

CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

MARCH 4, 2002 FINANCE AND FACILITIES OF THE WHOLE MEETING

March 4, 2002

I. CALL TO ORDER

Finance and Facilities Chairperson, Mary Jo Rossetti, called a Finance and Facilities Committee of the Whole Meeting of the School Committee to order in the Aldermanic Chambers at city hall at 6:45 p.m., to conduct a joint meeting of the School Committee and the Board of Aldermen's Finance and Capital Planning Committees to discuss Long Range Planning and Capital Improvements.

Ms. Rossetti welcomed everyone in attendance and thanked the Board of Aldermen for honoring the school committee's request for a joint meeting.

II. ROLL CALL

School Committee Members Present: Ms. Cardoso, Ms. Murray, Ms. Bauer, Ms. Harris, Ms. Taylor, Alderman White, Ms. Rossetti and Mr. Sullivan.

Mayor Gay was absent.

Board of Aldermen Finance Subcommittee Members Present: Joseph A. Curtatone, Sean T. O'Donovan, William A. White, Jr., James F. Halloran, Denise Provost and Bruce Desmond

Also present for presentations were Chief Financial Officer for the City of Somerville, Thomas Hedderick and Patrick J. McCormick, Chief Technology Information Officer.

Dr. Albert F. Argenziano, Superintendent of Schools, Marie B. Ferrari, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Administration and Mr. Anthony C. Caliri, Human Resources Manager were also present along with approximately 50 members of the audience.

III. BONDABLE ITEMS AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT

Mr. Hedderick, Chief Financial Officer for the city, provided a detailed summary of the past three years as well as future spending in the area of bondable items as well as capital improvements for the City of Somerville. Discussion followed among members and no actions were taken.

IV. SCHOOL DEPARTMENT CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Dr. Argenziano, Superintendent of Schools, presented the Capital Improvement Plan put together by the Somerville School Committee as a Five-Year Plan in five specific areas:

• Curriculum & Instruction (16%)	\$	2,120,000.
• Health and Safety (5%)	\$	630,000.
• Renovation and Maintenance (10%)	\$	1,300,000.
• Structural Repair & Improvement (27%)	\$	3,460,000.
• Technology (42%)	\$	5,920,000.

Discussion took place among members and no actions were taken.

V. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m., by voice vote.

Dr. Albert F. Argenziano
Secretary

March 4, 2002

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Dennis M. Sullivan called a Regular Meeting of the School Committee to order in the aldermanic chambers at 8:20 p.m., with a moment of silence and a salute to the flag of the United States of America.

II. ROLL CALL

Present were Ms. Cardoso, Ms. Murray, Mayor Gay, Ms. Bauer, Ms. Harris, Ms. Taylor, Alderman White, Ms. Rossetti, and Chairman Sullivan.

No one was absent.

III. AWARDS AND CITATIONS

Ms. Taylor presented citations to the undefeated Somerville High School Boys Indoor Track Team who earned the Co-Championship of the Greater Boston League with a lofty 7-0-1 record.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There were no minutes presented this evening for approval.

V. STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL

Student representative for the 2001-2002 school year, Kerri Connolly, was not present this evening and no report was given.

VI. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Argenziano reported on the following items:

1. Meeting Updates:
 - Reported that the Rules Committee of the Whole meeting scheduled for Wednesday, March 6th, has been postponed to Monday, March 11, 2002, at 7 p.m., in order for people to attend the Girls' Basketball game at Lynn Classical High School against East Cambridge and hopefully go on to the Tsongas Center on Saturday.
 - Advised that the Personnel Committee of the Whole will interview the three finalists for the ESCS Principal position on Tuesday, March 5th beginning at 6:15 p.m. The finalists are: Susan J. Collins, Thelma E. Davis and Stephen M. Tuccelli.
 - A committee meeting regarding the SHS 150th Celebration will take place on Thursday, March 7th beginning at 6:30 p.m., at the Ray Izzo Highlander Café at SHS.
2. A memo was submitted from Mark K. McQuillan, Deputy Commissioner of Education, regarding Elementary and Secondary Education: No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, President Bush's educational legislation.
3. At the last meeting, Doug Sacra, HMFH Architect, talked about the Green School Pilot Program and Somerville's award of that grant. A breakdown of where the money will be going was provided to members.

VI. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT (cont.)

Dr. Argenziano reported on the following items (cont.)

4. A copy of a letter from NEASC to SHS Headmaster, Tom Galligani, advising that they are continuing the school's accreditation, and continued the school on warning for deficiencies related to the Standard for Accreditation on Leadership and Organization. The October 1, 2002 report (two year report), to be submitted by Mr. Galligani, can change Somerville's status.
5. A copy of a Medicare memorandum from the office of Health and Human Services that will affect Somerville receiving less money was provided.
6. A copy of the Student Survey requested by the Ed. Programs and Instruction Subcommittee, was provided and at the meeting of March 13th will be discussed.
7. A letter from the City Clerk, John J. Long, notifying that Alderman James F. Halloran and Bruce M. Desmond will be the two appointed members of the Drug Task Force was submitted to members.
8. Assistant Superintendent for C/I/A, Robert A. Snow, provided the March Schedule relative to curriculum, instruction and assessment.
9. Information regarding the third-quarter professional development workshop to be held on Wednesday, March 13th for Group I was provided by Mr. Robert A. Snow.
10. A memo regarding the MCAS Retest provided by Mr. Stephen J. O'Leary, Supervisor of Guidance and Testing was provided.
11. A Kindergarten registration update through February 21st was provided with 288 students registered for Kindergarten. Dr. Argenziano advised that over the last three years, there have been approximately 350 students registered. Ms. Murray and Aldermanic President White had several questions relative to this report that Dr. Jenkins, District Administrator for Student Services, addressed.
12. Dr. Argenziano submitted copies of two research items that the school committee would find interesting, one on year-round schooling and one on the revival of K-8 building structure. He stated that Somerville has had a K-8 structure for the last two decades and it appears that a number of schools are returning to the K-8 structure.
13. A March Calendar from the Somerville Family Network was provided.
14. A March Calendar for the Somerville Public Schools was also provided.
15. School Council Minutes were provided from the Edgerly Education Center and the West Somerville Neighborhood School.
16. At the request of Mary Jo Rossetti, An itinerary was provided for the conference that Frank Ferraro, Paula Atwood and Crista Marchesseault, would be attending March 6-9, 2002.

VI. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT (cont.)

Dr. Argenziano reported on the following items (cont.)

17. Updates:

- Boys' Basketball Team: ended up 14 & 7, lost to Central Catholic last Wednesday. Dr. Argenziano congratulated Coach Mellilo and his team for a successful year.
- Boys' Track Team: Coach Dickerson spoke earlier regarding Louis Moreira being 1st in the state and could possibly end up in the top 1, 2 or 3 positions in the United States. The superintendent suggested bringing him before the school committee at a future date.
- Girls' Basketball Team: beat Acton/Boxborough on Saturday, 58-55, Coach Brian Harris.
- Advised that Kennedy School students, at the National History Day competition, won eight out of thirteen prizes in Belmont on Saturday, March 2nd.
- The SHS Drama Team also won and they too are going on under the direction of Mario Barros.

Dr. Argenziano and the school committee congratulated and applauded all above-mentioned groups for a great job!

VII. REPORT OF SUBCOMMITTEES

A. ***Finance and Facilities Subcommittee:*** Ms. Rossetti (March 4)

Subject discussed:

Joint Meeting between the Somerville School Committee/Board of Aldermen: to discuss Long Range Planning and Capital Improvements.

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business for this evening's meeting.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

Drug Prevention & Substance Abuse

Ms. Murray advised that she received a letter from two members of the community with signatures of the Mayor and Marty Martinez, Director of Youth Services, which relates to a program that is being rolled out in the community around drug prevention and substance abuse. Ms. Murray said this program is not part of the Prevention Task Force and that the Prevention Task Force is hoping to have a presentation by the Mayor and Marty Martinez at an upcoming Ed. Programs and Instruction Subcommittee meeting to see if their drug prevention and substance abuse program could be brought into the schools. The community piece will be discussed within the larger Task Force meeting. Mayor Gay advised that she would take care of the community piece along with working with the school committee.

X. ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

Ms. Rossetti

1. Advised that the WSNS will conduct their *Family Night* on Friday, March 8th, at the Kennedy School in order for them to enjoy the pool.
2. The Science Olympiad, convened at Tufts University, will take place all day on March 16th in which WSNS students will participate. This Olympiad is open to the public.
3. Reported that the SHS Science Fair will be held this Thursday, March 7th, and wished all the students well. The high school will be hosting the annual regional science fair later this month.
4. Wished the Girls' Basketball team good luck this Wednesday. Also wished Louis Moreira good luck, as he will be competing at the Nationals this weekend. The Girls' and Boys' Track Teams will be conducting their banquet this Thursday, March 7th at the Dante Club and members are invited to attend.
5. Coach O'Rourke will be having his Annual Scholarship Dinner Dance on Saturday, March 16th at Dilboy Post. Tickets and information may be obtained from Coach O'Rourke at SHS.
6. Parents of the Girls' Swim Team will be conducting their Annual Dinner Dance/Fund Raiser next Friday, March 22nd at the V.F.W. Logan Post in Teele Square. For information call 617-628-5712.
7. Parents of the Girls' Basketball Team will be conducting their Annual Banquet in celebration of the girls' season on Tuesday, March 26th at 6 p.m., at Good Times Emporium. For information call Mary Jo Rossetti.

Alderman White

Spoke regarding the lengthy meeting held this evening between the Board of Aldermen's Finance Subcommittee and the school committee's Finance and Facilities members to discuss Long Range Planning and Capital Improvements. As President of the BOA, he has set up a special subcommittee of the BOA to deal with technology, chaired by Alderman Bruce M. Desmond, Alderman Jim Halloran and Alderman Bill Roche. The purpose of the committee is to conduct comprehensive technology analyses of the utilization of technology and also the cost to the city. Alderman White will submit to this committee any request for monetary transfers by the Mayor. He suggested that as the technology issue becomes more focused, that a special meeting might be scheduled between the full school committee or subcommittee with the Board of Aldermen.

Monday, March 4, 2002 – Regular Meeting

X. ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS (cont.)

Ms. Taylor

1. Advised that the SHS Vocational Education Program will be conducting an Open House on Wednesday, March 20th from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m.
2. Also advised that there will be a Public Hearing on Tuesday, March 12th at the state house and the topic will be *Revenue Enhancement Committee* regarding the state fiscal situation and what impact it will have on the city and school department.
3. Reported that the School Age Advisory Council will have a meeting on Thursday, March 7th, at the PHCS beginning at 6:30 p.m. The agenda will be: 1) After School Programs and 2) Parent Involvement.
4. The Child Identification Program, free for parents, Saturday, March 16th, SHS Auditorium.
5. Advised that in reference to the Rules Management meeting scheduled for Wednesday, March 6, 2002, the re-scheduled date will be Monday, March 11th at 7 p.m.

Ms. Harris

1. Upcoming Personnel Committee of the Whole Meetings:
 - Tuesday, March 5th, at 6:30 p.m., the Personnel Committee of the Whole will meet to interview the three finalists for the East Somerville Community School Principal position. The finalists are: Susan J. Collins, Thelma E. Davis and Stephen M. Tuccelli.
 - Thursday, March 21st, at 6:15 p.m., the Personnel Committee of the Whole will again meet to interview the three finalists for the West Somerville Neighborhood School Principal position.
 - Monday, April 8th, at 6:15 p.m., the finalists for the Powder House Community School will be interviewed.
2. Reported that on February 27th, five students joined the Substance Abuse Task Force Steering Committee meeting. Ms. Harris said it was wonderful to have their presence and assistance. A student Speak-Out Forum is being planned for Monday, March 18th from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. The agenda has not as yet been set. The next meeting of the Substance Abuse Task Force is on Wednesday, April 3^d at 5:30 p.m., in the library at SHS.
3. Wished the Lady Highlanders luck on Wednesday evening.

Monday, March 4, 2002 – Regular Meeting

X. ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS (cont.)

Ms. Bauer

1. Reported that on Wednesday, March 6th from 6:30 to 8 p.m., the Kennedy School will be having a *Literacy Evening*.
3. March 19th through the 22nd, the Winter Hill Community School will have their PTA Book Fair (Tuesday through Friday).
4. On Thursday, March 7th from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., the Cummings School will conduct a *Pajama Party Reading Night*.
5. Also congratulated the Girls' Basketball Team, History Day Competition students. Ms. Bauer reported that the SHS Drama Club was victorious in the preliminary round of the Massachusetts High School Drama Festival on Saturday. In addition to moving on to the semi-final round, several students won individual awards. Awards were given to several of the actors and there were technical awards to the students who did the lighting and sound. Ms. Bauer congratulated all the participants on the victory.

The semi-final round of the drama competition will be on Saturday, March 9th, in Fall River. They will again present this play against seven other competitors – *Break a leg!*

At upcoming meetings the Basketball Team, the Drama Club and also History Day will be receiving Citations.

Mayor Gay

1. Reported that she visited a few schools and congratulated Kennedy School student Eoghan Conway who received a \$5,000 National Award from A & E and AT&T for a Gerry Adams biography, which is part of the Irish peace process and the classroom teacher, received \$1,000 to spend on the classroom. Mayor Gay congratulated Eoghan and his family.
2. Also reported that she read at the Lincoln Park Community School on Friday morning and read *Green Eggs and Ham* to three 4th grade classes and had a wonderful time. Mayor Gay thanked everyone involved.
3. Congratulated all students on their academic achievements, sports and drama accomplishments.
4. Spoke regarding *Massachusetts 2020*, a nonprofit organization that seeks to expand opportunities for families especially regarding after school programs and are anxious to bring it to Somerville. Mayor Gay advised that some grant money has been received and she is currently working with Tufts University and *Massachusetts 2020* to see if there is any money available there. A grant from the United Way was received in the amount of \$50,000 and applications are pending from other organizations as well. Discussion took place. Dr. Argenziano advised that the total cost for the program is \$250,000 and the Mayor is seeking approximately 20% from Tufts and 20% from another source that they already have over the first year to get four or five sources to equal the total. More discussion took place among members.

X. ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS (cont.)

Mayor Gay (cont.)

5. Advised that last Wednesday the Massachusetts Mayor's Association met in Boston for their monthly meeting. She advised that she met with the Senate President, Senator Birmingham, to discuss some of present problems at the state level. A lunch was then conducted with the Speaker of the House and a very depressing picture was painted regarding the state's financial situation. Certain Mayors stood side-by-side and took a vote to go back and raise taxes to 5.95. For the month of February, the state is already \$500 million dollars down. Next year they are looking at 2+ billion dollars. Mayor Gay advised that she is going to have to look very carefully as to how programs are going to be funded within the city. She said once again, the residential and commercial taxes would be raised. Mayor Gay said public safety; schools, and preserving city services are priorities. She said tough decisions would have to be made.

Ms. Murray

1. Regarding *Massachusetts 2020*:
 - a. Ms. Murray requested that a member of the Board of Aldermen sit in on the monthly conversations that take place with Tufts regarding this program. The next meeting is this Thursday, March 7, 2002, at 11:30 a.m., in the Ray Izzo Highlander Café at SHS with Tuft's representative Barbara Rubel, Director of Community Relations and Dr. Martha N. Cyr, Director of Engineering Educational Outreach, School of Engineering, from Tufts Engineering Department.
 - b. Mentioned that Somerville is third on the list and is mobilizing several different community groups, political groups, and leaders in the community who have not spoken before. Ms. Murray said even is Somerville is not chosen for this particular program, we may be chosen for another.
2. Reported that the Brown School PTA will meet on March 13th at 6:30 p.m.
3. At an Ed. Programs and Instruction Subcommittee meeting on March 13th, at 7 p.m., (after the Brown School PTA meeting) the Student Survey relative to interest in before or after school activities for next year.
4. Wondered when the next Long Range Planning Committee of the Whole would take place relative to items that were "pending funding" discussed at the last LRPC meeting. Chairman Sullivan advised that he would consider late March or early April or as soon as a clearer picture of the city's finances is present.
5. Relative to the next meeting of the Substance Abuse Task Force is on Wednesday, April 3rd at 5:30 p.m., in the library at SHS, Ms. Murray advised that subcommittees would be asked to give reports.
6. Congratulated the Mayor on the birth of her new grandson!

X. ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS (cont.)

Ms. Cardoso

1. Advised that on Tuesday, March 12th, the PTA Full Council will meet at the Healey School at 7 p.m.
2. The Title I PAC meeting will be on Tuesday, March 19th at 7 p.m., at the Winter Hill Community School.
3. Mentioned that the school committee needs to look at the criteria used regarding school committee Citations and Awards and suggested consulting with one another before deciding how and to whom they will be awarded.

Chairman Sullivan

1. Reported that the *Massachusetts Law Enforcement Memorial Foundation* will be sponsoring will be sponsoring a Half Marathon and 5K at Lake Quannapowitt in Wakefield beginning at 10 a.m. The proceeds will help to build a memorial at the State House honoring the over 260 members of Mass. Law Enforcement killed in the line of duty. For 2002, a donation will also be given to an NYPD charity in support of September 11. For additional information call: 781-662-0091. Mr. Sullivan said this race has special significance to Somerville, as one of our police officers, killed in the line of duty June 24th, Michael J. Dowd, Jr., and he will be listed on the memorial. Officer Dowd was a 27-year veteran of the Somerville Police Department and a veteran of World War I. Mr. Sullivan advised that he will be running and urged others to join him.
2. Advised that on Friday, March 22nd, the SHS Girls' Swim Team will conduct their 3^d Annual St. Patrick's Day Fundraisers at Logan Post in Teele Square from 7 p.m. to midnight. Corned Beef and Cabbage will be served and tickets are \$15 per person and \$25 per couple. For more information call Maryann Coulombe at 617-628-5712.
3. Also reported that last week, ESCS Principal, Fred O'Meara, read Dr. Seuss' *Green Eggs and Ham* to several classes and 1st, 2nd and 3^d grade students were served green eggs and ham to honor Dr. Seuss. Mr. Sullivan congratulated him on a great job!
4. Also wished everyone a Happy St. Patrick's Day!

XI. COMMUNICATIONS

- A. A letter from the Principal of the Lincoln Park Community School, Mr. Chris E. Johanson, responded in full support of the motion by the Somerville School Committee requesting a one-year freeze of the income tax decrease. Received and placed on file.
- B. A letter from Cosmetology Teachers, Connie Filosi and Stella Apostolakos, thanking the school committee on behalf of themselves and their students for being recognized for their contributions to cancer victims. Received and placed on file.

Monday, March 4, 2002 – Regular Meeting

XII. PERSONNEL

No Personnel Report was submitted for this evening's meeting.

XIII. DEATH

The superintendent reported with regret the death of the following persons. A moment of silence was observed and letters of sympathy will be sent to their families.

1. Ms. Edna Christianson (Feb. 14) who formerly taught the Health Program and the Nurses' Aide Program at Somerville High School. Ms. Christianson was 90 years old.
2. Mrs. Beatrice J. Walczak (Feb. 25) mother of Karl Walczak, Science teacher at Somerville High School.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 p.m., by voice vote.

Dr. Albert F. Argenziano
Secretary