ACTION:** A motion was made by S. MacNeill and seconded by D. Maurer not to become a School Choice community for 2009-2010 due to enrollment issues. The motion was approved 3-0.

**III. Old Business**

Dr. Olson expressed the need to submit registration for Day on the Hill scheduled for May 7, 2009.

M. Christie reminded the public that the SBCEF will sponsor a Trivia Night at the Robin Hood School on Friday, April 3.

**IV. Discussion**

none

**V. Superintendent's Report/Announcements & Correspondence**

none

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**VI. Executive Session**

**ACTION:** A motion was made by S. MacNeill, seconded by D. Maurer, and voted unanimously by roll call at 9:45 to enter Executive Session under MGL Ch. 39, § 23B.

**VII. Adjourn**

**ACTION:** A motion was made by S. MacNeill and seconded by D. Maurer to adjourn the meeting. The motion was approved 3-0.

The meeting adjourned at 10:55 P.M.

**RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED**  
**LES E. OLSON, SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**