

MINUTES OF THE LINCOLN SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
Thursday, December 16, 2010  
Hartwell Building, Lincoln, MA  
OPEN SESSION

Present: Jennifer Glass (Chair), Al Schmertzler, Tim Christenfeld, Jen James, Deb Leister (Hanscom Representative). Also present: Mickey Brandmeyer (Superintendent), Mary Sterling (Assistant Superintendent), Buckner Creel (Administrator for Business and Finance), Stephanie Powers (Administrator of Student Services).

Absent: Tom Sander (Vice Chair), Debbie John (Boston Representative), Joe Connell (Hanscom Representative).

### I. Greetings and Call to Order

Ms. Glass, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm. The meeting is being taped.

### II. Chairperson's and Members' Reports

Mr. Christenfeld said the Town's Facilities Committee did not address three important questions when it prepared its report on the use of Town space. One of those questions was about the best uses of the Hartwell Complex. The Council on Aging [COA] and the Recreation Department would like to see a revived Facilities Committee to consider the space needs of the COA and possible community uses of the Hartwell Complex.

Mr. Christenfeld talked with COA Director Carolyn Bottum, and they would like Committee members to meet with the Council for coffee in the spring.

Mr. Christenfeld is reviewing the School Committee policy manual, which has 119 policies in 12 categories. He would like to discuss how to tackle it and suggested that bidding requirements, the superintendent's role, and the budget procedure are outdated. For instance, the budget procedure requires three budgets—METCO, Hanscom, and Lincoln—to be presented. He will compile a spreadsheet that will show which policies need revision and in what areas they do not have policies but need them. Ms. Glass indicated this conversation would take place in February, and Mr. Brandmeyer said there are five or six that need to be updated because of the new bullying policy.

Mr. Schmertzler said the Town's Capital Planning Committee [CPC] is likely to approve the COA's request for a feasibility study. Mr. Christenfeld noted the Committee he mentioned earlier would lay the groundwork for their feasibility study.

Ms. Leister attended the phenomenal Hanscom Middle School's orchestra and choir Winter Concert, which was standing room only.

Ms. Glass and Mr. Brandmeyer presented an FY2012 budget overview at the PTA meeting. There was an interesting discussion, and they encourage people to share their ideas. She and Mr. Sander, Ms. John, and Mr. Brandmeyer met to discuss the METCO program's goals and grant with Boston parents. Ms. Glass also attended Principal Sharon Hobbs' coffee this morning; attendance was higher than usual. Ms. Glass received the informative standards-based report card for 5<sup>th</sup> graders and thanked all involved for their work. She asked parents to please fill out the survey about it.

Mr. Schmertzler went to the Massachusetts School Building Authority's [MSBA] review of the proposal for the architect. It was a transparent process with nine firms under consideration. They narrowed the choices to three, and the top two companies are far ahead of the third one on the list. Ms. Glass thanked Selectman Gary Taylor, Mr. Creel, and Mr. Brandmeyer for doing a great job representing them at the MSBA.

### III. Public Comments

Barbara Low, 16 Blueberry Lane, enjoyed the Hanscom Band and thanked them for their performance.

Maria Hylton, 5 Oakdale Lane and Co-chair of the METCO Coordinating Committee, reported there have been a series of meetings with Boston parents to help them understand the budget process as there is much confusion. They are trying to reframe the conversation so that the Boston community moves away from a separate METCO mindset and embraces Lincoln and the budget as one entity. There would be shared gains and losses, and positions would not be METCO jobs, but staff jobs at the Lincoln schools. Ms. Glass thanked her for her input.

#### IV. Consent Agenda

Documents: 1) Memorandum from Stephen McKenna to School Committee and Mickey Brandmeyer, dated December 16, 2010 RE: PTA Donation with Copy of Check from PTA, dated November 29, 2010; 2) Copy of Check from Albion Bjork, dated December 1, 2010

Ms. Glass moved, and Mr. Schmertzler seconded, the motion to accept the donations totaling \$600 for the setup of Ms. Porter's classroom and for the Betty Bjork Technology Professional Development Fund. The Committee voted unanimously to accept the gifts.

Mr. Brandmeyer will send thank you letters and reported that the Bjork Fund has earned enough interest to allow them to request proposals from teachers; they will have a total of \$1,000 to disburse in increments of \$250. They will bring proposals to the Committee for consideration in January.

#### V. Time Scheduled Appointments

##### A. Request from Town Manager to Relocate Town Offices to Ballfield Road during Town Hall Renovations

Documents: 1) Memorandum from Assistant Town Administrator Anita Scheipers to Jennifer Glass, dated December 8, 2010 RE: Temporary Relocation of Town Offices during the Construction Period; 2) Attached Rough Sketch of the Hartwell Building and Pods

Ms. Glass introduced Ms. Anita Scheipers, Assistant Town Administrator, who presented the memorandum about the temporary relocation of the Town Offices during the potential renovation. The Selectmen and the Town Offices Study Committee would like to use certain spaces in the Hartwell Complex, as they would like to keep as many government offices together in one place as possible. She met with Mr. Brandmeyer and Mr. Creel. Any improvements made to the spaces, if approved, would be charged to the town offices project and could be left for the schools' benefit. In addition, the Town would pay for its share of utilities and custodial staff.

The Committee asked about potential conflicts with different activities and groups and whether there is enough room to accommodate all of them. Ms. Scheipers said they decided to put the IT department in a trailer at the Town Office site. The school administration will work with the Recreation Department to find suitable spaces for Lincoln Day Camp activities displaced by the Town Office relocation. The 20 Town Office staff people would park near the Codman Pool. Meetings with other boards and committees would need to be held there. Other groups, such as the Friends of Lincoln Library, that use the PODS will be contacted, and Town Offices will help to find other space for these groups. Further details and plans will be discussed if the request is granted.

Mr. Schmertzler moved, and Ms. James seconded, the motion to allow the Selectmen to use space in the Hartwell Building and PODS for the temporary relocation of the Town Offices during the renovation of the Town Hall, a period estimated to be July 2011 through September 2012.

Ms. Barbara Low, Treasurer of the Friends of the Lincoln Library, and a current occupant of space in the PODS for the book sale, said it will be hard to find 221.8 linear feet of built-in bookcases for their book sale operations, which have raised \$43,000 in four years with \$14,000 donated to the library. Their volunteers and customers are mostly older residents. If the book sale has to stop for a lengthy period of time, their volunteers may not come back.

The Committee voted unanimously to approve the use of the space to temporarily relocate the Town Offices.

##### B. FY 2012 Budget Discussion: Gap Closing and Lincoln 5-8 Reorganization

Documents: 1) Memorandum from Mickey Brandmeyer to School Committee, dated December 9, 2010 RE: Proposed Gap Reduction for FY 2012 Lincoln Budget Phase 1; 2) Memorandum from Sharon Hobbs to School Committee, dated December 10, 2010 RE: Middle School Enrollment; 3) FY12 Budget—Gap Closing Recommendations Phase 1 as of December 13, 2010, Lincoln Campus

Mr. Brandmeyer said there were three items to discuss: 1) the alternatives to the staffing model of the Middle School because of decreasing enrollments; 2) the next steps in funding for METCO; and 3) the proposed reductions and gap closing for the Lincoln campus.

Sharon Hobbs, Principal for Grades 5-8, presented information about the Middle School staffing. Unlike elementary school teachers, middle school teachers are required to be licensed to teach in each content area and cannot switch subjects unless they are appropriately licensed in that subject. They will need to make staffing adjustments while maintaining the current program, continuing Developmental Design, and building remediation time into the school day for those students who need

it. The current 6<sup>th</sup> grade class, with 80 students, is their largest one for a long time. Some teachers are interested in part-time schedules.

Mr. Brandmeyer noted that they do not have a full program to bring to the Committee yet because they wanted input first. They will bring a proposal to the January 6 meeting. He noted they do not want the old experimental program where students could choose electives such as ultimate frisbee. Ms. Sterling supports keeping the Middle School core team of four content teachers at each grade level because in addition to the state requirement, teachers need to differentiate instruction, and it's hard to do without content mastery. Students also need extra help during the day, and it would allow for time to do that. The new anti-bullying law requires them to build in lessons about it into the school day.

The Committee members asked what would be lost if they cut teachers and suggested the proposal include what the program would look like with 12, 10, or 8 teachers, and how does it impact the implementation for Developmental Design program. If the current number of teachers was kept, what extra opportunities could be offered? Students with similar abilities might be grouped together for different subjects; this model has been used at Hanscom and works well. Maria Hylton asked whether Developmental Design has had a beneficial impact; Dr. Hobbs noted that it feels nicer in the hallways, discipline referrals have decreased, and the program redirects student actions by giving them the chance to do the right thing instead of punish them right away. She will collect data.

Mr. Brandmeyer reported on the two meetings with Boston parents and the METCO Coordinating Committee. State funding for the METCO grant has decreased steadily since FY05, and the grant has never fully funded the program. One part of the grant is for transportation and must be used for that purpose. Even though METCO is broken out on the budget sheet, they are working on the concept of "one school, one program" instead of METCO, Lincoln, Hanscom. Boston parents are most concerned with academic achievement; some are interested in the social and emotional support. The next meetings are January 11 and 12 with the leadership team, and he looks forward to the next conversation. The Committee's sense was that if METCO is integral to the program, it needs to be treated that way, and all staff members are able to help all children. There was concern expressed about the difficulties in hiring and maintaining a diverse staff; all children need to see diverse people being successful. METCO also serves Latino and Asian students.

Mr. Brandmeyer presented his suggestions for closing the Lincoln budget gap, which included cutting two new positions, facilities manager and the part-time custodian, (creating a facilities manager position would require sharing resources with the Town, and it is hard to recommend this while cutting two teaching positions); cutting the amount for the Lexia program and seeing if they can get a better price; and shifting the amounts for professional development to a federal grant. Most items will shift to grants or other funding sources, or they will do without them. The revised budget gap remains at \$158,585 without the METCO gap of \$49,049.

Ms. Glass thanked them for their work.

## VI. Superintendent's Report

### A. 2011-2012 School Year Calendar: Initial Thinking

Documents: 1) Working Draft I, dated December 8, 2010, Lincoln Public Schools 2011-2012 Calendar; 2) Working Draft II, dated December 8, 2010, Lincoln Public Schools 2011-2012 Calendar

Mr. Brandmeyer presented two drafts of next year's school calendar, and both start school before Labor Day. The difference is an extra day at the December recess. He needs to get approval from the Lincoln Teachers' Association [LTA] to have them return before Labor Day, and the LTA Executive Board needs to know before the School Committee votes on the calendar. He noted the two pressure points were at the start and end of the year. By law, they are required to schedule 185 days of school each year. Lincoln-Sudbury and Bedford are still working on their calendars. Bedford always starts after Labor Day, which will be September 5.

Committee members were divided on the start, with some wanting to start after Labor Day and others not. Mr. Brandmeyer suggested to start with students on August 31, close on December 21, or start September 6 and have the same winter vacation.

Mr. Brandmeyer reported that SMMA [Symmes, Maini, and McKee Associates] and OMR Architects are finalists with the School Building Committee [SBC]. The firms will interview and give tours of schools they've completed. He expects to have a negotiated contract, expected to cost \$400,000-\$450,000, to be signed by the January 20 meeting. They will bring a recommendation to the School Committee on January 20 for a vote.

VII. Curriculum

Document: What's New in Schools? Standards-Based Reporting: Parent Guide to Standards-Based Report Cards Brochure

Ms. Sterling encouraged all to look at the student artwork displayed in the rooms and hallways of the Hartwell Building. She made her "science pitch" for the Science Share and Science Fair, which will be mentioned in the principals' newsletters, and encouraged all to take advantage of science enrichment. She presented the flyer on standards-based report cards and asked that parents please fill out the survey about the report cards. Ms. Glass noted the shift in thinking is starting and going well. They plan to create them for grades K-3 and grade 6 in September.

VIII. Policy

None.

IX. Facilities and Financial

A. Warrant Approval

Document: None.

Mr. Creel presented the payroll warrants totaling \$620,790.31 and the accounts payable warrants totaling \$208,285.96 for a total of \$829,076.27. Mr. Schmertzler reviewed the warrants and commended Mr. Creel for his work. Ms. Glass moved to approve the warrants, with Mr. Christenfeld seconding the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the warrants.

X. Old Business

None.

XI. New Business

None.

XII. Approval of Minutes

None.

XIII. Information Enclosures

None.

XIV. Adjournment

On motion by Ms. Glass, seconded by Mr. Schmertzler, the Committee voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sarah G. Marcotte  
Recording Secretary