

Chair, R. Cohen, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Roberta G. Doering School auditorium.

Present: A. Bonavita, B. Burbank, D. Juzba, C. Mineo, W. Rua, & S. Reed
W. Sapelli, A. LeClair, R. Clickstein, & student representative Joseph Joyal

During Citizen's Speak Time, School Committee member, Diane Juzba, of 189 So. Westfield Street, announced that she would not be seeking re-election to the board next fall. She thanked her colleagues, past and present, for a wonderful 14-year tenure working on behalf of Agawam's children.

Under Highlights on Education, elementary Library/Media Specialist, Jennifer Green, presented a report highlighting the new grade two through four Coding and Robotics Program. In addition to showing a video of students interacting with robots in the school library/media centers, her report included the following information:

- Goal of program is to give students new skills to create technology, not to just use technology
- To introduce coding at an early age
- Second, third and fourth grade coding curricula uses block coding
- Loops
- Decomposing coding
- Computational coding
- Coding combines math and logic
- Two robots – Dash & Dot
- Estimating distance and adding sound
- Creating an animal
- Debug programs

At the conclusion of her presentation, the Committee said it was great to see students excited about learning and participating in team work to achieve their goal. The Committee also thanked Mrs. Green for her dedication and for introducing students to the technology of the future.

Under Superintendent's Notes, Mr. Sapelli reported on the following items:

- Congratulations to the AHS Band, which was named "Most Outstanding Unit" in the 2017 Holyoke St. Patrick's Day Parade and also received an award for the "Best High School Majorette." This was the first time the high school band has received this prestigious award. Congratulations to Band Director, William Hueglin, and the members of the band.
- Attendance with Mr. Robbins and Mrs. Feyre at a conference entitled, *Responding to and Investigating Internet-Based Threats*, which took place at the Springfield Jewish Community Center. The 4-hour event was hosted by the Boston bureau of the FBI.
- Announcement that Granger School will host its *Annual Science & Engineering Fair* on March 30th in the school gymnasium.
- Announcement that the Junior High School will host its *Annual Family Math Night* on March 30th from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. in the school cafeteria
- Reminder that the *Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for the High School Athletic Facility and Locker Rooms* will take place on April 2nd at 2:00 p.m. The rain date is April 8th.
- Reminder that the Budget/Finance Subcommittee will meet with the City Council's School Budget Subcommittee on April 4th at 6:30 p.m. in the Doering School auditorium to review the proposed FY'18 School Budget.
- Announcement that the AHS Drama Club will perform the play, "You Can't Take It With You", on April 5th and April 6th at 7:00 p.m. in the school auditorium. Admission is \$5.
- Announcement that Clark School will host its *Annual Science & Engineering Fair* all day on April 6th with judging from 2:00 to 3:00 p.m.
- Reminder that the next DWST meeting will take place on April 7th at 7:30 a.m. in the high school cafeteria.
- Announcement that the *French & Spanish National Honor Societies* will conduct an induction ceremony on April 27th at 6:30 p.m. in the high school auditorium

Under Student Advisory Committee Representative Update, Joe reported on the following activities and events taking place at AHS:

- Spring sports tryouts took place last week
- The AHS Indoor Color Guard recently placed 1st in two competitions at Cranston Hill High School and at Cranston East, and have qualified to compete in the finals at the DCU.
- Students scored a huge human rights victory by being allowed to drink coffee in school only during 1st period and at the teacher's discretion
- The physical education department has started an after-school, floor hockey league due to popular demand

Under Unfinished Business, on a motion made by W. Rua, 2nd by S. Reed, the Committee, via roll call, voted to approve SCR-17-04, *Request to Create a Building Committee for a New Early Childhood Center*.

Vote: 6 – 1 nay (R. Cohen)

During discussion, R. Cohen cautioned that a new Early Childhood Center would be a budget buster and would increase taxes for residents. Mr. Sapelli explained how the need for a new preschool is a priority, and the creation of a building committee is the next step going forward. B. Burbank echoed that sentiment saying forming a building committee is the next logical step. C. Mineo noted that construction costs will only increase the longer we wait to build a new school.

At the conclusion of discussion, on a motion made by D. Juzba, 2nd by W. Rua, the Committee, via roll call, voted to have Mr. Sapelli form the Building Committee and, once formed, the Building Committee will select a chairperson.

Vote: 7 - 0

Under Business Meeting, on a motion made by D. Juzba, 2nd by B. Burbank, the Committee voted to approve the March 16, 2017, regular meeting and the March 21, 2017, Special Meeting minutes.

Vote: 7 - 0

Under Correspondence, R. Cohen announced that the district was selected to receive a Youth Opioid Prevention Grant. He also said that the Committee had received an invitation to the Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for the New Athletic Facility and Locker Rooms.

Next, on a motion made by S. Reed, 2nd by D. Juzba, the Committee voted to approve the following warrants as read: SW-17-54 in the amount of \$34,724.68; SW-17-55 in the amount of \$52,196.39; and SW-17-56 in the amount of \$130,038.12. Also approved was payroll warrant PW-17-04 in the amount of \$2,829,418.35.

Vote: 7 - 0

Under Reports, R. Cohen announced that the Committee should have received two paper reports regarding Personnel and a Financial Update in their packet of materials. He also announced that a Jobs Fair will be taking place on Wednesday, May 10th from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. at the Crestview Country Club in Agawam.

Next, Special Education Director, April Rist; Supervisor, Kimberly Cass; and Autism Coordinator, Jessie-Fern Sanders, provided the Committee with a SPED Program Update. In their PowerPoint presentation, the following information was shared with the Committee and viewing public:

- Addressing the social & emotional needs of all students
- Embracing inclusive practices for all students
- Technology and Assistive Technology Specialist
- Vertical alignment
- AVB/Aspire programs
- MCAS Alternative Portfolios
- Indicator 11 Audit and the Mid-Cycle Coordinated Program Review Audit
- One in five children in the USA show signs of a mental health disorder
- PBIS
- Collaboration with district technology team

- Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) training
- Essentials for Living training
- Community-based learning experiences
- New Aspire Program at the Junior High School

At the close of their presentation, the Committee thanked the three Special Education administrators for their comprehensive report and for their dedication to those students who have learning disabilities.

Under Subcommittee Updates, none were given.

Under New Business, due to timeliness, on a motion made by C. Mineo, 2nd by B. Burbank, D. Juzba, S. Reed, & W. Rua, the Committee voted to suspend the rules in order to take action on SCR-17-05, *Approval of the Emily K. Dushane Memorial Scholarship*.
Vote: 7 – 0

Then, on a motion made by A. Bonavita, 2nd by C. Mineo, the Committee voted to approve SCR-17-05.
Vote: 7 – 0

Next, Mrs. Rua said she recently found out that DESE has included a Social/Emotional Climate Questionnaire as part of the Grade 5, 8, and 10 MCAS tests, noting that approximately 30 additional questions at each grade level comprise this questionnaire. She also reported that districts may opt-out of this questionnaire. Student Representative Joe Joyal explained that the members of the Youth Advisory Board thought that utilizing the MCAS test was the easiest way to survey students.

After a lengthy discussion, on a motion made by A. Bonavita, 2nd by S. Reed, the Committee voted to suspend the rules in order to vote on whether to opt-out of the MCAS student questionnaire.
Vote: 7 – 0

Then, on a motion made by W. Rua, 2nd by A. Bonavita, the Committee voted to opt-out of the MCAS student questionnaire for grades 5, 8, and 10.
Vote: 7 - 0

Under Personnel, Committee Secretary, D. Juzba, announced that Dr. Allison LeClair and Mr. Steven Lemanski have been selected as the two finalists for the next Superintendent of Schools position.

Items: All Committee members thanked Mrs. Juzba for all of her hard work during her 14 years as a board member and wished her well in the future. S. Reed inquired about the topic at the Internet Safety Conference. Mr. Sapelli said that the program emphasized the “see something; say something” philosophy. Mrs. Reed said she hopes that the district creates an anonymous way for students to report safety concerns. She also congratulated Mr. Hueglin and the band members on their recent award. She concluded her remarks by saying that she hopes being able to drink coffee during 1st period helps the high school students to perform better. D. Juzba thanked her colleagues for all of their kind words. W. Rua thanked Tracy Wilkie and the Shane Foundation for sponsoring the Chris Herron assembly at the junior high school. She also reported attending the Spring Bands Concert which was tremendous and congratulated the Marking Mohawks for their award. Mrs. Rua thanked her colleagues for indulging her with the information from MASC, which she was able to share with Mr. Clickstein to facilitate the search for a new superintendent.

There being no further business, on a motion made by D. Juzba, 2nd by C. Mineo, the Committee voted to adjourn.
Vote: 7 - 0
Time: 9:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Alexis Ferioli
Executive Assistant to the Superintendent & School Committee

D. Juzba, Committee Secretary