

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (ABRSC)  
MEETING APPROVED OPEN MINUTES

Administration Building Auditorium

15 Charter Road, Acton

To view only: <https://www.youtube.com/actontv1>

June 16, 2022

6:30 p.m. Executive Session

7:15 p.m. Open Meeting

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Members Present: Ben Bloomenthal, Evelyn Abayaah-Issah (6:36 p.m.), Kyra Cook, Liz Fowlks, Adam Klein, Ginny Kremer, Amy Krishnamurthy, Tessa McKinley, Andrew Schwartz, Rebeccah Wilson

Members Absent: Yebin Wang

Others: Marie Altieri, Deborah Bookis, Peter Light, Beth Petr, Dave Verdolino

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The ABRSC was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chairperson Adam Klein.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Adam Klein stated the need for an Executive Session to be convened under

- MGL Chapter 30A section 21(a) purpose (3), to discuss strategy with respect to litigation because an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the Committee.

Tessa McKinley moved, Ben Bloomenthal seconded and it was unanimously,

**VOTED by roll call:** to enter executive session for the reason proposed.

(YES: Bloomenthal, Cook, Fowlks, Klein, Kremer, Krishnamurthy, McKinley, Schwartz, Wilson)

Adam Klein also stated the need for an Executive Session to be convened under

- MGL Chapter 30A section 21(a) purpose (7), to comply with or act under the authority of, any general or special law or federal grant-in-aid requirements - MGL Chapter 30A, section 22(f) to consider approval of minutes of the meeting on April 7, 2022

Tessa McKinley moved, Ben Bloomenthal seconded and it was unanimously,

**VOTED by roll call:** to enter executive session for the reason proposed.

(YES: Bloomenthal, Cook, Fowlks, Klein, Kremer, Krishnamurthy, McKinley, Schwartz, Wilson)

Adam Klein also stated the need for an Executive Session is to be convened under

- MGL Ch 30A section 21(a) purpose (2): to conduct a strategy session in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel.

Tessa McKinley moved, Ben Bloomenthal seconded and it was unanimously,

**VOTED by roll call:** to enter executive session for the reason proposed.

(YES: Bloomenthal, Cook, Fowlks, Klein, Kremer, Krishnamurthy, McKinley, Schwartz, Wilson)

Adam stated that the ABRSC would return to Open Meeting at approximately 7:15 pm.

### **OPEN MEETING**

1. **Chairperson's Welcome - Adam Klein**

The Committee returned to Open Meeting at 7:15 p.m. Members of the public were invited to view the meeting on Acton tv. It was stated that the meeting was being recorded and would be posted on Acton TV's website at actontv.org.

- a. **Welcome to Julie LaLumiere**, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent  
Mr. Light welcomed Julie LaLumiere who replaces Beth Petr. Beth will continue as Clerk to the School Committee and will take minutes at the meetings.
- b. **Public Participation**  
Nikhil Krishnamurthy thanked the School Committee for their extremely hard work and dedication to the young people and families of our community over the past year. He offered special thanks to his mother, Amy, who is the senior member on the Committee. Corinne Hogseth stated that the First Amendment includes her right to criticize elected officials and bring grievances to the Committee meetings. Christine Marlowe expressed frustration that it appears that funds are being spent on the mascot change even though the public was told they would not be. She advocated for spending more on teachers' assistants. Amanda Bailey thanked the Committee for their steady support of children and families during this unprecedented pandemic. She encouraged the public to listen to the entire meeting to learn more about the important work being done.
- c. **Superintendent's Update**  
Mr. Light noted that extra funding was not budgeted for the mascot change. Every year some money is spent to replace uniforms. There are a couple of expensive items like the high school gym floor but there are no plans to replace them now. There is no connection between these funds and assistants being reduced. He added that George Washington University just retired their Colonial mascot with a rationale consistent with AB's recent retirement.

Mr. Light thanked Adam Klein for serving as Committee Chairperson for the past year, and Beth Petr for her years of service to the District.

## 2. Ongoing Business

- a. **Preliminary Input on FY23 District Goals & Central Office Organization -**  
*Peter Light*

Mr. Light shared his thoughts around next year's goals in draft form so Committee members could provide feedback, and adjustments could be made if needed. He felt that six goals were too many last year because it is difficult for our educators and classrooms to work on all of them effectively.

### **GOAL 1: Social-Emotional Learning, Mental and Behavioral Health**

Comments included:

- Data is not about just a set of numbers.
- Regarding preventing hospitalizations, it was taking too long for students to be seen when issues came up. We believe that the new "Cartwheel" service will be a beneficial start.

- It was appreciated that this is the first goal and item. It is about getting kids in the door and ready to learn.
- How do we benchmark quickly so we can measure improvement?
- Some of these goals continue to feel very large. We should measure progress, not necessarily success. (Mr. Light replied that there will base line data going into the school year.)
- Quantitative measures would be helpful for Committee updates along the way. Using student attendance improvements was a good example.
- The focus on trauma was appreciated because we cannot move forward until it is addressed.

### **GOAL 2: Improved and more Equitable Academic Outcomes**

The District has built the MTSS system for this purpose.

### **GOAL 3: Culturally Responsive Practices**

Not everything in this goal has a quantifiable outcome. Given that the Committee voiced their desire to hire more staff of color, members appreciated this benchmark. Marie Altieri will do a full staffing update at the September meeting. Members were also excited about universal core instruction and look forward to “very diverse input from the community – school and beyond”.

### **Other Initiatives**

Comments included:

- All of these are exciting, especially the STEAM initiative. This is what our kids need in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It gives kids a sense of ownership when it is part of their school.
- A member hopes that the DEI Family Advisory Group and SEPAC input will be included. She wants to be sure all kids are given a chance to try the harder classes.
- Another member noted that Minuteman Tech is not an easier path, but an alternative path for students.

Mr. Light was asked to work with his Leadership Team and decide what the expectations are for the initiatives so the Committee doesn’t consider them more goals. Members agreed that three goals was a good number. Mr. Light added that for initiatives, the Committee will get informal updates throughout the year. Goal updates will be routed in the data and more formal.

- b. **Approval of ABRHS Handbook Changes - Second Read - VOTE- P. Light**  
 Members briefly discussed the change to the Truancy/ Attendance procedures. The High School recognizes that attendance for students and teachers this past year was an issue. Kids need a consistent approach with more supervision.

Ben Bloomenthal moved, Tessa McKinley seconded and it was unanimously, **VOTED**: to approve the ABRHS Handbook changes.

c. **Superintendent's Annual Summative Review - Adam Klein**

- i. Adam thanked members for submitting their reviews and read the summative review.

Kyra Cook moved, Tessa McKinley seconded and it was unanimously, **VOTED**: to accept the Annual Summative Review for Superintendent Peter Light dated 6/16/22 as presented.

Ginny Kremer moved, Evelyn Abayaah-Issah seconded and it was unanimously, **VOTED**: to increase Peter Light's salary by 3% in line with other administrators in the district for a total of \$234,840.

Mr. Light thanked the Committee for the evaluation, support and feedback. He noted that most of what a superintendent actually does is done by other people. He thanked all staff in the district for their hard work under incredibly challenging circumstances this year.

d. **EDCO Update - Peter Light (oral)**

The only outstanding item on this dissolution is for the Commissioner to approve the plan. AB paid about \$100,000 to close the lease and we expect to get back approximately \$60,000-\$75,000. This has been a tremendously challenging process and Peter thanked his colleagues on the EDCO Board. He recognized EDCO's 50 years and the services staff provided to students and professionals.

e. **Approval of the Change of Members to the School Building Committee - VOTE - Adam Klein**

Tessa McKinley moved, Ginny Kremer seconded and it was unanimously, **VOTED**: to approve the change of members to the School Building Committee.

f. **Updates from Members**

- i. **Health Insurance Trust (HIT) - Andrew Schwartz (6/16/22)**

An update was given on the meeting that occurred that morning.

g. **Recommendation to Approve Solar and Energy Storage Services Agreement, Lease Option Agreement, and Lease as presented and Authorize the Superintendent to sign them - VOTE- JD Head**

Mr. Light highlighted the many challenges that JD Head and Kate Crosby have successfully dealt with in Operations this year. This lease agreement was very challenging and represents 30 years of energy independence. JD explained that the new building was designed with this model in the forefront. We are developing something that doesn't exist yet which is very exciting. Despite the many unknowns and hurdles, it will be an economic win. Our attorneys and energy consultants have been heavily involved with the documents presented.

Tessa McKinley moved, Liz Fowlks seconded and it was unanimously,

**VOTED**: to approve the Solar and Energy Storage Services Agreement, the Lease Option Agreement, and the Lease as presented and Authorize the Superintendent to sign them.

h. **Recommendation to Approve the ABRSC Meeting Minutes of 6/9/22 - VOTE**  
- *Adam Klein*

Amy Krishnamurthy moved, Tessa McKinley seconded and it was unanimously,  
**VOTED**: to approve the ABRSC Meeting Minutes of 6/9/22.  
(Ben Bloomenthal abstained.)

i. **Statement of Warrants and Recommendation to Approve - VOTE – A. Klein**

Kyra Cook moved, Amy Krishnamurthy seconded and it was unanimously,  
**VOTED**: to approve the warrants (see memo language).

3. **FY23 ABRSC Reorganization**

a. **Appointments - Adam Klein**

Per the Regional Agreement and policy BDA, Adam reminded the Committee that the District Treasurer and School Committee Secretary are appointed annually.

- i. Tessa McKinley moved, Andrew Schwartz seconded and it was unanimously,  
**VOTED**: to Appoint Margaret Dennehy as ABRSD Treasurer.
- ii. Ben Bloomenthal moved, Andrew Schwartz seconded and it was unanimously,  
**VOTED**: to Appoint Beth Petr as ABRSC Secretary/Clerk.

b. **Election of Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee Officers – Peter Light**

- i. FYI: School Committee Annual Organizational Meeting [policy](#) & [procedures](#) BDA and School Committee Officers policy [BDB](#) - (*Terms begin August 1*)
- ii. **ABRSC Chairperson - VOTE**

Mr. Light reviewed the School Committee Annual Organizational Meeting policy and procedures BDA, noting that the Superintendent runs the election of officers.

First, the floor would be opened for nominations for the position of Chairperson for FY23. Members could nominate another member or themselves and a second was not needed. Once we had nominations for the position of chair, a vote would be taken to close those nominations. Once nominations were closed, each nominee would be given a chance to speak (or withdraw) and then members could speak in support of a candidate as well. Voting would be by roll call per our procedures. Each member would vote for one candidate. A candidate must have a majority of weighted votes to be elected. The Candidate with the most weighted votes would be declared the new Chairperson, unless no candidate received a

majority. (Acton members = 2.5, Boxborough members = 1.) In that case, additional roll call votes would be taken. Majority vote if all 11 members are present is 13 (total = 25.5).

Mr. Light opened the floor for nominations for the position of ABRSC Chairperson for FY23.

Amy Krishnamurthy nominated Kyra Cook. Kyra Cook nominated Adam Klein.

Andrew Schwartz moved, Ben Bloomenthal seconded and it was unanimously, **VOTED**: to close nominations.

The nominees were invited to speak. Kyra Cook thanked members for the trust they have in her and expressed gratitude to Tessa and Adam for leading the Committee through the challenging pandemic years. Adam Klein thanked Kyra for the nomination and serving with him as vice chair, but withdrew because he believes that she has the backing of the committee and "it's her turn".

A **ROLL CALL VOTE** was called and **Kyra Cook was unanimously elected as the ABRSC Chairperson for FY23.** (KYRA COOK: Abayaah-Issah, Bloomenthal, Cook, Fowlks, Klein, Kremer, Krishnamurthy, McKinley, Schwartz, Wilson)

iii. **ABRSC Vice Chairperson from Acton - VOTE**

Tessa McKinley nominated Amy Krishnamurthy. Kyra Cook nominated Andrew Schwartz.

Adam Klein moved, Tessa McKinley seconded and it was unanimously, **VOTED**: to close nominations.

Amy Krishnamurthy spoke about the importance of the Acton Leadership Group (ALG) process in getting budgets passed and building relationships. She has done this in the past, including when she was Chairperson and would like to continue. Andrew Schwartz was humbled by the nomination and appreciates the diversity of cultures in our community and how they all come together and must be embraced in all aspects of our schools.

Many members shared their thoughts in support of both Amy and Andrew. The importance of building relationships with members of the community, having years of experience and a deep knowledge of the budget process and Committee policies, and encouraging newer members to gain leadership experience were mentioned.

A **ROLL CALL VOTE** was called resulting in the following votes:

AMY KRISHNAMURTHY: Abayaah-Issah (B), Bloomenthal (A), Fowlks (B), Kremer (A), Krishnamurthy (A), McKinley (B)

**3 Acton x 2.5 = 7.5 + 3 Boxborough = 10.5 votes**

ANDREW SCHWARTZ: Cook (A), Klein (B), Wilson (A), Schwartz (A)

**3 Acton x 2.5 = 7.5 + 1 Boxborough = 8.5 votes**

**The ABRSC Vice-Chairperson from Acton will be Amy Krishnamurthy.**

(Note: 6 Acton members present x 2.5 = 15 + 4 Boxborough = 19 votes total.  
Required majority would be >19 divided by 2 = > 9.5 votes.)

iv. **ABRSC Vice Chairperson from Boxborough - VOTE**

Adam Klein nominated Tessa McKinley. Andrew Schwartz nominated Evelyn Abayaah-Issah.

Adam Klein moved, Amy Krishnamurthy seconded and it was unanimously,  
**VOTED**: to close nominations.

Tessa McKinley spoke. Evelyn Abayaah-Issah withdrew her nomination.

A **ROLL CALL VOTE** was called and **Tessa McKinley was unanimously elected as the ABRSC Vice Chairperson from Boxborough for FY23.**

(TESSA MCKINLEY: Abayaah-Issah, Bloomenthal, Cook, Fowlks, Klein, Kremer, Krishnamurthy, McKinley, Schwartz, Wilson)

**4. Adjourn**

Tessa McKinley moved, Ben Bloomenthal seconded and it was unanimously,  
**VOTED**: to adjourn the ABRSC at 9:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Petr

List of Documents Used:

Agenda, Preliminary District Goals 2022-23 (P.Light), Memo from J Dean re Changes to FY23 ABRHS Student Handbook (6-6-22), Memo from A Klein re Superintendent Evaluation (6-16-22), Addendum I to the Contract of P. Light with FY23 proposed salary, School Building Committee Members – revised list for 6-16-22 vote, Memo from J Wall of Anderson & Kreiger LLP re Solar Contracts for Douglas Gates Elementary New Building (6-13-22), Proposed Solar and Energy Storage Services Agreement, Lease Option Agreement with Exhibits A,B,C. Draft ABRSC Minutes of 6-9-22, Warrant memo from D Verdolino (6-16-22), ABRSC policies and procedures: School Committee Annual Organizational Meeting (BDA & BDA-R), School Committee Officers (BDB)

FYI items: Dismissal Schedule for June 21, last day of school, ABRSC Meetings for 2022-2023, FY23 ABRSC Members, Public Meeting re Hayward Road at Main St Intersection Improvements, Town of Acton, 6/16/22 at 7 PM Acton Town Hall

**NEXT MEETING:** Thursday, July 21, ABRSC Workshop at 6:00 p.m.