

## OPEN SESSION

### **SHARON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

School Committee Meeting

**Wednesday, February 1, 2006**

Administration Building

One School Street

Sharon, MA 02067

**Present:** Mrs. Jane Furr, Ms. Suzanne Gervais, Mr. Donald Gilligan, Mr. Sam Liao, Mr. Andrew Nebenzahl

**Absent:** Mr. Mitchell Blaustein

**Also present:** Dr. Claire Jackson, Dr. Barbara Dunham, Mr. Ralph Olsen, High School Principal, Anne McSheffrey, Tom McGrail, Caitlin McGrail, a member of the community and a member of the press

Mr. Nebenzahl called the Open Session meeting to order at 7:55 p.m.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE/REGULAR ITEMS**

#### **Open Forum**

There were no community members present for Open Forum.

#### **Correspondence**

There was no correspondence to come before the Committee at this time.

#### **Approve Minutes**

**MOTION:** (Gervais/ Gilligan) Moved to approve the Executive Session minutes for the January 18, 2006 meeting as drafted and submitted. Vote was five in the affirmative.

**MOTION:** (Gervais/ Gilligan) Moved to approve the Open Session minutes for the January 18, 2006 meeting as drafted and submitted. Vote was four in the affirmative. Mrs. Furr abstained.

#### **Student Representative**

Lior Haas, Student Representative, updated the Committee on events at the High School:

- Report cards will be issued on Friday, February 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- The Program of Studies has been printed and distributed to students. There will be an informational meeting for parents of students in grades 8-11 on February 9<sup>th</sup> starting at 7:00 p.m. at the High School.
- Congratulations to the boys' varsity basketball team for qualifying for the state tournament.
- Congratulations to the girls' gymnastic team for having a successful, undefeated record to date.
- Congratulations to the swim team for a successful season to date.

### **Announcements**

Dr. Jackson announced that the next School Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 15<sup>th</sup> at Heights Elementary School starting at 7:30 p.m. The purpose of this meeting is to present the 2006-2007 budget. The public is urged to attend this important meeting.

### **SUPERINTENDENT'S ITEMS**

#### **Grant Donation – Ann McSheffrey and Tom McGrail**

Dr. Jackson introduced Ann McSheffrey, her husband Tom McGrail and their daughter, Caitlin (who is a student at Cottage Street School). The McSheffrey-McGrail family are the generous benefactors of a grant in the amount of \$5,000 a year over the next ten years for professional development and the expansion of Sharon Public Schools' writing initiative. Mr. Nebenzahl, on behalf of the Committee, thanked the McSheffrey-McGrail family for their generous support of the Sharon Public Schools.

#### **Budget Update**

Dr. Jackson presented an overview of the preliminary 2006-2007 budget with the use of a PowerPoint presentation. Highlights from the presentation:

- Definition of a Maintenance of Service Budget (MOS) is the same personnel, same programs, same services carried forward into the next fiscal year. The current 2005-2006 budget is \$29,305,850. The projected MOS budget for 2006-2007 is \$31,595,000, which translates to a 7.9% (\$2.3 million dollar) increase.
- Reasons for the increase: negotiations with all unions in the district; the addition of 2.4 foreign language teachers for grades 3, 4 and 5; 70% increase in utilities; 40% increase in transportation; increased legal fees as well as higher tuitions for out placed students.
- Without additional funding, the MOS budget must be decreased by at least \$1.4 million dollars.
- Areas of reduction: books, materials, supplies, professional development and staffing.
- Reduction in teaching staff would result in increase class size and elimination of programs.

Dr. Jackson's complete PowerPoint presentation will be posted on the web.

### **STRATEGIC PLANNING/POLICY ITEMS**

#### **High School Planning: Later School Starting Time**

There was a lengthy discussion on the pros and cons of a later starting time for the High School. The Committee asked Mr. Olsen to conduct a more formalized survey among the school districts that belong to the Hockomock League regarding their start times and report back to the Committee with his findings. The School Committee will contact the School Committees of the Hockomock League to poll them on whether they are considering a time change in the near future. Dr. Jackson will present a draft letter that will be sent to the School Committees as well as documentation supporting a later start date at a subsequent meeting.

### **Vote FY06-07 Calendar**

There was a discussion on the possibility of a School Calendar for the 2006-2007 school year that would include a half-day on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving. Mr. Gilligan stated that Mr. Blaustein had requested the Committee consider the change to the proposed calendar.

**MOTION:** (Gilligan/Furr) Moved to adopt the 2006-2007 school calendar as presented with the addition of a half-day on Wednesday, November 22, 2006. Vote was Mr. Nebenzahl and Mr. Gilligan in the affirmative. Mrs. Furr, Ms. Gervais and Mr. Liao in the negative. The motion did not carry.

**MOTION:** (Gilligan/Gervais) Moved to adopt the 2006-2007 calendar as presented by Dr. Jackson with no school on Wednesday, November 22, 2006. Vote was Mrs. Furr, Ms. Gervais, Mr. Gilligan, Mr. Liao voting in the affirmative. Mr. Nebenzahl voted in the negative. The motion carried.

The starting date remains the same - August 30, 2006 for students Gr. 1-12. The first day of school for kindergarten will be September 5, 2006.

### **Vote Social Studies/History Learning Standards Grades 6-12**

Mr. Brande presented the Social Studies Learning Standards at the January 18<sup>th</sup> meeting. A formal vote to adopt the finished document was needed.

**MOTION:** (Gervais/Liao) Moved to adopt the Social Studies/History Learning Standards as presented by John Brande at the January 18, 2006 meeting. Vote was five in the affirmative.

### **Vote Sharon High School Course of Studies**

The Program of Studies was presented by Mr. Olsen and reviewed by the Committee at their January 18<sup>th</sup> meeting. A formal vote to adopt the finished document was needed.

**MOTION:** (Gilligan/Liao) Moved to adopt the High School Program of Studies as presented by Mr. Ralph Olsen at the January 18, 2006 meeting. Vote was five in the affirmative.

### **Review and Discuss Capital Outlay Requests**

The Committee reviewed the Capital Outlay requests for 2007. It was noted that the requests are modest and consist of only six items; therefore, they cannot be prioritized as they are all of equal importance. Mr. Nebenzahl requested that the repair of seats in the High School Auditorium be added to the list. Mrs. Furr requested that a price estimate be furnished before the next Capital Outlay meeting. Dr. Dunham would instruct Mr. Wertz to furnish the estimate.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

Dr. Jackson informed the Committee that the Fire Department was scheduled to conduct another inspection of the High School on Thursday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>. At a previous inspection, the school was cited for several fire code violations. Mr. Olsen and Dr. Jackson requested a joint meeting with the representatives from the Fire Department and School Committee to identify and clarify how the schools can accommodate the requirements of the Fire Department.

Dr. Dunham reviewed the projected utility and heating costs for the rest of the year. Sprague Contractors, who have a contract with the Town for natural gas, provided the projections.

The next meeting will be February 15, 2006 at the Heights Elementary School at 7:30 p.m. Members of the community are urged to attend this important budget hearing meeting.

Mr. Peter Francisco, a member of the audience, asked for clarification on the procedure for home schooling.

There being no further business to come before the Committee at this time, Mr. Nebenzahl requested a motion to adjourn.

**MOTION:** (Gilligan/Gervais) Moved to adjourn the Open Session meeting. Vote was five in the affirmative. The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

Submitted on behalf of the School Committee by: Helen Campanario, Recording Secretary