

Agawam School Committee  
Minutes – February 14, 2017  
Special Meeting

Chair, R. Cohen, called the meeting to order at 5:09 p.m. in the central office conference room.

Present: A. Bonavita, B. Burbank, D. Juzba, C. Mineo, S. Reed, W. Rua, W. Sapelli, R. Clickstein, & Attorney Russell Dupere

Absent: A. LeClair

R. Cohen began by explaining that a question had been raised regarding the votes, which were taken at the February 7, 2017, Special Meeting while members were in “Committee as a Whole.” He assured his colleagues that, after checking with several sources, the votes taken were indeed legal and binding. However, in future, the Committee will not utilize that particular Roberts Rules of Order procedure, as it is archaic and, according to Attorney Dupere, not used by most districts.

Next, Attorney Dupere explained the process for conducting an external search for a Superintendent of Schools. After stating that the next step is to post the position, he and the Committee reviewed the preliminary posting that had been created. Attorney Dupere suggested adding the sentence, “The entire process will be conducted in public sessions” to the posting, which may help to limit the pool of candidates. Because the posting will be placed on School Spring, he noted that there may be as many as 50 applicants for the position. Consequently, that pool of candidates will need to be screened in order to reduce the number of candidates to a more manageable number of 15 or 10.

Next, Attorney Dupere noted that one (1) full day should be planned in order to conduct interviews, noting that some districts hold them on Saturdays. He said that at least a half (½) day will be needed to review the applicants and another full day to interview the finalists. Therefore, different questions will need to be developed for each round of interviews. In addition, a scoring matrix will be required, which will become a public document.

According to Attorney Dupere, because of all the time and effort required to conduct an external search, districts usually contract with an out-of-district source such as MASC, which can charge in the range of \$15,000 to \$30,000. In order to save money, some districts assign a school committee member as search coordinator or someone else who is in-house. Attorney Dupere reported that the Southwick school district paid its executive assistant a stipend in the amount of \$5,000.00 to serve as search coordinator, and the Westfield school district paid \$7,500 for an in-house search coordinator.

When asked if she would be willing to serve as search coordinator, the district’s executive assistant, Mrs. Ferioli, declined explaining how her responsibilities increase at this time of school year, and she would not have the appropriate amount of time to devote to a search. School Business Administrator, Robert Clickstein, offered to serve as the Committee’s search coordinator. Attorney Dupere said he would check with the Attorney General’s office to verify that Mr. Clickstein is eligible to serve in that capacity and to receive a stipend. It was suggested that Mr. Clickstein receive a stipend for his time and effort in the amount of \$7,500. Next, Attorney Dupere pointed out that the Committee must be prepared to conduct site visits for out-of-district candidates.

During discussion, the following suggestions were made:

- Send out a survey for community/parent/teacher feedback utilizing Survey Monkey comprised of no more than five (5) questions
- Hold a “Meet & Greet” for the three (3) finalists so parents and residents can meet candidates
- Specify that candidates must have at least 5 years administrative experience in Massachusetts
- Specify that Massachusetts licensure must be current
- All credentials must be sent via schoolspring.com
- Meetings regarding the Superintendent Search will be held on Tuesdays (alternate weeks) and Thursdays, as well as half days on Saturdays if necessary
- A writing prompt should be included in the posting.
- The writing prompt will be, “If selected as Superintendent of Schools, what would be your vision for the Agawam Public Schools?”
- Mr. Clickstein will create a search timeline for the Committee to review

Next, on a motion made by A. Bonavita, 2<sup>nd</sup> by S. Reed, the Committee, via roll call, voted to appropriate the maximum amount of \$7,500 for an in-house, search coordinator stipend.

Vote: 7 - 0

Prior to adjournment, on a motion made by C. Mineo, 2<sup>nd</sup> by D. Juzba & W. Rua, the Committee voted to accept all of the items discussed including posting the position on School Spring; include a writing prompt in the posting; utilize Survey Monkey for community feedback; conduct a Meet & Greet for the three finalists; conduct all search committee meetings on alternate Tuesdays or on Thursdays; specify that applicants must have at least 5 years of administrative experience in Massachusetts; and create a search timeline.

Vote: 7 - 0

There being no further business, on a motion made by D. Juzba, 2<sup>nd</sup> by S. Reed, the Committee voted to adjourn.

Vote: 7 - 0

Time: 6:18 p.m.

Alexis Ferioli  
Executive Assistant to the Superintendent & School Committee

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Diane Juzba  
Committee Secretary