

Transcript of School Committee May 24, 2000

Citizen's Input

William Brown: This is in reference to anonymous letter that you received.

Peter Dahl, School Committee Chair: As information will be forthcoming, I did prepare a brief statement. I'm taking this moment to inform the School Committee and the general public about a situation that was recently the subject of a variety of Town wide rumors. The rumor involved an anonymous letter that I received, as well as several members of the community, I believe you, Mr. Brown received one, concerning allegations of work being done by a Town Employee at private residences of Town Employees. Given the anonymous nature of this, I don't usually give this type of letter any credence at all, but given the seriousness nature of the allegations, I felt it necessary to take action. So, at my request in collaboration with the Town Manager and the Reading Police Department conducted a comprehensive investigation. The issue has been resolved to my satisfaction and that of the Reading Police Department and at this point I consider the matter closed.

W. Brown: I respect your viewpoint, Mr. Dahl, but I think, the other person involved in that, had myself and Mr. MacDonald in his office three weeks ago and among other items we discussed, the Superintendent admitted to us that in fact he did have work done at his home, in fact, that he did pay for it out of his own (school) services. So I think that we should... there should be...

Interrupt P. Dahl: Bill one of the issues is I don't want to get into now because we have serious issues concerning personnel issues and I'd rather not bring those forward. We don't want to be in violation of someone's personal rights.

W. Brown: I understand, will this be brought to a date?

P. Dahl: This issue was conducted by myself, with the Town Manager and the Reading Police Department and I believe that the Reading Police Department felt that the issue was handled appropriately and was satisfied with what that investigation that they conducted. I don't want to talk this much other than this.

W. Brown: I would ask that it be put on the agenda for a future date.

P. Dahl: Thank you, I will take that under advisement.

CITIZEN'S INPUT

Mr. Brown asked if a statement would be made this evening from the Chair.

Chair Dahl advised that he was planning to read the statement later in the agenda but that he would do so now. Chair Dahl read his statement regarding rumors of a town employee doing work on town time at another town employees private residence.

Mr. Brown asked that this item be put on a future agenda.

HEALTH RISK SURVEY

Selectmen Matt Nestor was present. He stated that the Board had concerns with wording of the survey and they would like to see more parental input. He stated that a joint meeting has been scheduled with the Board of Selectmen the School Committee and the Substance Abuse Control Board for May 31st.

Dr. Harutunian discussed the process the administration had used for parental input.

After discussion, it was the consensus of the Committee that the window of opportunity to administer the health risk survey and to give ample time for parents to review the survey prior to their child taking the exam had passed. The Committee agreed that the Health Risk Survey would be postponed until the early fall.

Mr. Twomey stated that he would be unable to attend the meeting on the 31st and stated his opinion that the survey be given early in the fall.

Chair Dahl thanked Mr. Nestor for attending.

FY01 BUDGET

The Committee discussed the FY01 budget. Chair Dahl opened the meeting up to questions or comments from audience members.

Jennifer Hutchins spoke on behalf of a group of parents seeking to restore the four elementary teachers. She asked that the Committee support their request.

Mary Cookson thanked the Committee for the opportunity to speak and stated that she believed smaller class size is vital to the education of our children.