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ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (ABRSC) MEETING
DRAFT MINUTES

Library
R.J. Grey Junior High School

January 11, 2018
7:00 p.m.

Members Present: Diane Baum (7:04 p.m.), Brigid Bieber, Mary Brodin, Dennis Bruce, Amy Krishnamurthy (7:25 p.m.), Tessa McKinley, Paul Murphy, Eileen Zhang
Members Absent: Maya Minkin
Others: Marie Altieri, Dawn Bentley, Deborah Bookis, Bill McAlduff, Beth Petr, Dave Verdolino

1. The ABRSC was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Brigid Bieber, Vice Chair.

2. **Chairman's Introduction –**

2.1. Annual Spring Town Elections

- Acton last day to obtain nomination papers - February 2
- Acton last day to file nomination papers with signatures – February 6
 - Acton 2018 Town Election Calendar
- Boxborough last day to file nomination papers – April 3
 - Boxborough 2018 Town Election Calendar

Deanne O'Sullivan and Dennis Bruce will not be running again from Acton. Brigid Bieber will not be running again from Boxborough. Diane Baum has pulled papers in Acton.

3. **Public Participation - none**

4. **FY19 ABRSD Superintendent Recommended Budget Presentation #2 – Bill McAlduff**

4.1. Budget Update Memo

4.1.1. Detail Line Item Budget

- 4.1.1. 1.A FY19 Revenue Detail
- 4.1.1. 2.A FY19 Character Code Summary
- 4.1.1. 2.B FY19 Character Code Detail (posted separately)
- 4.1.1. 3.A FY19 Admin Responsibility Summary
- 4.1.1. 3.B FY19 Admin Responsibility Detail (posted separately)

Bill McAlduff presented the handful of changes from the preliminary budget. More adjustments may be made leading up to the final version as numbers are confirmed. The Governor's FY19 House 1 budget is scheduled to be released the Wednesday prior to Budget Saturday. The reduction from the preliminary budget 4% increase to the recommended budget of 3.8% is primarily due to the use of an additional \$150,000 from the Circuit Breaker Revolving Account. The one time busing cost is included based on one tier busing. Budget binders will be available on Jan 19.

4.2. Capital Budget

The Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) totaling \$120M has been pared down to a "mid-range" listing of approximately \$14M in priority projects. The current FY19 budget identifies spending approximately \$885,000 from this list. Bill wants to develop protocols for developing future capital plans. In the past there have not been specific line items identified for these kinds of building based items, sometimes they were considered capital, and

sometimes they were in the operating budget. The Committee appreciated slide 22 outlining this process. Dave Verdolino reviewed the Table 6 numbers and how Appendix A of the Regional Agreement affects the assessments of our two towns.

4.3. Revolving Account Updates

4.3.1. Food Services - <http://www.abschools.org/departments/food-services>

Kirsten Nelson highlighted some of the new initiatives: breakfast is now served at McT, Merriam and Conant, Extended Day lunch is offered at all elementary schools and the Comm Ed After School Program, all ordering is done through the Point of Sale System, and recycling and composting is in full swing. The Cooking Club is very popular. Lunch prices are not expected to increase for next year. The increase in free lunches served has been dramatic – 19,600 in 2012-2013 to 46,324 lunches in 2016-2017. The department's fund balance remains at an appropriate level.

4.3.2. Community Education - <http://abce.abschools.org/>

Erin Bettez reported on Community Ed's goal of supporting the smooth transition of before and after school care programs. She said that it is hard to compare her department from year to year because so much changes every year. She noted that many more kids are participating in programs this year so that is great. She is very happy with the transition to the online Use of Facilities Reservation System, particularly since anyone can now check the buildings' use schedules. FY17 Comm Ed support to the District and community totaled \$522,357. In response to a question, Erin said that they are looking into ways to provide financial assistance to more children who want to participate.

4.3.3. Athletics -

Steve Martin presented stating that last year's increase worked out well for the department. He was very conservative this year because he wasn't sure how funding would be affected. For instance, new uniforms were not purchased. He is confident now about fund balances and is starting to invest in the programs again. He recommended that fees stay the same for next year, and requested step 2 of a 3 tier increase in the appropriated budget that began last year to expand coaching staff and have assistants at all varsity sports that do not have them. This would add 6 assistant coaches next year.

5. **School Building Committee Update** – *Mary Brolin*

5.1. Draft minutes from meeting on 12/13/17

With the Special Town Meeting vote successful, Mary Brolin stated that the MSBA determines the timeline for next few steps. John Petersen spoke from the audience asking if the Committee has considered reviewing the Regional Agreement re the assessments. Mary said they have not as it would be a major initiative and there are already several large projects in the works. Dennis Bruce reminded the Committee that they have the option of reviewing it after 5 years and next year is the 5th year. Amy Krishnamurthy said she will look into it.

6. **Merriam School Principal Update**

Marie Altieri reported that there are 15 Search Committee members and it is going well. The posting opened in early December and closed January 4. Twenty four applications have been reviewed and candidates have been selected to interview. A decision will be made in February.

7. **Kindergarten Registration Update**

Marie Altieri reported that 140 parents/guardians attended Kindergarten Night. Registrations opened January 10 and ends on March 1. A lottery will be done. Tours are starting.

8. **Superintendent Search Update** – *Bill McAlduff*

Three decisions were needed from the School Committee in order to move forward:

8.1. Review and Approval of the Candidate Profile – **VOTE**

Diane Baum informed the Committee that the Profile document was given to them by NESDEC on Monday (3 days before the meeting). It was distributed to the subcommittee on Monday night and to School Committee Wednesday night. She has not had time to digest all of the information and asked members if they would consider postponing the vote so they have time to fully understand the material.

Bill McAlduff reminded the Committee that an important part of the consultant's work is taking all of the feedback from the survey and focus groups and incorporating it into the Profile document provided. This is one of the key reasons why the School Committee hired NESDEC. Although the schedule is tight, if they want to delay the decision, they would need an additional meeting before January 25. The profile is a major tool/guide the screening committee will use when they review application materials. He understands the need to be thorough, but the timing is important. There are a number of searches going on with similar deadline dates.

The members discussed the desire for more time to read the material coupled with the need to stay on schedule and allow NESDEC to do some of the work, as planned. Having two snow days recently (Jan 4 and 5) added to the difficulty.

Brigid Bieber felt the document was a good reflection of what she heard at the meetings, although she did not feel the last section of page 5 "Tasks the Community Wishes the New Superintendent to Focus Upon..." was appropriate to include. It was the sense of the committee that more time was needed to be sure the 5 pages accurately reflect the 60 pages of input. **They agreed to meet on Wednesday, January 17th at 7:30 a.m. in the Superintendent's Conference Room 13 in the Administration Building.** Dennis Bruce will be unable to attend.

8.2. Recommendation for Members of Screening Committee – **VOTE**

Diane Baum reported that 12 very well qualified volunteers were being recommended and it was a difficult decision. Brigid Bieber thanked all who submitted their name. In response to a question, Diane said that only 2 community members volunteered.

Paul Murphy moved, Mary Brolin seconded and it was unanimously,

VOTED: to approve the recommendation for the search screening membership the following people: Chidhi Aruanchalam, Amanda Bailey, Diane Baum, Kellie Carter, Mike Coppolino, John Fallon, Amy Krishnamurthy, Dana Labb, Leah Lally, Tessa McKinley, Steve Mucci, Kathy Simmons, Damian Sugrue, Kyra Wilson Cook

8.3. Recommendation for Salary Range – **VOTE**

Bill McAlduff spoke with Tony Bent about the importance of being able to share this information with people who are considering applying for the position. The committee appreciated the flexibility that approving a cap provided as opposed to a range.

Paul Murphy moved, Brigid Bieber seconded and it was unanimously,

VOTED: to approve a cap on the new superintendent's salary of \$220,000.

8.4. Information on our site: <http://www.abschools.org/home/superintendent-search>

8.4.1. Search timeline

9. Subcommittee Reports

9.1. Policy

9.1.1. Programs for Students with Special Education Needs, File: IHB – Second Read –

VOTE- *Dawn Bentley*

The subcommittee decided to create another policy involving Section 504 Plans, File: IHBA to follow IHB. Dawn Bentley proposed to vote on IHB and do a First Read at the meeting on February 1st for IHBA.

Brigid Bieber moved, Paul Murphy seconded and it was unanimously,

VOTED: to approve policy IHB.

10. School Committee Member Reports

Brigid Bieber reported that BLF met on 12/12/17. The Boxborough Finance Committee is looking for a couple of members. Health insurance is up 15% this year in Boxborough. This is different from Acton. A Special Town Meeting will be held on February 26 for a land purchase.

11. Consent Agenda

11.1. Statement of Warrants & Approval of Minutes

11.1.1. Minutes of 12/14/17 meeting

11.2. Donations to our Schools – *Bill McAlduff*

11.2.1. Recommendation to Approve \$16,000 Donation from the Friends of the Acton Libraries to the ABRSD libraries – **VOTE**

11.2.2. Recommendation to Approve \$2,000 Donation from Mark Lawrence Photographers, Inc. to the Jr High School to support student activities – **VOTE**

11.2.3. Recommendation to Approve \$1,000 Donation from Cain Electric for the Blanchard School Library – **VOTE**

The Chair asked if any of the items should be held from the consent agenda. There were none. Paul Murphy moved, Mary Brolin seconded and it was unanimously,

VOTED: to approve the consent agenda with thanks to the Friends of the Acton Libraries, Mark Lawrence Photographers and Cain Electric.

12. Open Meeting Law Complaint Decisions

Amy Krishnamurthy reported that two Open Meeting Law determinations were received this morning from the Attorney General. In the first, there was no violation found. In the second, the Open Meeting Law was violated based on a memo distributed to the School Committee one day prior to a scheduled school committee meeting because it constituted “deliberation” outside of that meeting. In their findings, however, the Attorney General ruled that there would be no additional relief as the memo had already been provided to the complainant and the contents of the memo was discussed at the scheduled School Committee meeting.

13. **FYI**

The ABRSC adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Petr

List of Documents Used: see agenda, list of warrants

Next Meetings:

ABRSC Budget Saturday Meeting, January 27 at 8:30 a.m. in the JH Library

ABRSC Meeting, February 1 at 7:00 p.m. in the JH Library

ABRSC Open Budget Hearing, February 15 at 7:00 p.m. in the JH Library (followed by regular meeting)

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (ABRSC) MEETING
DRAFT MINUTES

Library
R.J. Grey Junior High School

November 16, 2017
7:00 p.m.

8:45 p.m. (approximately) Executive Session

Members Present: Brigid Bieber, Mary Brolin, Dennis Bruce, Amy Krishnamurthy, Tessa McKinley, Maya Minkin, Paul Murphy, Kathleen Neville, Deanne O’Sullivan

Members Absent: Diane Baum, Eileen Zhang

Others: Marie Altieri, Dawn Bentley, Deborah Bookis, Bill McAlduff, Beth Petr, Dave Verdolino (left at 7:20 p.m.)

1. The ABRSC was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Chairperson Amy Krishnamurthy.
2. **Chairman’s Introduction** – *Amy Krishnamurthy*
3. **Statement of Warrants & Approval of Minutes**
 - 3.1. Meeting minutes of 11/9/17 will be done at the next meeting.
 - 3.2. The warrants were reviewed and signed by the Committee members. See list.
4. **Public Participation** - none
5. **Presentation: FY17 Annual Audit** – *David Verdolino*
 - 5.1. FY17 End of Year Audit Reports (*posted with 11/9/17 ABRSC meeting material*)

Dave Verdolino introduced Richard Sullivan, CPA with Powers & Sullivan. This is their second year of auditing our district. He was initially concerned about the transition to a new Business Director, but has found everything to be very smooth. The standard tests that Mr. Sullivan ran were just fine, noting that it was significant that the district closed the books on August 29th. He stated that the business office was “office ready” and extremely responsive when the auditors came in, which was appreciated. Mr. Sullivan explained the process. Regarding the financial results, the budget to actual statement is the most pertinent report for the Committee to review. Medicaid reimbursement and transportation both came in higher than expected. GASBE 74 needed to be implemented because we have an OPEB account, meaning that the district will report on the OPEB trust in the same way that pension liabilities are reported on. Mr. Sullivan reported that overall, no adjustments are required to the books, meaning that the information that the School Committee received all along was accurate. The audit opinion was unqualified, which is “what you want to hear”. There were also no issues related to internal controls, another important point for the governing body.

Regarding capital projects, the bond market looks at the ratings for the district members and both are good. Standard and Poor and Moody’s always wants to know what is being done regarding OPEB and how reserves are used. AB is in excellent shape in both regards. Mr. Sullivan also noted that the district has many policies and procedures in the financial area, which is great to document what is being done. These are all bond rating factors.

In January, the student activity accounts will be audited as required. Mr. Sullivan spoke to Dave Verdolino and Claire Jeannotte about a question that was not resolved involving the

management of some federal grants. Uniform guidance about the documentation of internal controls came out last year and he will share this with David. He also suggested a cash investment policy.

Mary Brolin thanked retired Finance Director Clare Jeannotte for serving in her position so well. Deanne O'Sullivan asked if our district has been moving away from the manual aspects of our payroll system. Marie Altieri replied that in last year's management letter there was mention of duplication between some of the departments because it is fairly manual, including paper timecards. The process is being streamlined now, but we have not had the staff or the time to make big changes in this area yet. Administrators are talking to other school districts, to see what works for them.

6. **Presentation: Acton Boxborough Regional High School - *Principal Larry Dorey***

6.1. High School Annual Update Slides

6.2. High School Annual Class Size Report

Principal Larry Dorey, Associate Principal Beth Baker and Data Manager Tina Vanasse presented the Class Size, Scheduling and School Goals Report.

Overall, class size averages at the High School have declined slightly, although there are still some large classes including in math. These are usually college level classes taught by veteran teachers like Bill Noeth. The Committee discussed how these high achieving students are supported. There was general understanding that if a teacher needs assistance, they know how to request the support for their students.

Regarding scheduling, the administration typically schedules 100% of the requests for 85% of the students, which is excellent. Larry thanked Tina for taking on scheduling now while he is Principal. They use Power Schedule. The appeals process was discussed. The administration really tries to accommodate change requests and it does impact the various class sizes. Regarding students who override class recommendations, Larry said that over 60% of students are successful with their override, but it is tricky. In order to provide college prep curriculum for all of our students, Larry explained that the district has to differentiate between these levels and colleges recognize that. Having more levels helps with stress levels because there is so much competition within the levels. Room availability and lunch also affects scheduling. The two-week pilot schedule will happen in March 2018 at the High School. This is a focus of this year's professional development.

Beth Baker spoke about the Driving Question, "How can staff, students, and families support wellness and balance within a rich learning environment that provides opportunities for all students to experience success?". She stressed that staff, students and families are key words this year, and the idea that ALL students deserve success. She highlighted the professional learning being done as well as the goal of putting students' wellbeing at the center of teaching and learning. Student Clubs and the AB Because You Matter Campaign (sponsored by Acton Boxborough United Way) are an important part of this focus.

The Committee appreciated the concern for students' stress levels and how the administration is trying to address the topic. They asked Larry how these goals can be measured, particularly since wellness was a goal last year. The senior survey asks about wellness and related questions. There is a faculty survey, data from the Challenge Success survey, the Youth Risk Behavior Survey, internal surveys on workloads and stress, and other survey questions are always being discussed. Dennis Bruce suggested that they be sure that all parts of the community understand the goals, and there be a measuring component to show the needle moving toward success or not.

7. **Presentation: Acton Boxborough Special Education Parent Advisory Council**
 Amanda Bailey updated the Committee on the 2017-2018 goals discussing accessibility, inclusion and adaptation vs accommodation. She emphasized the need for more handicap accessible playground equipment at our schools, describing it as “a civil rights issue” for some kids. Amanda spoke in support of the upcoming building project as a way to address some of these issues for all children. Brigid Bieber thanked Amanda for her support and described the accessibility of the playground for younger children as “heartbreaking”.
8. **School Building Committee Update – Mary Brolin**
- 8.1. MSBA Enrollment Meeting on 11/14/17 (*oral*)
 Bill McAlduff updated the Committee and thanked Marie Altieri for an excellent job at this meeting communicating what has happened in our community. As a result, more enrollment information was requested from the district. The Ashtons’ information was important and had an impact on our statement. MSBA also asked for some floorplans of our elementary schools in relation to the overcapacity of the buildings. Additional information, including housing sales, will be sent to the MSBA by the end of this week. After their review, the district will receive a design enrollment letter from MSBA stating what they will support. It helped that we had two sets of projections – NESDEC and the Ashtons’. The feasibility study agreement and timeline were clarified. AB is scheduled to be on the MSBA Board meeting agenda for 2/14/18, assuming positive votes at both Special Town Meetings next month.
- 8.2. Community Forums & Updated Slides
 A members asked if the playground accessibility consistency issues as described by Amanda Bailey are included in the presentations. It is included, but Mary Brolin noted how effectively Amanda stated it. The upcoming forums and tour were reviewed. Members were asked to educate and encourage their friends and neighbors to come to the Town Meetings next month. Mary stated how fortunate we are to have Mary Ann and Peter Ashton and their daughter, Amanda, as part of our community.
- 8.3. NEW! Douglas School Video Tour: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GOacBQzs-rA>
- 8.4. FYI
- 8.4.1 Draft Minutes of Building Committee Meeting on 11/8/17
- 8.4.2 Special Town Meetings in Acton & Boxborough on **Monday, 12/4/17** at 7:00 pm
- 8.4.3 Building Committee’s presence on social media – Please share!
- 8.4.3.1 Twitter - [@_ABSBP](#)
- 8.4.3.2 Instagram - [abschoolbuildingproject](#)
- 8.4.3.3 Facebook - [abschoolbuildingproject](#)
9. **FY19 School Calendar – First Read – Marie Altieri**
 Marie reviewed the proposed calendar. The 2018 start date was relatively clear cut this year due to how Labor Day falls. Katie Neville invited members of the school committee to advocate for the observance of other religious holidays, given the proposal to continue having Rosh Hashana, Yom Kippur and Good Friday off. Tessa McKinley was not in disagreement with Katie, but her issue is the half days. The choppiness of these weeks makes it very hard for teachers. For that reason, Tessa does not want to see any more days off. Maya Minkin noted that there is better cohesion with this calendar now and the ABEA agreement. Deanne O’Sullivan reported that this year was less choppy according to her friends. Aligning the Junior High half days with the elementary schedule was very helpful. A second read and possible vote will be done at the meeting on 12/14/17.

10. **Subcommittee Reports**

10.1. **Budget Subcommittee**

10.1.1. Meeting on 11/15/17 – Brigid Bieber reported that they talked about capital planning, building project update and implementing purchase cards for the district. Discussion of the cards will be at a future meeting. Next meeting is December 8.

10.2. **Policy Subcommittee**

10.2.1. FYI: New Procedures for Equal Educational Opportunities – File: JB

10.2.1.1. Students who are Transgender and/or Gender Nonconforming, File: JB-R
Deborah Bookis described the extensive process that resulted in these important new procedures for this existing policy. After the meeting, they will be shared with staff, and then posted on the policy website for the community, as well as the usual letter to families of 5/6 graders. Committee members appreciated how thoughtfully this was done and presented. In response to a request, Bill McAlduff said the administration would consider other ways that might be appropriate to share this information.

10.2.2. Consent Agenda – Second Read – **VOTE** - *Maya Minkin*

10.2.2.1. Graduation Requirements, File: IKF

10.2.2.2. Personnel Records, File: GBJ

10.2.2.3. Philosophy of Staff Development, File: GCIA

10.2.2.4. Professional Teacher Status, File: GCJ

10.2.2.5. First Aid, File: EBB

10.2.2.6. Programs for Students with Special Education Needs, File: IHB – HELD

Mary Brolin requested that Policy IHB be held from the consent agenda. Maya Minkin asked that the policy subcommittee review it because there are differences between 504s and IEPs. Amanda Bailey stated that this policy merges these two documents and they are not the same. She felt the title was not appropriate. Dawn Bentley agreed that Amanda was right regarding the legal aspect but the district has a mandate to speak to special education. She suggested the policy subcommittee create two separate policies and there was agreement.

10.2.2.7. Home or Hospital Instruction, File: IHBF

10.2.2.8. Pregnant/Parenting Students, File: JIE

10.2.2.9. Student Complaints and Grievances, File: JII

Brigid Bieber moved, Paul Murphy seconded and it was unanimously
VOTED: to approve the consent agenda as amended.

11. **School Committee Member Reports**

Health Insurance Trust met this morning and agreed on a 0 % increase for the budget. They plan to vote a rate in January but want enough data to know where they are going. Marie Altieri reminded the School Committee that working with all of the unions in Acton and the ABRSD, plan design changes were made, a deductible was added and an HSA and that was all very profitable. This really is all due to collaboration. Dennis Bruce questioned whether this decision could put the district in a position where a future superintendent will have to deal with a huge increase. Mary Brolin responded that if rates are raised the district is getting near the cap of where the fund balance can be.

12. **Donations to our Schools – Bill McAlduff**

12.1. Recommendation to Accept \$5,000 from the Regional PTSO to the High School to staff the library after school and extra hours during exams – **VOTE**

Brigid Bieber moved, Paul Murphy seconded and it was unanimously,
VOTED: to accept the PTSO gift to the High School with gratitude.

A member asked why the PTSO is paying for staffing the library after school and what does the district provide? Bill will include these comments in future budget discussions.

12.2. Recommendation to Accept \$3,750 from the Regional PTSO to the Junior High for student handbooks – **VOTE**

Paul Murphy moved, Tessa McKinley seconded and it was unanimously

VOTED: to accept the donation from the PTSO to the Junior High with gratitude.

Brigid Bieber asked if there a requirement for all schools to have a handbook. All schools' handbooks are posted online now. It was clarified that this donation was for plan books, not handbooks.

13. **FYI**

13.1. Movie Night/Babysitting for Special Town Meetings on 12/4/17

13.2. Family Learning Series - FY18 Calendar of Presentations

Although there is not a need for meeting on November 30, the Committee agreed to wait until the November 20th meeting to make a final decision about cancelling it.

Dawn Bentley mentioned the suicide prevention training on December 5th. We are hosting our first one in district soon at the Junior High.

14. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 9:35 p.m. Mary Brolin moved, Paul Murphy seconded and it was unanimously,

VOTED by roll call: to convene an executive session to consider the approval and release of the minutes and related materials from the October 19, 2017 executive session, in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 30A, section 2 (a) purpose 3, to discuss strategy with respect to litigation, as the Chair hereby declares that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the District's litigating position; the litigation discussed in the minutes involves two complaints under the open meeting law, filed on August 10, 2017, and threatened claims against the Committee for defamation.

(YES: Bieber, Brolin, Bruce, Krishnamurthy, McKinley, Minkin, Murphy, Neville, O'Sullivan)

The Chair stated that the Committee would return to open meeting for the sole purpose of adjourning.

The ABRSC returned to open meeting and adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Petr

List of Documents Used: see agenda, list of warrants

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (ABRSC) MEETING
DRAFT MINUTES

Library
R.J. Grey Junior High School

November 9, 2017
7:00 p.m.
9:00 p.m. (approximately) Executive Session (cxld)

Members Present: Diane Baum, Brigid Bieber, Mary Brolin, Dennis Bruce, Amy Krishnamurthy, Tessa McKinley, Maya Minkin (left at 8:40 p.m.), Paul Murphy, Kathleen Neville (7:06 p.m.), Eileen Zhang
Members Absent: Deanne O'Sullivan
Others: Marie Altieri, Dawn Bentley, Bill McAlduff, Beth Petr, Dave Verdolino

1. The ABRSC was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Amy Krishnamurthy, Chair.
2. **Chairman's Introduction** – *Amy Krishnamurthy*
3. **Statement of Warrants & Approval of Minutes**
 - 3.1. The meeting minutes of 10/30/17 were approved as written.
 - 3.2. The warrants were reviewed and signed by the Committee members. See list.
4. **Public Participation** - none
5. **Presentation: R.J. Grey Junior High School** - *Principal Andrew Shen*
 - 5.1. Annual School Report
Principal Shen shared new things happening at the Junior High this year, as well as the continued work with Challenge Success, Diversity & Equity, ELL Student Learning and Support, and Student Engagement & Socio/Emotional Health. The Committee loved hearing about the continued initiatives and the google site being used for homework. They asked about scheduling and funding for activities when students cannot afford it.
 - 5.2. JH Enrollment and Class Size Report
Overall enrollment at the Junior High has steadily declined since 2008-2009 when it peaked at 1003 students and fell to 888 in 2015-2016. In the past 2 years however, enrollment has been increasing with 964 students this year. The average team size in Grade 7 is 121.5 students and the average for Grade 8 is 119.5 students. Areas to monitor are:
 1. Students with non-traditional school backgrounds, interruptions in formal education, whose preparation is several years below grade level; often receiving ELL services
 2. Team sizes
 3. Class sizes of team classes and Exploratory

Questions were asked about the large class sizes. Mr. Shen said that some of the rooms are crowded. A few years ago a half team was added but it was not ideal. Some communities have received hundreds of children from Puerto Rico following the hurricane and many need ELL services. This is happening everywhere. Eileen Zhang asked about the math strategies being implemented. Andrew said that professional learning should be focused on this because it offers a wider variety of challenges to a larger group of kids learning math. He believes that all of the students are being addressed.
6. **Presentation: Annual Enrollment Presentation & Elementary Class Size Report** – *Marie Altieri*

- 6.1. Ashton Enrollment Projections Slides & Charts
- 6.2. Elementary Class Size Report Slides
- 6.3. Elementary Class Size Report Charts
- 6.4. October 1, 2017 Enrollment Report
- 6.5. NESDEC Preliminary Projections
- 6.6. NESDEC Acton and Boxborough Individual Enrollment Data

Marie Altieri began by saying that a lot of time has been spent analyzing enrollment projections. AB is transitioning to using the NESDEC projections in the future because this is the last year that the Ashtons will be available to do it. The MSBA meeting is next Tuesday in Boston. MSBA projections were lower than NESDEC or the Ashtons so Bill and Marie will try hard to make the case for the higher enrollment numbers that they believe are right. Marie outlined why they believe that the MSBA does not realize what is happening in the community. One example is that the 3 projections for Kindergarten – Ashton, NESDEC and MSBA, are all different. Marie thanked Karen Guzzardi at Boxborough Town Hall for data she provided on the new Paddock Estates student numbers.

Asked if our special education percentage has changed much with enrollment, Marie said that it had not, staying at about 17% for years. The district has increased a lot in the economically disadvantaged number of students. In response to a question, Marie confirmed that they do follow the rental market as well as the housing market. She noted that Bill McAlduff did the enrollment projections in Winchester so he has been a great resource.

Moving to number of sections for next year, the proposal included four Kindergartens at Blanchard for next year and one fewer Kindergarten in Acton. A 4th grade classroom would be added at either Conant or McT, not sure where yet. The administration proposed adding a 5th grade to Blanchard and one to a school in Acton. A 6th grade class would be eliminated. Adding 3 sections and taking away 1 would result in adding a total of 2. (Slide 7)

Bill emphasized that the MSBA is interested in a 10 year average so that is what he and Marie will concentrate on at the meeting. Marie added that our plan provides flexibility because we are thinking of a twin school with 8 preschool classrooms. Even with the MSBA numbers, we will have more classrooms than we have now. Marie is not sure if the district would actually make the building much bigger than the current plan, but it may impact the next building project more.

7. **Presentation: Finance** – *David Verdolino*

7.1. Student Activities Funds review and **VOTE** of approval

Next year Dave will do this vote at the same time as the imprest balance vote that was already done. He will send responses to Diane Baum's questions to the whole School Committee when he is ready. This vote is per policy JJ.

Diane Baum moved, and Mary Brolin seconded the motion:

“To approve the accompanying lists of proposed student activity funds for Blanchard Memorial School, R.J. Grey Junior High School and Acton-Boxborough Regional High School, each as recommended by the respective building principals, as the officially recognized clubs, teams and other organized student activities for the 2017-2018 school year.”

Paul Murphy asked if there is no advisor for those that are missing in the memo. Dave assumes that these roles have now been filled. He noted that some clubs may not be currently active.

The motion was **VOTED** and unanimously passed.

7.2. Q1 Financial Report

Dave reported that they project a budget surplus of about \$600,000 at this time for FY18. This is with minimal risk for revenue projections, and approximates the planned use of E&D for the MSBA Feasibility Study.

7.3. FY19 Budget Schedule/Timeline and Guidelines

The timeline and guidelines were previously discussed with the budget subcommittee.

7.4. FY17 End of Year Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) Update

Dave described the packet information as an extract from a report from the advisors used at a meeting they did with Treasurer Margaret Dennehy. Margaret is the chair of the Board of Advisors which includes Dave, the School Committee Chair and representatives from each of the Acton and Boxborough Finance Committees. Paul Murphy noted that the earnings on the OPEB trust have really made the account grow. Mary Brolin agreed and said that keeping the commitment to add to it really helps bond ratings.

8. **School Building Committee Update – Mary Brolin**

8.1. Community Forums & Slides – working on building support in the community.

8.2. FYI

8.2.1 Draft Minutes of Building Committee Meeting on 10/11/17

8.2.1. Special Town Meetings in Acton & Boxborough on **Monday, 12/4/17** at 7:00 pm

8.2.2. Building Committee's presence on social media – Please share!

8.2.2.1. Twitter - [@_ABSBP](#)

8.2.2.2. Instagram - [abschoolbuildingproject](#)

8.2.2.3. Facebook - [abschoolbuildingproject](#)

Mary Brolin shared the presentations that will be used at the Special Town Meetings. Dennis Bruce will present in Acton and Mary will present in Boxborough with Building Committee members in attendance. School Committee members agreed with the Building Committee members sitting up front with Mary/Dennis so they could answer questions.

The Committee discussed what would happen if the articles did not pass. The district would fall out of the MSBA eligibility period meaning they are no longer a partner with MSBA. As a community we would then need to decide how to proceed or not, and funding would be on our own. They could choose to fund the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) items but that is only a 10 year fix so a short term solution. The net cost could be \$60 million of repairs, bringing buildings up to ADA compliance, etc.etc. The community would need to decide how to handle this. Concern was expressed about the significant opportunity lost for educational purposes.

9. **Merriam Principal Retirement Announcement & Search Update**

Marie Altieri reported that Ed Kaufman's retirement after 23 years at Merriam will be a big change for the Merriam community. The replacement process has begun.

10. **Permanent Superintendent Search Update – Amy Krishnamurthy (oral)**

10.1. ABRSC meeting with NESDEC for Orientation – Mon, Nov 20 at 7:00 p.m. JHL Amy will ask that NESDEC come prepared with an ad for the Committee to vote on so it can be placed right away. Bill said that he and Amy received a draft that includes some information for the Central Office to fill out. He will send this out shortly to School Committee members and have it ready to go on November 20th.

11. **Subcommittee Reports**

- 11.1. **Budget Subcommittee – Brigid Bieber**
 - 11.1.1. Minutes of meeting on 7/19/17
 - 11.1.2. Recommendation to Appoint New Member Diane Baum – **VOTE**
Mary Brolin moved, Paul Murphy seconded and it was unanimously
VOTED: to appoint Diane Baum to the Budget Subcommittee
 - 11.1.3. Recommendation to Approve Budget Subcommittee Charge – **VOTE**
Paul Murphy moved, Diane Baum seconded and it was unanimously,
VOTED: to approve the charge as proposed in the memo in the packet.
- 11.2. **Policy Subcommittee Consent Agenda – First Read**
 - 11.2.1. Graduation Requirements, File: IKF
 - 11.2.2. Personnel Records, File: GBJ
 - 11.2.3. Philosophy of Staff Development, File: GCIA
 - 11.2.4. Professional Teacher Status, File: GCJ
 - 11.2.5. First Aid, File: EBB
 - 11.2.6. Programs for Students with Special Education Needs, File: IHB
 - 11.2.7. Home or Hospital Instruction, File: IHBF
 - 11.2.8. Pregnant/Parenting Students, File: JIE
 - 11.2.9. Student Complaints and Grievances, File: JII

Katie Neville explained that these policies needed minor updating since regionalization and were up for a First Reading. Re” Graduation Requirements”, policy IKF, Dennis Bruce asked if AB still requires only 2 years of math. Marie Altieri explained that this policy was updated in 2012 to include the arts requirement. There is a lot of process around graduation requirements. It is for all students with all kinds of needs. For some students these are heavy duty requirements and Deb Bookis and the principals felt that this was appropriate.

Diane Baum asked why 504s are included in “Programs for Students with Special Education Needs”, policy IHB. Dawn Bentley explained that the P in IEP is program, not plan. This is part of the federal statute. Dawn explained the difference between 504s and IEPs. 504s are only about accommodation. Children with an IEP also have a 504 that is why it’s included. Amanda Bailey had a similar question.

Further questions or comments may be sent to Katie or Maya Minkin before the next meeting.

- 11.3. **Regional Financial Oversight – Mary Brolin (oral)**
 - 11.3.1. Recommendation to Appoint Amy Krishnamurthy to Vacancy – **VOTE**
This is year 4 of 5. Because Kristina Rychlik left, Mary needs someone who can commit to this committee for 2 years.
Brigid Bieber moved, Paul Murphy seconded with gratitude and it was unanimously,
VOTED: to appoint Amy Krishnamurthy to the Regional Financial Oversight Committee

12. School Committee Member Reports

- 12.1. **Acton Leadership Group (ALG) – Amy Krishnamurthy**
 - 12.1.1. Minutes and materials from meeting on 10/26/17

13. Donations to the School District - Bill McAlduff

- 13.1. **Recommendation to Accept \$10,000 Gift from Patriot Swim Club for ABRHS Pool – VOTE**
Paul Murphy moved, Mary Brolin seconded with gratitude and it was unanimously,
VOTED: to accept the Patriot Swim Club donation to the ABRHS pool.

13.2. Recommendation to Accept Regional PTSO Grants to the High School – **VOTE**
Paul Murphy moved, Brigid Bieber seconded and it was unanimously,
VOTED: to accept the PTSO’s three grants to the High School.

14. **Open Meeting Law Complaint – Bill McAlduff**

14.1. S. Ballard on 10/30/17 re Executive Session held on October 19, 2017

Bill McAlduff stated that an OML complaint was received from Mr. Ballard. Per the guide, School Committee members have received a copy of the complaint in the packet and must reviewed it at an open meeting. Bill summarized the points made in complaint and the action requested by Mr. Ballard. The School Committee has 14 business days to respond, which would be by November 17, 2017. Bill recommended that the Chair and Superintendent consult with legal counsel to create a response.

Mary Brolin moved, Diane Baum seconded and it was unanimously,

VOTED: that the School Committee respond to this Complaint through the chair and superintendent’s office with consultation with legal counsel.

15. **FYI**

- 15.1. FY17 End of Year Audit Reports
-for discussion at meeting on 11/16/17 when Richard Sullivan will present
- 15.2. Kindergarten Registration Schedule
- 15.3. Green Communities Program 20% Reduction Goal Achieved by Acton
- 15.4. Acton Town Manager Search Committee online survey for community input
- 15.5. Homework Policy Implementation Information Night Slides, 10/24/17
- 15.6. Family Learning Series - FY18 Calendar of Presentations
- 15.7. Expanding our Notion of Success: <https://www.smores.com/8kd2q>
- 15.8. AG Issues Updated Open Meeting Law regulations, effective 10/6/17:
<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/new-open-meeting-law-regulations-effective-october-6-2017>
- 15.9. Monthly Enrollment, 11/1/17

The Chair stated that the posted EXECUTIVE SESSION will be done at a future meeting.

The ABRSC adjourned at 9:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Petr

List of Documents Used: see agenda, list of warrants

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (ABRSC)
DRAFT OPEN Minutes

Library
R.J. Grey Junior High School

October 19, 2017
7:00 p.m.
9:25 p.m. (approx.) Executive Session

Members Present: Diane Baum, Brigid Bieber, Mary Brolin, Dennis Bruce (8:05 p.m.), Amy Krishnamurthy, Tessa McKinley, Maya Minkin, Paul Murphy, Kathleen Neville, Deanne O’Sullivan (7:10 p.m.), Eileen Zhang (7:05 p.m.)
Members Absent: none
Others: Marie Altieri, Dawn Bentley, Deborah Bookis, Bill McAlduff, Beth Petr

1. The ABRSC meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. by Chairperson Amy Krishnamurthy.
2. **Chairman’s Introduction** – *Amy Krishnamurthy*
The Chairperson thanked the Principals for being in attendance. She also thanked the Boxborough Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee for their unanimous vote of support of the Building Project warrant article for the 12/4/17 Special Town Meeting.
3. **Statement of Warrants & Approval of Minutes**
 - 3.1. The meeting minutes of 10/3/17 were approved as amended.
 - 3.2. The warrants were reviewed and signed by the Committee members. See list.
4. **Public Participation** - *none*
5. **Presentation: Gates School** – *Principal Lynne Newman, Assistant Principal Priscilla Kotyk*
The theme of the presentation was “Civility, Respect & Kindness: Growing a Caring Community”. Brigid Bieber noted how education has changed over the years. It includes so much more than it used to, including a focus on building a community. She stated that it is an important time in our society to build these values.
6. **Presentation: Acton Finance Committee** – *Steve Noone*
 - 6.1. Point of View Document, 9/28/17
 - 6.2. School Committee presentation to Finance Committee, 10/10/17
Steve Noone invited everyone to the Town Manager Search Committee forum on Oct 26th. The Acton Finance Committee is charged with looking beyond the current year and making recommendations, including gathering feedback from the public. He emphasized slide 7 showing the affordability of the town of Acton and how the average single family tax bill has increased by 15.52% from 2010 - 2015. Slide 25 recommended that for FY19, the operating budget should grow by no more than the 3% increase in revenue to be sustainable. It was confirmed that Amy Krishnamurthy took Kristina Rychlik’s place on the Acton Planning Capital Group, although they have not met yet.
7. **Enrollment Update** – *Marie Altieri*
 - 7.1. October 1, 2017 Enrollment Report
 - 7.2. NESDEC Preliminary Projections

7.3. NESDEC Acton and Boxborough Individual Enrollment Data

The official enrollment report will be given at the next School Committee meeting, but Marie wanted to get the most current information out asap. Housing sales have become a big driver, with a 65% housing turnover in 2 years. In Boxborough this went up 33%. The MSBA is engaged with the district in reviewing all of this information. NESDEC projections separate by town were received yesterday. Marie briefly reviewed the Oct 1 numbers. They are looking at staffing patterns based on some of the numbers. She reported that 9 ½% of our students overall are economically disadvantaged. Marie asked the Committee to review these charts again prior to the next meeting when the annual enrollment presentation will be done.

The Committee discussed how ELL students are assigned to our classrooms, including how they are handled in the lottery process. Members felt that they need to be spread out, no school should have significantly more of these students than another. All ELL learners cannot all be put in one school. Marie confirmed that the administration is working on this. Most ELL students move in after the lottery so they have to be placed where there is space available, or we add a class due to need in the summer and that is where many of the ELL students are placed. Also kindergarten screening happens in September after students are placed and this year 40% of the kindergarten students who were ELL screened needed services.

Marie reported that several years ago we were 55-60% over class size guidelines, but now we are 12-15% over guidelines so there has been improvement there. Members discussed the inexact science of enrollment projections and how although they have been quite accurate in the past, we have had some surprises recently. Bill McAlduff agreed with Marie that housing patterns are a phenomenon that is happening all over. Economics affects it but every 20 years or so there is a generational shift of houses occupied by seniors that move and young families move in with kids. The question was asked at what point does self-segregation become an issue? The school not being addressed by the building project is the one with the fewest white students. Marie said that they spoke to the Department of Education about this and it is difficult to address. Concern was expressed about the staff case overload and some students not receiving the services they need.

8. **Elementary School Funding Update** – *Marie Altieri*

In September 2016, a goal of examining elementary school funding was approved by the School Committee. Elementary principals and members of the Senior Leadership Team met throughout the year and a report was presented to the School Committee in June 2017. If approved by the Committee, the goal is to implement these changes in 2018-2019.

The Position Statement on slide 13 was discussed. Bill McAlduff asked that the School Committee vote Recommendation #1 to bring all Before and After School programs into the Community Education division.

Bill noted that Recommendation #2 and the first 2 bullets of the Additional Recommendations are administrative functions so no School Committee action is needed. The third and fourth bullets of the Additional Recommendations are School Committee policy issues.

The Committee thanked Marie for her extensive work on this topic, including reaching consensus from the administrators. They discussed what it meant to double the number of assistants (or the funding level) at a time when enrollment was decreasing, although given the diversity of the students that was the best solution at the time. Deanne O'Sullivan commented

that if we say we will have 1 assistant per classroom for 12 hours, if a class has a large ELL population, that falls on the PTO to fund more assistance because the paid assistant will be pulled in many directions with that student population. She did not consider this equitable. Marie responded that the districts does have other supports for ELL, but she acknowledged Deanne's comment. The Blanchard School has been able to provide assistants without PTO funding, and Tessa McKinley was frustrated that Acton PTOs have been paying for it. She emphasized that the conversation should be about what the real need is for assistants and how the district will pay for it. She stated that PTOs can continue to fund things, but not positions that are educationally needed for the students. Katie Neville advocated for the next step to be the School Committee getting behind some common policy language. Members agreed. Mary Brolin was stunned at the imbalance when she first saw these numbers. Brigid agreed that PTOs should not be depended on for operational expenses. She asked for more knowledge around who decides what amount of assistants is appropriate. Marie confirmed that this discussion is only about regular education assistants, not Kindergarten assistants or special education assistants.

The Committee agreed to vote on the recommendation at their next meeting.

Marie explained that Community Education will continue to run enrichment programs as in the past as long as there is interest. The schools will not be running their own enrichment courses. The drop in option is a little complicated because it is hard to staff when the number of children is not always determined. She added that breakfast is now offered in the elementary schools through our Food Services, and this will be part of the extended day program in all 6 schools next September. Erin Bettez spoke about her enthusiasm for the Extended Day Programs. As soon as it is voted, she will talk with the other schools' program directors and see what they are doing and how. Their shared goal is to make the best programs for all students in all of our schools.

Dennis Bruce asked what has changed in the 6 years since the district tried to do this last time. Marie replied that the numbers have kept growing and the disparity kept growing as well. The changes in our student population and equity have become more and more important. Collaboration and working together with the principals has made this proposal possible.

9. Donations to the School District

9.1. Recommendation to Accept FY18 Donations from the PTOs, PTSOs, PTF to the Schools
– **VOTE** – *Bill McAlduff*

Mary Brolin moved, Diane Baum seconded and it was

VOTED: to accept the FY18 donations from the PTOs, PTSOs and PTF to the schools.
(YES: Baum, Bieber, Brolin, Bruce, Krishnamurthy, Minkin, Murphy, Neville, O'Sullivan, Zhang)

Tessa McKinley abstained, stating that it was due to the inequities in the schools' funding. Mary Brolin stated that she voted it because she cannot pull this money out of the operating budget.

9.2. Recommendation to Accept Grant from Danny's Place Youth Services for the A-B Community Education Summer Leadership in Training Program – **VOTE** – *Bill McAlduff*

Amy Krishnamurthy abstained because she is on the Board of Danny's Place. Brigid Bieber ran this agenda item.

Paul Murphy moved with gratitude, Mary Brolin seconded and it was

VOTED: to accept the Grant from Danny's Place Youth Services.
(YES: : Baum, Bieber, Brolin, Bruce, McKinley, Minkin, Murphy, Neville, O'Sullivan, Zhang)

10. **School Building Committee Update – Mary Brolin**

10.1. Building Committee Meeting on 10/11/17

10.2. Community Forums & Materials / Slides

The recent forum at Douglas was “great”. Chris Whitbeck gave a very informative tour of the building. A video is being created as well as a taped presentation with Acton TV. The Boxborough Selectmen and Finance Committee are in support.

10.3. FYI

10.3.1. Special Town Meetings in Acton & Boxborough on Monday, 12/4/17 at 7:00 pm

10.3.2. Building Committee's presence on social media – Please share!

10.3.2.1. Twitter - [@ ABSBP](#)

10.3.2.2. Instagram - [abschoolbuildingproject](#)

10.3.2.3. Facebook - [abschoolbuildingproject](#)

11. **Permanent Superintendent Search Update – Amy Krishnamurthy (Marie Altieri left for this agenda item)**

11.1. Memo from the Superintendent Regarding Search Firm Proposals

11.2. New England School Development Council (NESDEC)

11.3. Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC)

11.4. Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates (HYA)

11.5. Presentation Slides re the Search Process from ABRSC meeting 10/3/17

This was a follow up from the last meeting where Bill McAlduff was authorized to request proposals from Search Firms. He contacted 5 organizations. Two of the 5 did not respond with proposals. In reviewing the 3 proposals received, the scope was fairly similar, all have staff and community feedback involved, all had a degree of warranties. Each offered cost proposals. He asked the Committee to discuss the 3 proposals and to either choose one to employ, or have one or all present to the School Committee before they decide.

The Committee discussed the pros and cons of the services offered by NESDEC, MASC and HYA. HYA has a lot of language translation services and does a lot of outreach to minority organizations, which could be beneficial. HYA is a lot more expensive than the others. HYA's pre-screening process does not seem appropriate for AB as it removes some control, although it could be helpful to try a different approach like this. Several members were not interested in MASC given some prior experience.

Bill Guthlein and Steve Noone (who is on the ActonTown Manager search) shared their thoughts about the process.

The Committee agreed to meet on Monday, Oct 30 at 7:00 p.m. for presentations by NESDEC and HYA. Bill McAlduff will contact the search firms.

12. **Subcommittee Reports (oral)**

12.1. Budget Subcommittee meeting, 10/11/17 – *Brigid Bieber*

This was the first meeting. They will bring back to School Committee that the Budget Subcommittee never had a formal charge and that should be done. The Acton Fincom Point of View (POV) document was discussed.

12.2. Policy Subcommittee meeting, 10/11/17 – *Katie Neville*

13. School Committee Member Reports

Diane Baum reported that Pam Nourse told her that Minuteman Tech is being commended by the Dept of Education for closing the achievement gap, one of only 7 schools in New England. Paul Murphy attended the Family Learning Presentation on Resilience with Rob Evans and it was wonderful.

Deanne O’Sullivan reported that the Joint PTO met and Marie came and explained many issues which was very helpful.

14. FYI

- 14.1. Donations to the School District (*\$500 or less*)
 - 14.1.1. Grant from Danny’s Place Youth Services for the William James Interface
- 14.2. Acton Town Manager Search Community Forum, Thurs, 10/26/17 at 7:00 p.m. in Acton Town Hall Room 204
- 14.3. Acton Leadership Group (ALG) Meeting minutes of 9/28/17
- 14.4. No School/Delayed Opening/Emergency Release procedures and memo
- 14.5. Family Learning Series - FY18 Calendar of Presentations
 - 14.5.1. What Parents and Caregivers Can Do to Nurture Lifetime Readers, Steven Layne, Ed.D. Nov 7 at 7:00 p.m. in the ABR High School Auditorium

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

At 9:41 p.m. Amy Krishnamurthy moved, Paul Murphy seconded and it was unanimously,

VOTED by roll call: to convene an executive session in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 30A, section 21 (a) purpose 3, to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation, an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the District’s bargaining or litigating position.

(YES: Baum, Bieber, Brolin, Bruce, Krishnamurthy, McKinley, Minkin, Murphy, Neville, O’Sullivan, Zhang)

The Chair stated that the Committee would return to open meeting only to adjourn.

The ABRSC returned to open meeting and adjourned at 10:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Beth Petr

List of Documents Used: See agenda, list of warrants

Rec'd Feb 20, 2018



OPEN MEETING LAW COMPLAINT FORM

Office of the Attorney General
One Ashburton Place
Boston, MA 02108

Please note that all fields are required unless otherwise noted.

Your Contact Information:

First Name: Steven Last Name: Ballard

Address: Law Offices of Steven Ballard; 354 Washington Street, Suite 323

City: Wellesley State: MA Zip Code: 02481

Phone Number: 7815912750 Ext. _____

Email: sballard@stevenballard.com

Organization or Media Affiliation (if any): _____

Are you filing the complaint in your capacity as an individual, representative of an organization, or media?

(For statistical purposes only)

Individual Organization Media

Public Body that is the subject of this complaint:

City/Town County Regional/District State

Name of Public Body (including city/town, county or region, if applicable): Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee, Acton Massachusetts

Specific person(s), if any, you allege committed the violation: Amy Krishnamurthy, Chair

Date of alleged violation: February 10, 2018

Description of alleged violation:

Describe the alleged violation that this complaint is about. If you believe the alleged violation was intentional, please say so and include the reasons supporting your belief.

Note: This text field has a maximum of 3000 characters.

Chair Amy Krishnamurthy (Chair) and the Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee (ABRSC) violated the Open Meeting Law, M.G.L. c. 30A § 25(a) and (b), by failing to timely create and approve minutes of its open meeting of January 11, 2018.

M.G.L. c. 30A, § 25(a) and (b) and 940 CMR 29.11 (2) require that: "Minutes of all open and executive sessions shall be created and approved in a timely manner. A 'timely manner' will generally be considered to be within the next three public body meetings or within 30 days, whichever is later, unless the public body can show good cause for further delay. The Attorney General encourages public bodies to approve minutes at the next meeting whenever possible."

February 1, 2018 was the third public body meeting after the January 11, 2018 meeting, and February 10, 2018 was the 30th day after that meeting. The minutes for the January 11, 2018 meeting should thus have been created and approved at the latest by February 10, 2018. Instead, even at the fourth meeting, on February 15, 2018, no item for consideration and approval of minutes for that much earlier meeting was even on the agenda; as of this day, the next scheduled public meeting is March 1, 2018, which would be at least the fifth open session after January 11, 2018, and 49 days after the January 11, 2018 meeting. The Chair and the ABRSC have no good cause for this delay; the January 11, 2018 meeting was a regular, open meeting, and in fact minutes for the very next open meeting, on January 22, 2018, were themselves approved on February 1, 2018. As of the date of this complaint, no draft meeting minutes for the January 11 meeting have been posted on the ABRSD website, nor has there been any indication in any agenda for the many public meetings that have followed that any minutes have even been drafted, or when they might be drafted, considered and approved.

The Chair and the ABRSC thus violated the Open Meeting Law beginning on February 10, 2018 and thereafter by failing to timely create, present, consider and approve minutes for the January 11, 2018 meeting.

What action do you want the public body to take in response to your complaint?

Note: This text field has a maximum of 500 characters.

The ABRSC should approve minutes of any open meeting at the immediately following meeting, as encouraged by the AG's regulations, and should adopt a written policy to that effect at its next public meeting. Chair Krishnamurthy should undergo a training session authorized by the AG's Office immediately, especially in light of the AG's January 8, 2018 finding she violated the Open Meeting Law (the violation letter for which in fact appears in the very packet for that January 11 meeting).

Review, sign, and submit your complaint

I. Disclosure of Your Complaint.

Public Record. Under most circumstances, your complaint, and any documents submitted with your complaint, is considered a public record and will be available to any member of the public upon request.

Publication to Website. As part of the Open Data Initiative, the AGO will publish to its website certain information regarding your complaint, including your name and the name of the public body. The AGO will not publish your contact information.

II. Consulting With a Private Attorney.

The AGO cannot give you legal advice and is not able to be your private attorney, but represents the public interest. If you have any questions concerning your individual legal rights or responsibilities you should contact a private attorney.

III. Submit Your Complaint to the Public Body.

The complaint must be filed first with the public body. If you have any questions, please contact the Division of Open Government by calling (617) 963-2540 or by email to openmeeting@state.ma.us.

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read and understood the provisions above and certify that the information I have provided is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signed: Steven R. Ballard

Date: February 17, 2018