

**ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
MINUTES**

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**OPEN BUDGET HEARING**

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Library  
R.J. Grey Junior High

February 1, 2007  
8:00 p.m.

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*Members Present:* Michael Coppolino, Brigid Bieber, Sharon Smith McManus,  
Rebecca Neville, John Ryder, Bruce Sabot  
*Also Present:* William Ryan, George Frost, Susan Horn, Elizabeth Huber,  
citizens and press

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The Chairperson called the meeting to order at 8:00 pm.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S INTRODUCTION**

Superintendent Bill Ryan referred to items in the packet about the circumstance regarding the tragic death of a student at Lincoln-Sudbury High School. He read a letter that Steve Donovan, ABRHS principal, will be sending out to all parents. He thanked the team of ABRHS counselors who helped out at L-S. George Frost commented on the meeting he had with all our principals re: emergency plans, drills, etc. He was impressed by the thorough preparedness, plans and vigilance. We will continue to work on solidifying emergency plans at the Admin. Building. A student rep commented that she wished our administration had made an announcement about what had happened, since rumors abounded. The Superintendent responded that unfortunately it was very difficult to know what the facts really were until later in the day.

**STATEMENT OF WARRANT**

Warrant #2007-016 in the amount of \$1,228,592.21 was signed by the chairperson and circulated to the rest of the Committee for signatures.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of January 4 and 20, 2007 were approved as amended.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** - None

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**1. BLF Report**

- Becky Neville reported that Boxborough is still looking at a shortfall, but hopes to find ways to solve the problem without an override.

**2. FY'07 Budget**

- Bill Ryan said we continue to watch utilities and SPED tuition line items. Liza Huber, Director of Pupil Services, shared some information on how out-of-district school tuitions have risen during the year. Nineteen schools have been approved for tuition increases during this fiscal year, and another 14 will be approved for FY'08. Under the Circuit Breaker, we may be able to apply for extraordinary relief. John Ryder suggested thinking about writing the Commissioner to ask which of two unfunded mandates should we fund - 990 or SPED - as we cannot fund both.

**3. Health Trust Report**

- Bob Evans, Fin. Com. rep to the Health Trust, reported that they voted a maximum increase for the various plans for budgetary planning purposes. Next month, they will vote actual rates. HMOs will probably remain constant, MHPlus may vary. Bill noted that this has helped solve our budget problem and that we have used these new rates in the revised FY'08 APS and ABRSD budgets.

#### **4. FY'08 ABRSD Proposed Budget - OPEN BUDGET HEARING**

- Bill Ryan noted that the Committee must vote the budget 45 days before the first day of Acton Town Meeting. He recommended holding a Joint SC meeting on Feb. 15, before the Acton meeting, at 7 pm, to vote the FY'08 ABRSD budget and assessments. This will give the administration a bit more time to get additional information about state aid (Chapter 70 numbers). If there are no changes in the formula, our numbers should be good.

#### **5. Director of Personnel/Administrative Services Search Update**

- Bill Ryan reported that we have advertised for the position. All applications must be received by Feb. 9. He has formed a committee to help interview candidates.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **1. Recommendation to Accept Donation from AB Community Education**

It was moved (Ryder), seconded (Neville) and unanimously

**VOTED: To accept, with gratitude, the generous donation of \$18,160 from AB Community Education.**

This amount represents 3,632 participants in the fall term classes that met for more than one session.

#### **2. Recommendation to Accept Gift from AB Community Education**

It was moved (Neville), seconded (McManus) and unanimously

**VOTED: To accept, with gratitude, the generous gift of \$15,000 for the cost of installing lights at the ABRHS baseball field and tennis courts.**

### **FOR YOUR INFORMATION**

- The Superintendent referred to several items.
- Susan Horn, Assistant Superintendent, reported that we are presenting the reports of the Youth Risk Behavior Study on Feb. 7, 7 - 9 pm, JH Auditorium. Everyone is welcome to attend. Bill Ryan urged parents to attend - these are your children. The report is on our website. Becky recommended that in the future, the results should go to schools, before the Globe.
- The ABRSD annual audit report was in the packet. John Ryder suggested putting it on our website.

### **ISSUES OF THE COMMITTEE**

- Subcommittee Updates:
  - Sharon McManus gave an update on the Succession Planning Subcommittee. She and Becky Neville have met with Bill Ryan.
  - Sharon McManus also reported on a diversity workshop she attended which included information about starting a Chinese language school. The workshop gave valuable information on the culture and what the educational system in China is like. She suggested an educational activity for the School Committee to get some of this information.
  - E-Funding Subcommittee - Brigid Bieber reported that they are discussing options.
- Michael Coppolino asked for some discussion about communicating with DOE re: requiring 990 hours in the junior and senior years only for those who are not proficient after 10th grade. Most Committee members felt it would not be wise to do this now, but to wait and see how things play out, then reevaluate.

**NEXT MEETINGS:** February 15, 7-7:30 pm, Joint Session, JH Library  
March 1, 7:30 pm, JH Library

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sarah T. Lawton, Secretary