

**WATERTOWN SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
WATERTOWN, MA**

**RICHARD E. MASTRANGELO  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
149 MAIN STREET**

**MONDAY  
DECEMBER 18, 2017  
7:00 P.M.**

**MINUTES**

**I. Roll Call**

The School Committee Chairman, Mr. John Portz, called to order the December 12, 2017 meeting of the School Committee at 7:00 PM. Present were School Committee members Ms. Kendra Foley, Ms. Eileen Hsü-Balzer, Dr. Guido Guidotti, Ms. Lindsay Mosca, Mr. Mark Sideris, and Ms. Elizabeth Yusem. Also present were Superintendent Dr. Deanne Galdston, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching & Learning Dr. Theresa B. McGuinness, Assistant Superintendent of Finance & Operations Ms. Mary C. DeLai, Director of Human Resources Mr. Craig Hardimon, Director of Student Services Ms. Kathleen Desmarais, and various members of the public.

**II. Public Forum – Session I**

No member of the public spoke.

**III. Recognition of School Committee Members Elizabeth Yusem and Guido Guidotti**

School Committee members Ms. Elizabeth Yusem and Dr. Guido Guidotti were recognized by the School Committee for their years of generous and tireless service to the Watertown Public Schools. Both Ms. Yusem and Dr. Guidotti thanked the community, the Town, and the District for their support.

**IV. Presentation and Discussion**

**A. Elementary Schools Building Project – Ai3 Architects**

Mr. Portz introduced Mr. Scott Dunlap, Managing Principal at Ai3 Architects. Mr. Dunlap gave a [presentation](#) about design concepts and options for the renovation of Watertown's three elementary schools. Recommended architectural designs were focused on improved educational spaces designed to foster the 21<sup>st</sup> century ideologies of teaching and learning. The new school designs were tailored to improve the learning environments for students as well as the working environments for teachers and staff, and also the safety and security for all. Beyond the schematic designs of the school buildings, Mr. Dunlap presented possible timelines for the budgeting, planning, and execution phases of the renovation projects.

Various School Committee members expressed their thanks for the thorough presentation. Mr. Dunlap and his associates said that public meetings regarding the renovation of the schools would be posted so the community would be aware of the visioning process and the construction and renovation projects that will follow.

Dr. Galdston commented on her excitement for the project going forward. She said that there is a great responsibility to creating educational environments that will stand the test of time. She said the District is fully committed to providing the best standard of education to Watertown's students, regardless of the condition of the buildings in their current states. She said that the District has a responsibility to ensure its staff is encouraged to use contemporary teaching practices despite the existing older school buildings, which will prepare the teachers for the enhanced school spaces post-renovation.

**B. High School Building Project – Invitation into the Eligibility Period by the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA)**

Mr. Portz reported that MSBA had on December 13, 2017 officially invited Watertown High School into its eligibility period for state funding towards a new or renovated high school facility.

Dr. Galdston thanked the District for more than four years of efforts pushing to get the high school accepted into the MSBA program. Out of 82 SOIs submitted in Massachusetts for core programs, Watertown was one of only 15 communities finally accepted into the eligibility period.

Dr. Galdston said the next step in the MSBA's eligibility period is a 270-day (April 2, 2018 – December 28, 2017) process which formalizes and streamlines the beginning of the MSBA's grant approval. Beyond that, a feasibility study would be conducted, followed by a schematic design process. The ability of the Town to complete preliminary requirements of the eligibility period does not guarantee an invitation into the MSBA Capital Pipeline.

## **V. Public Forum – Session II**

A member of the public thanked Ms. Yusem and Dr. Guidotti for their service on the School Committee. He said he liked the presentation by Ai3 and that he appreciated the creative elementary school designs that were suggested by the firm. He said he preferred total reconstruction to renovation of the high school.

## **VI. Reports**

### **A. Chairman's**

The Chairman said the various policies from the District's Policy Manual would be reviewed at the upcoming Policy Subcommittee meeting on December 21, 2017.

### **B. Superintendent's**

The Superintendent said she was grateful for the Town appropriation to hire Ai3 for the schematic design process of the elementary schools. She said she was available to chat with the community on December 20, 2017 at 9:00 AM and 7:00 PM for a monthly "Superintendent's Coffee" meeting with the public.

## **VII. Next Meeting**

The next School Committee meeting was announced to be scheduled for January 8, 2017.

## **VIII. New Business**

No new business was discussed.

## **IX. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 8:27 PM.

Meeting Documents:

[Ai3 Elementary Schools Building Project Presentation](#)  
[2017.12.18 Watertown HS EP Board Action Letter](#)

Minutes submitted by Christie Fisher, Administrative Assistant to the Central Office.