

QUINCY SCHOOL COMMITTEE

POLICY SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING February 6, 2017

A meeting of the Policy Subcommittee was held on Monday, February 6, 2017 at 5:15 pm in the Coddington Building. Present were Mayor Thomas Koch, Mrs. Kathryn Hubley, Ms. Barbara Isola, Mrs. Emily Lebo, Mrs. Anne Mahoney, and Mr. Paul Bregoli, Chair. Also attending were Superintendent DeCristofaro, Deputy Superintendent Kevin Mulvey, Mrs. Maura Papile, Ms. Madeline Roy, Mr. Keith Segalla; Quincy Education Association President Allison Cox, and Ms. Laura Owens, Clerk.

Mr. Bregoli called the Policy Subcommittee meeting to order at 5:15 pm.

Mr. Bregoli asked to review Section 2.4.5 and 2.4.11 as it refers to the Open Forum section of the School Committee meeting agenda. Mr. Bregoli asked Mr. Mulvey to provide draft language to update the definition of Open Forum as follows, noting review of legal precedents:

Open Forum: An opportunity for community input regarding the Quincy Public Schools. Community in this context is defined as a resident of the City of Quincy, a parent of a student who attends the Quincy Public Schools, or an employee of the Quincy Public Schools. Non-community persons not permitted to speak at Open Forum may submit written statements to the School Committee. After giving his or her name and address, each speaker may make a presentation of no more than four minutes to the School Committee. An individual may not exchange their time or yield to others.

Mrs. Hubley asked if this should specify current employees, to define from former employees but Mr. Mulvey said former employees are not employees of Quincy Public Schools. Mrs. Hubley suggested limiting the time for Open Forum to three minutes.

Mr. Bregoli opened the discussion to all members of School Committee, not only the members of the Subcommittee and recognized Mrs. Lebo

Mrs. Lebo is against this language change, this limits input from outside sources to School Committee. Mr. Mulvey said if a person contacted School Committee, any member could add an item to the agenda for them to speak on.

Mrs. Mahoney said in her three terms on School Committee very few people from outside of Quincy have ever appeared to speak at Open Forum. Open Forum is an opportunity to hear from the public and is often a positive input into the meeting. This would be narrowing the School Committee view. Mrs. Mahoney also does not agree with changing the time limit.

Mrs. Lebo said if an issue is surfaced in writing and School Committee chooses not to respond, the public will not be aware that the issue has been raised. Mrs. Lebo also does not agree with the time limit change.

Mr. Bregoli said he agrees with Open Forum in concept, and while we have the obligation to listen to the School Committee constituents, taxpayers in the City of Quincy, School Committee is not obliged to listed to everyone.

Mrs. Lebo said Quincy Public Schools receives state funding and there are people who live outside the local community who can inform us.

Mayor Koch said he appreciates the comments of all residents, taxpayers or not, but does not agree that those outside the city should have the same access to speak before School Committee.

Ms. Isola asked about legal precedents and asked to be able to read the cases before reacting. Ms. Isola said an outside group could organize and bring a number of people to speak on an issue, but can't conceive of a situation where we wouldn't want to hear of this. Ms. Isola said local business owners may not be Quincy residents and School Committee may want to hear from them. Being on the School Committee encompasses a lot more than we would want to limit to Quincy residents.

Mr. Mulvey will provide copies of the cases to School Committee members before they leave for the evening.

Mr. Bregoli said that Open Forum was added to the agenda by Mr. Raymondi during his tenure on School Committee, Mrs. Lebo and Mrs. Mahoney concurred said this was a good addition.

Mrs. Lebo said that there are many community resources, such as local colleges and universities, all could potentially inform us of issues, but under this language, they would not be allowed.

Ms. Isola said we take money from our community partners and they are not residents.

Mrs. Mahoney said School Committee has not had large issue with outside speakers. In her twelve years on School Committee, only two outside speakers stand out in her memory. Changing the language sends the message that School Committee doesn't want to hear from people, there is no need to be fearful of what gets said. Mrs. Mahoney wondered how many meetings have occurred where no one has spoken at Open Forum.

Mr. Bregoli recognized that this item will not move out of Subcommittee tonight, but will be discussed at the next Policy Subcommittee meeting.

School Committee Policy Book Section 3 was distributed for School Committee to review for the next Policy Subcommittee meeting.

Mrs. Hubley made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:35 pm. Ms. Isola seconded the motion and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.