

MINUTES OF THE LINCOLN SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Thursday, December 19, 2013
Hartwell Building, Lincoln, MA
OPEN SESSION

Present: Jennifer Glass (Chair), Tom Sander (Vice Chair), Al Schmertzler, Tim Christenfeld. Also present: Becky McFall (Superintendent), Mary Sterling (Assistant Superintendent), Buckner Creel (Administrator for Business and Finance), Stephanie Powers (Administrator for Student Services), Robert Ford (Director of Technology).

Absent: Jen James, Preditta Cedeno (METCO Representative), Lisa Pizarro (Hanscom Civilian School Liaison Officer).

I. Greetings and Call to Order

Ms. Glass, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm.

II. Chairperson's and Members' Reports

None.

III. Public Comments

None.

IV. Consent Agenda

None.

V. Time Scheduled Appointments

A. Update on Hanscom Primary School and Hanscom Middle School Building Projects

Document: None.

Dr. McFall reviewed a PowerPoint presentation on the 35% design review of the Hanscom Primary School. The new building has a budget of \$32 million with 80,000 square feet of space, which is a little smaller than the Hanscom Middle School. They met with architectural firm Ewing Cole on December 10 and 11, and the project is moving along well. The design includes an increase in collaborative spaces with small group learning spaces and break-out rooms between classrooms. The stage can be used from both sides with an operable wall that can close off a side of the common room. There are also courtyard outdoor learning spaces. There are many skylights to bring the daylight into the building. She noted that the design may change based on ongoing discussions.

The project will be at the 65% design phase in March, and they will meet with the architects again.

The two new school buildings will look like one cohesive building and will connect on the second level with a bridge on the inside.

The Hanscom Middle School project, with a price tag of \$37 to \$40 million, was awarded a construction contract yesterday. Mr. Creel noted that there has been a year's delay, and while the sequestration process contributed to the delay, procurement also

presented difficulties. They are waiting for Senate approval on the Primary School and estimate there will be a late-summer move of the Middle School into the temporary trailers. Dr. McFall said there was much faculty input, and they made a presentation to the faculty last week that is available online. The district will negotiate with the Department of Defense on the Fixtures, Furniture and Equipment [FF+E] budget for the new building, and it is unclear who will pay for those items; Department of Defense Educational Activity [DoDEA] design calls for a lot of FF+E. They are looking at bid options and will negotiate with DoDEA.

Ms. Glass thanked them for their work.

B. Update on Lincoln School Building Project

Document: None, but see the Information Enclosure.

Ms. Glass reviewed the next steps on the Lincoln School Building Project. The Town was not invited by the Massachusetts School Building Authority [MSBA] to participate in their process this year. Ms. Glass and Dr. McFall were told that the district's Statement of Interest [SOI] was complete, and while not many towns have faced this situation of rejecting an MSBA-approved school building project, there have been some that have and have been re-invited to the MSBA pipeline. Ms. Glass will talk with those towns, and Dr. McFall said that those towns have had much different project scopes from their original school building projects.

The question is whether to submit an SOI again for the April 11, 2014 deadline. They discussed the issue with Town Administrator Timothy Higgins and the Selectmen, and the School Committee should meet with the Selectmen and Finance and Capital Planning Committees because the Selectmen have to sign the SOI in order to resubmit it. Mr. Christenfeld asked if the district could change the date on the current SOI and resubmit it.

Mr. Schmertzler asked if they could do a parallel SOI to replace windows, boilers, and other items. Dr. McFall said they are looking into that process, but she does not think they can apply to both MSBA programs at the same time; there are issues with the MSBA accelerated repair option that may disqualify the district. Mr. Creel said the repair option is a very different process that does not allow for discussion with the Town; the MSBA decides what needs to be repaired and fixes it. Mr. Christenfeld said the School Building Advisory Committee [SBAC] found that they need to focus on the needs, and if money is spent on repair items it is likely to trigger codes.

Eric Harris of the Finance Committee warned that if they try for a less costly project, they will not get a big project, and they are playing into the hands of those in Town who want a repair project.

Ms. Glass will send dates to the Committee for a meeting with the Board of Selectmen to discuss strategy and the outreach events needed before Town Meeting and said the Committee would discuss the Capital Planning Committee list at the January 9 meeting.

C. Continuation of FY15 Preliminary Budget Presentation

Documents: 1) Lincoln Public Schools, FY 2015 Preliminary Budget Book; 2) Memorandum to Lincoln School Committee and Becky McFall, Superintendent, from

Buck Creel, Administrator for Business and Finance, Subject: FY15 Budget Guidelines, dated September 12, 2013; 3) Lincoln Public Schools, FY15 Budget Development Timeline, undated; 4) Memorandum to All Budgeting Agencies, Town of Lincoln from Lincoln Finance Committee, Re: FY 2015 Budget Guideline, dated October 11, 2013

Dr. McFall updated the Committee on the Concord Area Special Education Collaborative [CASE] assessment, which is currently level funded in the FY15 budget. The numbers are not yet completely finalized, but Mr. Creel said that they now have a deficit in the Lincoln and Hanscom budgets because of the CASE assessment. The deficits are broken into the instructional services component and the transportation component, and are respectively \$10,935 and \$10,830 for a total of \$21,765 for the Lincoln campus and are \$150,540 and \$80,385 for a total of \$230,925 for the Hanscom campus. The district has a growing number of students who need special education services. Dr. McFall said these figures are a maximum number based on the current number of students and are not final. It is unlikely that the district will receive additional special education reimbursement and that it does not receive those funds for transportation costs. Mr. Creel said CASE transportation is the most economical way to go.

CASE, with nine member districts, will have a tiered tuition rate system and is still working on its rates for instructional services; previously they charged a flat rate for the entire program. CASE takes in students from nonmember school districts and is looking at those tuitions and is examining their staffing. Dr. McFall thought that CASE was setting high rates now but will most likely have to adjust them downward. Dr. McFall said the district has three options to fix the deficit: 1) be more aware on the Lincoln campus of the needs; 2) look at the budget and shift improvement initiatives; and 3) submit a preferred budget and a base budget. Dr. McFall's perspective is that they should try to absorb the deficits on the Lincoln campus instead of submitting a preferred budget.

Mr. Sander and Ms. Glass wanted to absorb the costs into the budget. Mr. Creel said they might be able to pre-purchase tuition, but it is too early to tell. Ms. Glass said they will alert the Finance Committee at the next meeting with them in January. Eric Harris of the Finance Committee told them to be conservative in budgeting.

Dr. McFall recommended that they keep the proposed preliminary budget the same on the Lincoln campus, and they will go to the Reserve Fund to bridge the deficit for the Hanscom campus.

The Committee will vote on the FY15 budget at the January 23 meeting.

Ms. Glass thanked them for their work.

D. Report on Extracurricular Participation

Document: Report to School Committee and Rebecca McFall, Superintendent from Stephanie Powers, Administrator for Student Services, Re: Report on Student Participation in Extracurricular Athletics, Music and Drama, dated December 11, 2013

Ms. Powers reviewed her report on extracurricular participation, which is an annual report that has to be submitted to the state. This report covered the 2012-2013 school year, and she thanked those who contributed to it. The district is required by law

to monitor extracurricular athletics, music, and drama to ensure that all students can fully participate. The report breaks the students into demographic groups, some of which break down into the state's subgroup categories of students: Low Income, Students with Disabilities, African American, Asian, Hispanic/Latino, Multiple Race/Non-Latino, and White. English Language Learners are also included. The Lincoln School athletic programs charge fees, but there are scholarships available. In accordance with the Hanscom contract, there are no fees for after-school sports.

Ms. Powers said participation in sports fluctuates, but there is good participation in the music programs; some parents pay tuition to take music lessons. Participation in the drama programs has remained consistent, but more Hanscom students have become involved. Ms. Powers suggested that the district recruit some students to participate in athletic activities, but there is nothing that shows up as a high concern. She could investigate anything if asked.

Students may be involved with other activities outside of the school, which may make a difference in their participation in the after-school activities. Ms. Powers said the School Health Advisory Council will be sending a survey to students to determine what those outside school activities are, and she will report to the Committee on the results in April.

Mr. Sander asked her to plot the participation in these activities over time to see if there were any patterns.

Ms. Glass thanked her for her work.

E. Update on Lincoln Agency Annual Report for FinCom
Document: None.

Mr. Christenfeld said they will update the numbers and submit the report in the same format as last year's report, which was the first one. The story line might be a little different. He and Mr. Sander will present their draft to the Committee in mid-January, and the report will be submitted to the Finance Committee in February. Mr. Christenfeld thanked Dr. Sterling and the administration for their help in collecting and analyzing the numbers.

Ms. Glass thanked them for their work.

VI. Superintendent's Report

Document: None.

Dr. McFall acknowledged that Tuesday's commute home for Boston students was difficult because of the snow storm. The district held a full day of school. One of the Boston buses delivered students at home at a reasonable time, but another bus that left at 3:00 pm did not finish delivering students until 6:15 pm. They will reflect on that and may release students earlier the next time winter weather threatens.

Ms. Glass thanked her for her work.

VII. Curriculum

Document: None.

Dr. Sterling noted that Tuesday was Raytheon grant training day, where 16 teachers received the engineering kits that are tied to science concepts. Mairead Curtis, Science Leader, is guiding the choice of kits, which are free. Teachers gave good feedback.

Dr. Sterling attended a 3rd grade engineering class that was constructing robots and following the instructions very closely. She observed two students in particular, where one was helping the other with the electric pieces of the robot, which was great.

Dr. Sterling said Terry Green presented their proposal for a boardwalk through the wetlands on the Lincoln School campus at Tuesday's meeting with the Community Preservation Committee. The Preservation Committee voted to bring the proposal for a public hearing. Dr. McFall said that Facilities Coordinator Michael Haines also presented the playground proposal, and it, too, will have a public hearing. Mr. Creel noted they might use Ms. Green's proposal for a boardwalk near the Shawsheen River on the Hanscom campus. A boardwalk may be part of the Hanscom Primary School 35% design review.

Ms. Glass thanked her for her work.

VIII. Policy

A. Funding Proposal and Applications—First Reading

Document: Lincoln Public Schools, Funding Proposals and Applications, File DD, Adopted by the School Committee September 28, 1981

Ms. Glass noted that the four policies need to be updated.

Dr. McFall said the district receives recurring grants, but the policy is to cover new grants, which require them to submit applications and proposals. The policy's purpose is not to have the Committee micromanage the proposal process, but to bring forward for discussion the significant grants that would align with the district's mission and goals. Dr. McFall noted that grants are different from gifts.

The Committee wanted the word "all" deleted from the first sentence of the second paragraph.

B. Budget Hearings—First Reading

Document: Lincoln Public Schools, Budget Hearings, File DBF, Adopted at School Committee Meeting of September 28, 1981

There was no discussion about this policy, which outlines the requirements for posting the budget hearings and budget information for the public.

C. Bidding Requirements—First Reading

Document: Lincoln Public Schools, Bidding Requirements, File DJE, Adopted at School Committee Meeting of September 28, 1981

Mr. Creel said that the current policy predates Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 30B on procurement, and the suggested change is to have it follow M.G.L. 30B. There is a dollar limit, currently \$25,000, for the requirements of M.G.L. 30B to be followed.

Mr. Christenfeld said that the Committee has to follow Ch. 30B but can be more strict and make the amount at which the bidding requirements policy must be followed to be less than \$25,000. Mr. Creel noted that the Committee is using the language recommended by the Massachusetts Association of School Committees [MASC], and the Committee is reserving certain rights to their actions regarding bids.

D. Vendor Relations—First Reading

Document: Lincoln Public Schools, Vendor Relations, File DJG, Adopted at School Committee Meeting of September 29, [sic?]1981

Mr. Creel will delete the reference to MASC in the policy.

Mr. Sander asked that the original policies and the suggested changes to the policies be tracked. Dr. McFall will bring the originals with their edits for the next meeting.

All four policies will come back to the Committee for a second reading and vote.

IX. Facilities and Financial

A. Warrant Approval

Document: None.

Mr. Creel presented the payroll warrants totaling \$708,566.84 and the accounts payable warrants totaling \$261,720.76 for a total of \$970,287.60. Mr. Schmertzler reviewed the warrants and recommended that they be approved. Mr. Sander moved to approve the warrants, with Mr. Christenfeld seconding the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the warrants.

X. Old Business

A. Recognition of Teacher Receiving Professional Teacher Status

Document: Letter to School Committee from Rebecca McFall, Re: Professional Status Awards, dated December 9, 2013

Dr. McFall congratulated Wendy Glosband, a 6th grade teacher at the Lincoln School, for receiving Professional Status. Ms. Glosband has been on maternity leave and returned to school on December 6.

Ms. Glass congratulated Ms. Glosband and welcomed her back.

XI. New Business

Document: None.

Ms. Glass noted that Katherine Hall Page, the Committee's liaison with the DeCordova Museum, has decided to step down from the position after serving for 12 years. She thanked Ms. Page for her extraordinary work. In January, the Committee will write a description of the position and start the process to find a new liaison.

XII. Approval of Minutes

Document: Draft of School Committee Minutes for September 26, 2013

The Committee tabled the minutes until the next meeting.

XIII. Information Enclosures

Document: Letter to Rebecca McFall, Superintendent, from John K. McCarthy, Executive Director, Massachusetts School Building Authority, Re: Lincoln's FY 2013 SOI Status, dated December 5, 2013

These items were not discussed. The documents are for the Committee's information.

XIV. Adjournment

On motion by Ms. Glass, seconded by Mr. Sander, the Committee voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:07 pm.

The next School Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 9, 2014 at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah G. Marcotte
Recording Secretary