

January 28, 2002

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Dennis M. Sullivan called a Regular Meeting of the School Committee to order in the aldermanic chambers at 8:00 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

The Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Albert F. Argenziano, presented a Resolution to the 2001 SHS Football Program for one of its finest and most productive seasons in some 50 years. The resolution can be found on page 21.

Alderman and Coach, Joseph A. Curtatone briefly addressed the school committee commending each player on the team. Resolutions were also presented to Mike Neal who scored 16 touchdowns, rushed for more than 1,600 yards, and was the second-leading tackler on defense and SHS lineman Wainwright Wint who was named to the All-State team by the Massachusetts Football Coaches Association, an honor received by very few football players. Coach Tony Gulla could not be present this evening due to a family member's illness. A Resolution will be presented to Coach Gulla in the near future.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The following Minutes were approved for printing by voice:

January 7, 2002:

- School Committee Organizational Meeting

January 14, 2002:

- Regular School Committee Meeting

V. STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL

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

VI. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Argenziano reported on the following items:

1. Gave the school committee a brief update on the proposed re-construction schedule of the Teen Health Clinic at Somerville High School and outlined some of the activity that will be going on at the site. Discussion followed. No actions were taken.

VI. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT (cont.)

2. Commended Dr. Steven F. Jenkins, District Administrator for Student Services, Parent Information Center Acting Coordinator, Regina Bertholdo, and everyone involved in the very successful 8th Annual School Fair held on Saturday, January 26th. Approximately 130 Kindergarten children were registered, about 40% of the Kindergarten population. Sandra Resnick, a Fellow at Brandeis University, attached a survey to the registration information and the results of this survey will be provided to members after it is compiled.
3. Advised that a Long Range Planning Committee of the Whole will take place at the East Somerville Community School this Thursday, January 31st at 7 p.m., to again discuss future school space issues. Dr. Argenziano stated that this is the 8th meeting regarding this topic and that the school committee and the superintendent need to sit down and discuss this item at this meeting.
4. A copy of school committee attendance at meetings was provided to members.
5. Advised that the Prevention Task Force has met on two occasions and will now provide an evening workshop on Wednesday, February 13, 2002, in the Auditorium at Somerville High School from 6:30 p.m., to 8:30 p.m., for all parents and students.

Ms. Murray referred to a copy of a Board of Aldermen Resolution submitted to members relative to also forming a task force to address drug and alcohol problems experienced by the youth of our city and suggested that it was a duplication of effort. Discussion.

MOTION: Ms. Murray made a motion, seconded by Ms. Cardoso, to request that the Superintendent of Schools send a letter on behalf of the school committee requesting that the Board of Aldermen jointly work with the Somerville School Committee and the Prevention Task Force already formed which includes all members mentioned in the Board of Aldermen's Resolution. The motion was approved by voice vote.

6. A copy of *Projected Enrollments* requested by Ms. Bauer was provided. Dr. Argenziano advised that these figures are used in regard to building new schools.
7. Referred to a letter from Mr. Nelson Salazar, Executive Director of *The Welcome Project* requesting all correspondence from 1992 through 2001 between the Somerville Public Schools, the U.S. Department of Justice, the U.S. DOE, and the MA DOE relating to the 1992 agreement between the Haitian Coalition, the Department of Justice MA Department of Education and Somerville Public Schools about bilingual education; 2001 Somerville Public Schools Accreditation Report; the Superintendent's Re-evaluation reports for years 1998 through 2001; Math Science and engineering technology reports for grades 7 and 8, separated by race of students and Advanced Placement and Honor class registrations in the high school, separated by race. Dr. Argenziano advised that he sent Mr. Salazar a letter that he could pick the information up at his office and he did so late Friday afternoon.

VI. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT (cont.)

8. Dr. Argenziano referred to the interview team listing for the Edgerly Vice Principal position and advised that one additional parent was added to the list.
9. Referred to a copy of a letter from DPW Commissioner, David P. Dow, advising that the T.R. White Company will be the contractor for the new Edgerly Early Childhood Development Center.
10. A copy of a memo from SHS Headmaster, Tom Galligani, regarding the graduation procedure for Somerville High School. The Headmaster and Vice Headmaster will be responsible for the actual giving of diplomas to the graduates on graduation evening.
11. Advised that AFSCME, Local 274/Cafeteria Employees notified that the Union desires to enter into negotiations for the purpose of extending the Agreement presently in effect.
12. A copy of 2001 10th Grade MCAS Information requested by Chairman Sullivan was enclosed in packets. This issue will be discussed at a Rules Subcommittee meeting on Wednesday, March 6th.
13. Ms. Maureen Hilliard, Principal of the WHCS, provided a missing page from her School Improvement Plan for members.
14. A copy of the Diversity Staffing Report, which will be discussed next Monday, and the Drop Out Rate were provided to members at the request of Mayor Gay. At SHS for the past year the total number of dropouts is 3.3%, which is below the state average of 3.48%. The drop out rate has been reduced 5.7 to 5.3, which is 2.2%. FC/NW was at 50% a year ago and is presently at 40%.
15. The CTBS scores were provided and over 5 grades tested the Brown School ranked three times in the top three, the Kennedy School five times, LPCS, three times and the WSNS, twice in the top three. Dr. Argenziano advised that the WSNS and the Winter Hill Community School have been selected by the state as two Compass Schools for outstanding Achievement in MCAS similar to ESCS last year.
16. A packet of information was provided regarding the ESCS Principal position to members. There are 10 finalists that will be interviewed.
17. Advised that Ms. Peggy Melanson, a columnist, independent journalist, performing artist, storyteller and workshop presenter who represented Somerville as an Olympic Torchbearer for the 2002 Winter Olympics Torch Relay on December 27th will be present at the February 4th school committee meeting to receive a Citation from the school committee. The torch is on display at the Somerville Public Library for the month of February.
18. Advised that MASC provided a three-page update relative to the Governor's FY03 budget and it appears that whatever is in Chapter 70 is going to have to cover everything.

VII. REPORT OF SUBCOMMITTEES

A. *Long Range Planning Committees of the Whole:* Mr. Sullivan (Jan. 16 & 17)

Subjects discussed:

- School Improvement Plans

Approved motion from Committees of the Whole:

To approve the School Improvement Plans as presented, pending funding.

- Mr. Sullivan advised that computer problems at various schools were also discussed.
- Referred to a letter from the school committee to Mayor Gay requesting an update regarding Technology as it relates to the need for more hardware, software and infrastructure in school buildings with Somerville High School being the number one priority.

Mayor Gay responded that at this point in time, the city does not have \$200,000 to put towards the purchase of technology equipment for Somerville High School. Additional conversation was held pertaining to electrical upgrade. The Mayor stated that the \$200,000 would, however, be soon forwarded to the school budget. Aldermanic President, Bill White, requested and the superintendent will provide, the following information in order to be fully updated: Somerville's Long Range Plan for information technology dated January 29, 1996, the Technology guides in all the curriculum areas that was distributed to school committee members on October 16, 1995, the Technology Assessment Plan for the 1997-98 school year, the local Technology Plan Update Report submitted in 1998, the latest Technology Plan submitted to the Department of Education, the School Improvement Plan Required Technology as of January 2002, and the Distribution Plan for the \$600,000 approved June 2001, for a spending plan at SHS. Discussion continued. No actions were taken.

B. *Ed. Programs and Instruction Subcommittee:* Ms. Murray (Jan. 23)

Subjects discussed:

1. Community Schools Program – Ms. Peg Buckman
Ms. Murray advised that this program services approximately 2000 children per year and much discussion took place.
2. After School Programs – Ms. Myra Axner (School Age Advisory Council)
Reported that the program received a \$30,000 grant from the Boston Foundation, which will continue the efforts regarding After School Programs.
3. SHS After School Programs – Mr. Gerald Knight
Discussion took place relative to the SHS Athletics Program.

VII. REPORT OF SUBCOMMITTEES (cont.)

B. *Ed. Programs and Instruction Subcommittee* (cont.)

4. Advised that the next Ed. Programs and Instruction Subcommittee will meet on Wednesday, February 6th at 7 p.m., to discuss the Two-Way Bilingual Program and approval of In-Service courses.

C. *Finance and Facilities Subcommittee*: Ms. Rossetti (Jan. 28)

Subject discussed:

- **Technology Update:** Tim Egan, Information Systems and Database Administrator, Bron Abucewicz, Network Manager and Joseph Mastrocola, Coordinator of Instructional Technology.

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

IX. NEW BUSINESS

A. Calendar Item

The superintendent noted that the third Monday in February falls on the President's Day Holiday, February 18, and the superintendent asked the pleasure of the board as to this meeting date or an alternate. The second school committee in February will take place on Monday, February 25, 2002.

B. New Elementary and Secondary Education Act

Ms. Rossetti referred this item to an Ed. Programs and Instructions Subcommittee meeting for discussion.

C. Substance Abuse and Prevention Issues Forum/February 13th

Ms. Rossetti spoke regarding the upcoming workshop to be held on February 13th from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., relative to substance abuse and prevention issues at Somerville High School in the auditorium. Nora Mann, Assistant District Attorney, will conduct the workshop.

MOTION: Ms. Rossetti made a motion requesting that the superintendent communicate to all staff that Wednesday, February 13th, be an evening exempt from homework in hopes that all students, parents and guardians would be encouraged to attend this workshop sponsored by the city-wide task force held at SHS Auditorium from 6:30-8:30 p.m. Discussion.

Ms. Taylor seconded the motion for the purpose of discussion although she stated she would not be inclined to vote for the motion. Ms. Rossetti said she spoke to many parents regarding this issue and they felt it should be "mandated". Discussion. Mayor

IX. NEW BUSINESS (cont.)

C. Substance Abuse and Prevention Issues Forum/February 13th (cont.)

Gay said she did not think you could “mandate” no homework and attendance at an evening meeting and suggested using the word “encourage”.

Ms. Rossetti requested a roll call vote on the above motion. Ms. Cardoso suggested the following friendly amendment:

FRIENDLY AMENDMENT: Ms. Cardoso suggested a friendly amendment to the above motion that the superintendent send out a communication to staff, guardians and parents “encouraging” them to attend the evening workshop.

Ms. Rossetti did not accept the friendly amendment and again requested a roll call vote. The motion failed to carry by a roll call vote of: No—8—Cardoso, Murray, Gay, Bauer, Harris, Taylor, White, Sullivan; Yes—1—Rossetti.

X. ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

Ms. Taylor

1. Reported that the Library Technology Subcommittee met for the third time and a survey will be distributed to students asking how they are currently using the library for research. Another survey for parents, which will be distributed to the bilingual, PACs as to what parent’s expectations are of the library media centers.
2. Also advised that the newly formed Somerville All-City Elementary School Chorus performed with the Cambridge Symphony Orchestra on Saturday, January 26th, 2002. Ms. Taylor requested that the following students receive Citations from the school committee to be presented to them on Awards Night: Nikky Amazu, Bernie Auch, Shaina Colozzi, Sidaullia Benson, Crystal Douglass, Bizuneh Etenesh, Jessica Freitas, Evelyn Fuentes, Sally Jean-Baptiste, Andrew Manz-Siek, Kristina Pirroni, Tiel Reardon, Kristina Smith, Alexandria Tober Kennedy and Eoghan Conway. Also for teachers Beverly Mosby and Ed MacDonald.
3. Ms. Taylor also requested Citations for the SHS Variety Show Coordinator, Richard Romanoff and the Student Committee as follows: Cheryl Paglierani, Lisa Moise, Andy Stark, Stephanie Horton and John Pirroni. The Citations will be given to Ms. McMichaels to be distributed to the above-mentioned people. The *2002 Variety Show* took place at SHS Auditorium on Friday, January 25th at 7 p.m.

Ms. Cardoso

1. Thanked the superintendent and Marie B. Ferrari, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Administration, for the response regarding the School Improvement Plan requests.
2. On Monday, February 4th, there will be a sped PAC meeting at the Kennedy School from 7-9 p.m. The topic will be the second in a series of three entitled, “Post Secondary Education – The College Career Connection”.

X. ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS (cont.)

Ms. Murray

1. Thanked everyone who participated in the very successful 8th Annual School Fair on Saturday especially, Dr. Steven F. Jenkins and his office for their hard work and generous donations of books given out to every child at the School Fair.
2. Advised that she attended the Cummings School Science night and thoroughly enjoyed it.
3. Also stated that she was rooting for the Patriots on Super Bowl Sunday!

Ms. Bauer

1. Advised that she visited the Somerville Public Library and the Olympic torch has been on display since January 26th.
2. Mentioned that Joan Gallagher, Director of Library/Media Services, was delivering questionnaires that would be distributed to SHS grade 11 students.
3. Reported that on January 23rd she attended the Guidance Department breakfast at Culinary Arts and the room was filled with service providers from inside and outside of the school system. Agencies ranged from prenatal (parenting help) to post-high school (SCALE) and everything in between. Ms. Bauer thanked Steve O'Leary for organizing the breakfast and keeping agencies in touch with each other.
4. Cummings School Events:
 - (a.) Advised that on Thursday, January 31st, is the Cummings School Annual Science Fair beginning at 9 a.m. SHS AP science students will be judging the science fair projects.
 - (b.) Also on January 31st there will be a PTA meeting at the Cummings School beginning at 2:45 p.m.
 - (c.) At 4:45 to 6:00 p.m., there will be an MCAS information session geared for parents of grades 6, 7 and 8 students.

Alderman White

Alderman White had numerous specific inquiries relative to Technology that the superintendent advised he would provide in order to bring him up-to-date and able to present the school committee's concerns to the Technology Subcommittee of the Board of Aldermen within the near future.

Chairman Sullivan

1. Advised that another community meeting took place on Tuesday, January 15th, in regards to the new Edgerly Early Childhood Center. Mr. Sullivan commended DPW Project Manager, Mike Foley as well as architect Doug Sacra.

X. ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS (cont.)

Chairman Sullivan (cont.)

2. Reported that groundbreaking ceremonies took place on Tuesday, January 22, 2002, at the site of the new Edgerly Early Childhood Center. Mr. Sullivan thanked everyone involved in this project.

XI. COMMUNICATIONS

Dr. Argenziano advised that the only communication received was from Mr. Nelson Salazar, Executive Director of The Welcome Project, already received by the school committee and referred to earlier in his comments.

XII. PERSONNEL

- A. There was no personnel report submitted for this evening's meeting. A report will be submitted at the February 4, 2002 school committee meeting.

B. Deaths

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

- Mrs. Adeline Jodice (Jan. 17), mother of Elena A. McGreal, SHS Business Teacher, and mother-in-law of Connie McGreal, PHCS Principal.
- Mr. Thomas V. Joyce (Jan. 17), husband of Marion P. Joyce, SHS Business Teacher.
- Ms. Catherine E. Kenney (Jan. 19), who retired as a Cafeteria Manager in 1975 from the Somerville Public Schools.
- Ms. Ruth L. Haley, (Jan. 27), mother of Kathleen Johanson, teacher at PHCS, and mother-in-law of Chris Johanson, Principal of the LPCS.

Mayor Gay requested that Mr. Walter Pero, Director of Veteran's Services, be remembered in prayers as he is currently undergoing chemotherapy.

XIII. RESOLUTION

SOMERVILLE HIGH SCHOOL
FOOTBALL PROGRAM
~ 2001 ~

WHEREAS, Somerville High School's football program orchestrated one of its finest and most productive seasons in some 50 years, recording an 8-2 record, and just missing out on a post-season playoff spot, and a possible berth in the prestigious Super Bowl, and

WHEREAS, The SHS team, featuring strong offensive and defensive units, was led by All-Scholastic running back Mike Neal who scored 16 touchdowns, rushed for more than 1,600 yards, and was the second- leading tackler on defense, and

Monday, January 28, 2002 – Regular Meeting

Somerville High School Football Program (cont.)

WHEREAS, Highlander head coach Tony Gulla, in his fifth season at the helm, was selected as Division I Coach of the Year, directing his team to upset victories over Waltham and Peabody and boosting his five-year career record to 29-23, and

WHEREAS, SHS lineman Wainwright Wint was named to the All-State team, by the Massachusetts Football Coaches Association, an honor received by very few football players, therefore be it

RESOLVED: That the Somerville School Committee publicly honor the SHS football team, senior co-captains Frank McPherson and Wainwright Wint; assistant coaches Fran McCarthy, Rich Brunet, Joe Villaine, Dean Sacca, Joe Curtatone, Harry Marchetti, Pat Ripley and Rob Odilon; the SHS cheerleaders and band; the team trainers; and Athletic Director Jerry Knight for helping to engineer a superlative season, and be it further

RESOLVED: That these well-earned Resolutions be entered into the minutes of tonight's meeting, and that a formal copy be presented to Coach Gulla.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:55 p.m., by voice vote.

Dr. Albert F. Argenziano
Secretary