

MINUTES OF THE LINCOLN SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Thursday, July 8, 2010
Hartwell Building, Lincoln, MA
OPEN SESSION

Present: Jennifer Glass (Chair), Tom Sander (Vice Chair), Al Schmertzler, Tim Christenfeld, Deb Leister (Hanscom Representative). Also present: Mickey Brandmeyer (Superintendent), Buckner Creel (Administrator for Business and Finance), Stephanie Powers (Administrator of Student Services). Absent: Rob Orgel, Debbie John (Boston Representative), Joe Connell (Hanscom Representative).

I. Greetings and Call to Order

Ms. Glass, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm.

II. Chairperson's and Members' Reports

Mr. Brandmeyer reported that televisions have been ordered and the meetings will be televised beginning in the fall.

III. Public Comments

None.

IV. Consent Agenda

A. Accept Gift from PTA

Document: Memo from Stephen McKenna to School Committee and Mr. Brandmeyer, with copies of checks for \$200 and \$100 from the PTA to the Town of Lincoln

There was no separate discussion of this issue.

B. Accept Gift from Lincoln Land Conservation Trust

Document: Memo from LLCT to School Committee, Proposal to Support Ecology Education in the Lincoln Public Schools, Dated June 30, 2010

There was no separate discussion of this issue.

C. Accept Gift for Betty Bjork Fund

Document: Copy of Check for \$500 from Albion and Elizabeth Bjork

There was no separate discussion of this issue.

D. Approve Overnight Field Trip to Sargent Camp

Documents: Late Night and Overnight Field Trip Proposal, Grade 7 Field Trip to Sargent Center description, Letter to Parents and Caregivers from Principal Sharon Hobbs, Dated September 1, 2010, Timetable for Sargent Center, Lincoln School Field Trip Consent Form, Letter: What Students Should Bring, Draft of Schedule for Trip, Policy IJOA, Field Trips (Voted at June 3, 2004 School Committee meeting)

Mr. Christenfeld arrived at 6:10 pm.

Ms. Glass noted that the field trip proposal mentioned the Legacy Fund as a funding source for the trip, and said it needs to be approved for that use. There are other scholarship funds available for students for this trip. Mr. Brandmeyer will draft a means-testing policy for scholarships for school activities. He recommended changing the parent session to 6 to 7 pm because the timing conflicts with Curriculum Night.

Mr. Sander moved to approve the consent agenda subject to attempting to change the time on the parent information session for the Sargent Field Trip. Ms. Glass seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the consent agenda.

V. Time Scheduled Appointments

A. Proposal from Frontier Academy to Open a Private School

Documents: Memorandum dated October 2, 2007 to School Committees and Superintendents from Jeffrey M. Nellhaus, Acting Commissioner of Education RE: Advisory on Approval of Massachusetts Private Schools Pursuant to MGL C. 76, Section 1; Letter dated June 10, 2010 to School

Committee from Charles Cherington and Ashley Pettus, and Program Prospectus, Frontier Academy: A Pilot Program offering the Arrowsmith Program for Learning Disabilities

Mr. Brandmeyer introduced the proposal brought by Ashley Pettus and Charles Cherington of Cambridge to open a private school called Frontier Academy at the Carroll School in Lincoln. The Committee has to approve the school according to the state's compulsory school attendance law. While some school committees have policies on this issue, Lincoln does not.

Frontier Academy will offer the Arrowsmith Program, a cognitive program that works to remediate the causes of most common learning dysfunctions by exercising weak areas of the brain. The program does not address autism spectrum disorders or Asperger's syndrome and cannot have students who have major behavioral or emotional problems. Frontier Academy would be a one-year program, after which they will seek an educational partner to run the school. The Carroll School, or another school, may adopt the Arrowsmith methodology. They bought a license from Arrowsmith and want to start school on September 7, 2010, the same day the Carroll School does. The Carroll School is in full support of their project.

Ms. Pettus said students who find this program helpful are those who can't do executive functions and who have difficulty with organization. The program is not taught in New England even though there is demand for it. Her children attend an Arrowsmith School in Vancouver, British Columbia and have done well; one who couldn't initiate things before can do so now. Students spend half of their school day doing Arrowsmith exercises and half their day on English and math and some social studies and science. Frontier Academy would accept no more than ten middle-school aged children. They may have seven students signed up, but it's hard to enroll people without the approval. It can take students two to three years to see success with the program, but the goal is to have them return to mainstream classes. Students are clustered by ability level and spend much of the day on individually-based exercises.

Mr. Brandmeyer said there are no issues with discrimination because they are asking for a private school and not a private special education school, according to his conversations with the Department of Education. Mr. Brandmeyer noted that Lincoln could not send its students to the program as an out-of-district placement; Ms. Powers noted that students sent to out-of-district placements have to attend a school approved by the Massachusetts Association of Approved Private Schools. He was advised by DESE that the Committee could grant a one-year approval, and it could be approved for September 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011. In addition, they will put together a policy in the fall for the Committee that will include an ongoing review. Lincoln's liability is minimal once approval to run the school is granted.

Mr. Brandmeyer will prepare a recommendation for the Committee on Frontier Academy after he's had further conversations with the Department of Education and Ms. Pettus. The recommendation will establish parameters on these issues, will give context and will explain how compulsory attendance falls into place. Mr. Brandmeyer will have the recommendation ready for a meeting on July 21 at 8 am.

Ms. Glass thanked him for his work.

B. Approval of Request for Services [RFS] for Owner's Project Manager for Lincoln School Feasibility Study

Document: Request for Owner's Project Management Services for the Revitalization of the Lincoln School by the Lincoln School Building Committee

Mr. Schmertzler is the Chair of the School Building Committee [SBC], and Mr. Creel chaired the subcommittee of the SBC that obtained the information to draft the RFS. Mr. Creel said that much of the proposal comes from the Massachusetts School Building Authority's [MSBA] template and focused the Committee on the first 15 pages.

The SBC estimates that the project could cost \$30 to \$45 million; they want a person with significant project management skills. Mr. Brandmeyer noted that the deadline to receive proposals is August 6, and the goal is to get on the MSBA's October 13 agenda. The MSBA has to approve the Owner's Project Manager [OPM] and the SBC wants to get the OPM in the position quickly.

Mr. Creel discussed the concept of CM at Risk, which uses collaborative methods with subcontractors. Mr. Creel noted that this is a qualifications-based process rather than one that requires accepting the lowest bidder as is usually the case.

The contract with the OPM is not a fixed-price contract; it is based on billable hours, but the fees are based on the \$650,000 maximum that was approved at Town Meeting, and the SBC will monitor the expenditures. They hope the firm would be interested in the project's duration, and the School Committee reserves the right to continue the contract with the person through all the phases of the project.

The Committee recommended some edits to the RFS, and Mr. Creel will make them before it is released. He recommended that the Committee approve the RFS so that they can start.

Ms. Glass thanked him for his work.

Mr. Sander moved, and Mr. Schmertzler seconded, the motion to approve the Request for Services with the edits that were mentioned. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the RFS.

VI. Superintendent's Report

Document: None.

Mr. Brandmeyer attended the Hanscom Title I extended school year programs. He reported that the students were engaged and focused, and great things were happening.

There will be math enrichment programs in August.

VII. Curriculum

Document: None.

None.

VIII. Policy

None.

IX. Facilities and Financial

A. Warrant Approval

Document: None.

Mr. Creel presented the payroll warrants totaling \$1,866,627.25 and the accounts payable warrants totaling \$293,583.42 for a total of \$2,160,210.67. Mr. Schmertzler reviewed the warrants and noted that the teachers can receive their summer money at once. Mr. Sander moved to approve the warrants, with Ms. Glass seconding the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the warrants.

B. FY10 Budget Report

Document: Close of FY10 and End of Year Spending Plan, Effective June 30, 2010

Mr. Brandmeyer said they notified the Finance Committee that they closed FY10 in the black by approximately \$85,000. They will use the money to pay NStar for the power outage and the replacement of feeders to Hartwell, to prepay special education tuition, and to pre-purchase paper. He mentioned that they eliminated the METCO secretary's position at a cost savings of approximately \$30,000.

If there are additional expenses for special education, they will contact the Finance Committee.

Ms. Glass thanked him for his report.

C. Contribution to GASB 45 Account

Document: None.

Mr. Creel explained that in 2009 they contributed for the first time to the Town's special revenue fund for Hanscom School employees. The Town is required to set aside funds for future liabilities, and making these investments early is good for the Town's bond rating. Mr. Creel noted that this is a year in which they can contribute, and he recommended that the Committee contribute \$200,000. The funds would be transferred from the Hanscom Health Insurance Reserve Fund to the GASB 45 Account.

Mr. Schmertzler asked whether the contribution was premature, given that the Hanscom enrollment has dropped significantly because of the privatization of the Base housing. Mr. Brandmeyer said we should make the appropriate contributions as we may be unable to next year. Ms. Glass noted that we will still have the liability for the Hanscom teachers if at some point the contract ends with the federal government for the Base's schooling.

Ms. Glass moved, and Mr. Schmertzler seconded, the motion to approve a transfer of \$200,000 from the Hanscom Health Insurance Reserve Fund to the GASB 45 fund. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the transfer.

X. Old Business

Documents: None.

The Committee signed a new lease with Magic Garden before the end of FY10.

XI. New Business

A. Open Meeting Law: Changes Effective July 1, 2010

Documents: Memorandum dated June 30, 2010 to All Town Departments from Susan Brooks, Town Clerk; Memorandum dated January 20, 2010 to Board of Selectmen and Town Administrator from Kopelman and Paige, RE: Taking and Maintaining Minutes; Memorandum dated January 20, 2010 to Board of Selectmen and Town Administrator from Kopelman and Paige, RE: The New Open Meeting Law—An Overview; Memorandum dated January 20, 2010 to Board of Selectmen and Town Administrator from Kopelman and Paige, RE: The Role of the Attorney General

Mr. Brandmeyer highlighted the changes in the Open Meeting Law as they pertain to the Committee's business. Remote participation by Committee members may be allowed, but the Attorney General's Office will issue guidelines on it. Committee members may not discuss items on the agenda outside of the meetings so that the deliberations surrounding their decisions and votes are made at the meeting.

Ms. Leister mentioned a bullying incident near the Hanscom Middle School on the last day of school. She asked whether there could be more protection for students because it is hard to draw the line between home, school, and after-school programs on the Base. Mr. Brandmeyer said there is a new law about anti-bullying, and they are waiting for guidelines and training from the Department of Education. They don't tolerate bullying, and incidents will be investigated. The Committee will discuss an anti-bullying policy in the fall.

XII. Approval of Minutes

Documents: Drafts of Minutes from School Committee meetings on March 24, 2010, April 8, 2010, April 29, 2010, and May 13, 2010.

Ms. Glass moved, and Mr. Schmertzler seconded, the motion to approve the minutes of the March 24, April 8, April 29, and May 13, 2010 meetings. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes.

XIII. Information Enclosures

None.

XIV. Adjournment

Ms. Glass moved, and Mr. Sander seconded, the motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 pm. The Committee voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah G. Marcotte
Recording Secretary