

March 5, 2003

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Rossetti called a Long Range Planning Committee of the Whole Meeting of the School Committee to order in the superintendent's conference room at 181 Washington Street at 7:04 p.m., to discuss space issues and follow-up to the New England School Development Council (NESDEC) report.

II. ROLL CALL

Present were Ms. Cardoso, Ms. Harris, Ms. Bauer, Mr. Sullivan, Ms. Taylor, Ms. Murray and Ms. Rossetti.

Mayor Gay and Alderman O'Donovan were absent.

Also present were Dr. Albert F. Argenziano, Superintendent of Schools, Ms. Marie B. Ferrari, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Administration, and seven members of the audience.

III. Space Issues/Follow-Up to the New England School Development Council Report.

Sale of the Conwell School building:

Ms. Rossetti reported the school committee met last evening, March 4, 2003, with the Board of Aldermen and discussed the Mayor's proposal to the committee. It is Mayor Gay's wish that the Somerville School Committee releases the old Conwell School building back to the city for possible sale. Discussion followed.

MOTION: Ms. Taylor made a motion, seconded by Mr. Sullivan, that the school department declares the Conwell School a surplus as far as the needs of the school department are concerned.

Discussion took place. Ms. Taylor withdrew her motion in order for members to discuss the Unidos Program and other building space issues and concerns. The committee will return to this item of the Conwell School building later in the evening.

Location of the Unidos Program for 2003-2004:

Ms. Taylor gave an update to the meeting that was held on Thursday, February 27th at the Powder House Community School with the Unidos Program and Powder House Community School community. There were approximately fifty people in attendance at that meeting and the public as well as the Powder House Community School staff shared input with the committee.

This evening, discussion took place regarding the location of the Unidos Program for next school year. Dr. Argenziano advised that he needs ten spaces to house the Unidos Program and talked about the two schools where this would be possible. He explained if the Unidos Program was to move to the Powder House Community School, and any child who is in a (using the old terminology - Bilingual or ESL program) K5 he would like to take the total staff along with the students who are not going to be transitioned into regular education and move them to the Winter Hill Community School. In the 6th, 7th, and 8th grades, he would move three sections,

III. Space Issues: (cont.)

based on language, predominantly Portuguese to the Lincoln Park Community School and the remaining group would go to East Somerville Community School.

If the Unidos Program moved to Lincoln Park Community School, K5 would go to Winter Hill Community School and the 6th, 7th, and 8th grades would go to predominantly, the East Somerville Community School, and if not enough room at either of those schools, the remaining would go to the Powder House Community School.

Discussion followed. The Superintendent answered questions asked by school committee members. Audience members also shared their input with Dr. Argenziano and the school committee.

MOTION: Mr. Sullivan made a motion, seconded by Ms. Harris, to move the current Unidos Program to the Powder House Community School, effective September 1, 2003.

The motion was approved by a roll call vote of: Yes–7–Cardoso, Harris, Bauer, Sullivan, Taylor, Murray and Rossetti; Absent–2–Gay and O'Donovan.

Briefly discussed, also, was the sale of the Conwell School building and the Choice Program.

MOTION: Ms. Taylor made a motion, seconded by Mr. Sullivan, to have the Somerville School Committee declare the Conwell School surplus for educational purposes, whereas, it is always difficult to remove buildings from educational use, we do this under budgetary constraints. Therefore, the school department expects to receive a proportional share of the proceeds of the sale.

The motion was approved by a roll call vote of: Yes–6–Cardoso, Harris, Bauer, Sullivan, Taylor, and Rossetti; No–1–Murray; Absent–2–Gay and O'Donovan.

MOTION: Ms. Harris made a motion, seconded by Ms. Cardoso, to allow the Choice Program to remain at the Healey School for the 2003-2004 school year with the addition of one more classroom.

The motion was approved by a roll call vote of: Yes–7–Cardoso, Harris, Bauer, Sullivan, Taylor, Murray and Rossetti; Absent–2–Gay and O'Donovan.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m. by voice vote.

Dr. Albert F. Argenziano
Secretary