

TOWN OF NORWOOD  
School Committee Meeting  
James R. Savage Educational Center  
Wednesday, February 14, 2017

A meeting of the Norwood School Committee was held on Wednesday, February 14, 2017. The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m.

**Committee Members Present:** Mr. James Gormley, Chairman, Ms. Lisa Igoe; Mr. Patrick McDonough, Mrs. Michele Eysie Mullen and Ms. Myev Bodenhofer.

**Administrators Present:** None.

**Old Business:** Superintendent Search Business – Interview Questions for Finalist: Chairman Gormley began the meeting by explaining that this evening's meeting is for the Committee to work together to compile the questions that will be asked of the final five candidates at their interviews this week.

Mrs. Mullen said she spoke with Mr. Hayden regarding going live with the interviews vs. not going live for the interviews. Mrs. Mullen feels the first candidate would be at a disadvantage from the other candidates as the other candidates would be able to have the questions ahead of time. Mr. Hayden explained to Mrs. Mullen that this Committee was the governing body, which oversees the meetings.

Ms. Igoe said she spoke with representatives from MASC who confirmed that this Committee is the governing body.

After some discussion, Mrs. Mullen requested the Committee agree to not go live until the final candidate's interview is finished. She then suggested that we also not allow this evening's meeting to continue live for the same reasons.

Mrs. Bodenhofer suggested that the Committee take this as two separate items. She reminded that Open Meeting Laws allow anyone from the public to attend the meetings, including those being interviewed.

After some discussion, Mrs. Mullen made a motion to not go live until the final interview was over for the purpose of equity and fairness to all of the candidates, which was seconded by Mr. McDonough. The Committee voted unanimously in favor 5-0.

Mrs. Mullen, with her concern of certain candidates getting a head start with the questions, made a motion to end the live taping of this evening's meeting once we start discussing questions for this week's interviews for the purpose of equity and fairness to all, which was seconded by Mr. McDonough.

Ms. Igoe asked cameraman, Brian Boudreau, if that would work with NPA.

Mr. Boudreau explained that the equipment in the School Committee room works simultaneously with the equipment at the station and he can pause the meeting for Executive Session breaks, but cannot continue taping unless it is live as that function is set on a timer at the station. He said he would contact Meaghan Corbett at the station to get advice.

Mrs. Mullen requested to table the motion until Brian Boudreau hears back from NPA-TV.

Mrs. Mullen then reviewed how the Search Committee was put together and the process of how they went from 37 candidates down to the final five. Mrs. Mullen explained why Mrs. Mullen and Ms. Igoe decided it was important to change the final number of candidates moving forward from three to five. She explained that this School Committee is now the governing Board and we have the right to accept or amend the recommendations from the Superintendent Search Sub Committee. She said we will be interviewing these candidates this week and doing reference checks and site visits. She added with guidance from Mr. Hayden and Mr. Glen Koocher from MASC, we planned interviews for this week, before February vacation as there are 32 other towns interviewing for Superintendents and time was of the essence.

There was some discussion as to what the next process would be. Mrs. Mullen said we are working on questions this evening, with interviews scheduled for this week. After that, this Committee needs to decide if we invite all five candidates back for site visits to the schools, or if we would rather narrow the group down to the final two or three for site visits.

At this point in the meetings, Brian Boudreau, cameraman from NPA-TV, said he spoke with Scott Murphy of Norwood Public Access who was on his way to the meeting to speak with the Committee about the Open Meeting Laws.

After some discussion, Mr. McDonough made a motion to post a School Committee Meeting for Wednesday, February 22, 2017 at 10:00 a.m. in the School Committee Room at the Savage Educational Center for the Superintendent Search to deliberate after the candidate interviews and to bring forward the finalists, which was seconded by Mrs. Igoe. The Committee voted unanimously in favor 5-0.

Mrs. Mullen made for a five-minute recess, which was seconded by Mr. McDonough. The Committee voted unanimously in favor 5-0.

Chairman Gormley welcomed everyone back to Open Session at 7:10 p.m.

Chairman Gormley welcomed Mr. Scott Murphy of NPA-TV to this evening's meeting.

Mr. Murphy explained that Station Manager Meaghan Corbett contacted him regarding the discussion to not go live with the upcoming interviews for the Superintendent Search.

Mr. Murphy explained that these are public meetings and their policy is to go live with every single meeting for those in the town who cannot attend to see. He said there is no way to stop someone from the press from live-tweet from the meeting. Mr. Murphy said as far as an Open Meeting Law goes, NPA will broadcast all meetings until the meeting goes into Executive Session or the meeting ends. Mr. Murphy said seven years ago when Mr. Hayden was hired, this was probably done differently, but NPA policy is to make no exceptions.

Mr. McDonough explained to Mr. Murphy that this School Committee is the governing body and we govern what happens in this room.

Mr. Murphy said that is not how Open Meeting Laws work and asked if this was the will of the Committee or just Mr. McDonough.

Mr. McDonough said it was voted on it this evening and it was the will of the Committee. The others agreed.

Ms. Igoe read a summary of Mr. Hayden's conversation with Mr. Tolman this morning.

Mr. Murphy said that that was Mr. Hayden's summary of the conversation but that was not what Mr. Tolman had meant.

Mr. McDonough asked Mr. Murphy if he runs the studio out of the High School.

Mr. Murphy said yes.

Mr. McDonough said that that would mean that they have to follow the policies of the Schools.

Mr. Murphy emphasized that the School Department has no control over NPA-TV adding that NPA owns everything in that room except the rugs and would be able to relocate if necessary.

Mrs. Mullen explained that she has asked the news reporters and they have agreed to refrain from printing the questions so that this can be a fair and equitable interview. The first interviewer will not have a fair shot if all the others can watch her interview. Mrs. Mullen asked Mr. Murphy why he would not cooperate.

Mr. Murphy said he does not believe this is legal and NPA. Mr. Murphy said by asking them not to tape live, this Committee is singling out NPA. Anyone sitting in this room can tweet; record on their phone or text anything out during the event.

Ms. Igoe said she agrees with her committee members but does understand NPA's position. She asked if the meeting were to be changed to a room that was not wired for live taping, would it be taped.

Mr. Murphy said it is harder to go live from areas that are not set up for it.

There was some discussion as to moving the interviews to another place so that they will be taped but not live.

Mrs. Bodenhofer said that the interviews are posted and cannot be moved as we are within the 48-hour time requirement.

Mrs. Mullen said that we will then move the date and times of the interviews to keep this fair and equitable. Mrs. Mullen hoped that Mr. Murphy would take the time to consider this special one-time request. She emphasized that the Committee wants all of the meetings to be broadcasted, just after all the interviews are finished for the reason of fair and equitable interviews for all of the candidates.

Mr. Murphy said that the policies of NPA have been approved based on past experiences. Mr. Murphy said if they make this exception for this Committee, they will be open to special requests from all the other Boards.

Chairman Gormley reminded that no one could be able to live-stream the meeting as this Committee has a policy that all phone in this room be shut off.

Mrs. Mullen said she is not comfortable at this point going forward with live television tonight during the preparation of the questions for the interviews. She asked Mr. Murphy if he would be agreeable to not be live from this point on to develop the questions for the upcoming interviews.

Mr. Murphy said he cannot agree to that request for this evening's meeting, but he will bring the request back to the Board for the upcoming interviews and will let this Committee know their answer by tomorrow.

Mr. McDonough read part of a policy from the School Committee Policy Book that said the Norwood School Committee is the legislative body that governs this room and this school system. He said that we have the right to not have these meetings taped live.

Mr. Murphy said his understanding is that if they asked him to shut the cameras off now, they would be in violation of the Open Meeting Laws. He again

said everyone understands this School Committee's position but NPA does not want this to happen again from any of the Board in Town.

Ms. Igoe said this Committee has heard all that Mr. Murphy has to say and she thanked him for bringing this request back to his Board. She suggested that going forward all candidates should be interviewed on the same day to avoid this predicament. She said we are learning as we go and this Committee appreciates all NPA does for the town.

Mr. McDonough said that if we cannot continue this meeting without being live, there is not reason to continue the meeting.

Chairman Gormley asked if we should ask all the candidates the same questions?

Mrs. Mullen suggested everyone watch the Town of Sharon's January 25<sup>th</sup> School Committee Meeting as they recently hired a Superintendent and everyone came up with their own questions piggy-backing off of the other's questions. She said she fully trusts all of her co-committee members to ask important questions.

Mrs. Bodenhofer felt that when questions are too scripted, it doesn't feel like an organic conversation. She said she has interviewed many people as part of her job and likes the idea of tailoring questions to the individual candidate. She likes the idea of giving the candidate five-minute for introductions.

There was some discussion regarding using the criteria off of the brochure as a guideline for the questions.

Mr. McDonough reminded that any notes taken during the interviews are public information and he said he stands by this Committee's decision to not have the interview's go live until after the final interview is completed.

There was some discussion regarding the process for the interviews.

Mrs. Mullen hopes that the plea to NPA is agreed upon. If NPA does not agree, Mrs. Bodenhofer said she is not in favor of moving the location of the interviews at the last minute.

Mrs. Mullen said she does think moving the room is the answer due to the vote of this Committee.

Ms. Igoe said that if NPA does not agree to this request, we could reschedule all of the interviews for Saturday in the High School library.

Mrs. Mullen said she does not want this to happen but we could do the site visits first and move the interviews to the evenings.

Mrs. Mullen did not want to interview five candidates in one day.

Mrs. Bodenhofer reminded that there is a Building Study Committee Meeting tomorrow evening in Room 219 with Scott Dunlap.

Mr. Hayden said that if there was something scheduled in room 219 and we needed the room, he could move them.

Mrs. Mullen made a motion that we remain in this room tomorrow night for the first interview as long as it does not go live, but if that request is rejected by NPA-TV, then this Committee will move to room 219, which was seconded by Mr. McDonough. The Committee voted in favor 4-1 (Mrs. Bodenhofer opposed).

**Adjournment:** Mr. McDonough made a motion for adjournment at 8:40 p.m., which was seconded by Mrs. Bodenhofer. The Committee voted unanimously in favor 5-0.

Respectfully Submitted:

Donna G. Doliner, Clerk  
Norwood School Committee