

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL SESSION
OF THE MALDEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Thursday, May 16, 2024
Herbert L. Jackson Council Chamber Room #106 - 215 Pleasant Street
And Virtual Meeting

Mayor Christenson called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

Mayor Christenson read the docket items for the meeting. Mayor Christenson invited Ms. Spadafora to speak about the finalists. Ms. Spadafora said that Ms. Robin Desmond, one of the four finalists put forward by the Superintendent Search Committee officially withdrew her application yesterday because she was offered a Superintendent position in another district. Ms. Spadafora wished Ms. Desmond well in the next chapter of her career.

Mayor Christenson led the committee in the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silence for those who have served our country and for those who continue to do so.

Roll Call

The following attendance was taken:

Mayor Christenson	Present
Mr. Drummey	Present
Mr. McCarthy	Present
Ms. Spadafora	Present
Ms. Macklin	Present
Ms. Hortie	Present
Mr. Gray	Present
Mr. Bernard	Present
Ms. Rose-Zeiberg	Present
Clerk	Present

1. Interview Superintendent Candidate Finalist - Dr. Timothy Sippel

Ms. Spadafora introduced the final candidate, Dr. Timothy Sippel.

Dr. Sippel provided a brief introduction detailing his career and educational background.

Mayor Christenson asked the first question about what brought Dr. Sippel to Malden and what he can offer the district as the next School Superintendent.

Mr. McCarthy asked Dr. Sippel to explain a time when he was a part of implementing school safety protocols, whether it was for an individual school building or school district, and the importance of that conversation during the school year.

Mr. Gray said that the Superintendent would randomly meet and converse with a multitude of students, staff, faculty and the public on any given day. Communication is key in the Superintendent position. Mr. Gray asked about the methods of communication which Dr. Sippel would rely on to reach all stakeholders.

Ms. Rose-Zeiberg asked about Dr. Sippel's view and experience with creating equitable programs throughout a district for students who are academically advanced for their grade.

Ms. Hortie asked about a time when Dr. Sippel put a matter of ethical practice, principle or urgency ahead of his personal or professional interest. Ms. Hortie also asked if Dr. Sippel has ever put his position or security on the line to pursue what he believed to be fair or just. What it was (or if more than one, which were there) that required Dr. Sippel to demonstrate personal courage in his work or personal life.

Ms. Spadafora said that Special Education can be a challenge due to the complexity of rules, service needs, student and parent concerns. Ms. Spadafora asked Dr. Sippel what are the criteria he would use to assess the effectiveness of special education programs.

Ms. Macklin, as chair of the Superintendent Evaluation committee, asked about some measurable goals that the Malden School Committee should consider to support and evaluate Dr. Sippel's success.

Mr. Drummey asked about Dr. Sippel's involvement and experience with district negotiations and collective bargaining.

Mr. Bernard said that there are several areas where clear delineation of authority becomes more blurred than clear. For example, several areas touch both policy and administrative operations, and it may not be fully clear about where the school committee's responsibilities end and where the administration's responsibilities begins. Mr. Bernard asked for some examples of how Dr. Sippel has worked in any capacity with his School Committees to resolve potential conflicts.

Ms. Rose-Zeiberg asked what is needed from the School Committee in order to be successful as the Superintendent.

Ms. Macklin said that Malden is a very diverse district. However, educators and faculty do not reflect the demographic. Ms. Macklin asked how can diversity among school staff be increased, not only among BIPOCs (Black, Indigenous, and people of color) but also among candidates belonging to other intersectional identities.

Mr. Drummey asked about Dr. Sippel's experiences in developing a budget.

Mr. Bernard asked for examples of how Dr. Sippel worked with community leaders to build support for public schools.

Ms. Spadafora asked about how Dr. Sippel determines the success of his district and how he would define success over a short term or over the long run.

Mayor Christenson asked what recommendations Dr. Sippel would provide if someone asked for places to visit in Malden.

Ms. Hortie asked about Dr. Sippel's experiences with MCAS as it is being put on the ballot.

Mr. Bernard asked about any experiences that Dr. Sippel had about having an idea and implementing it but which did not achieve the expected results. Mr. Bernard asked how Dr. Sippel handled the outcome.

Mayor Christenson asked Dr. Sippel if he had any questions for the School Committee members or would like to provide a closing statement.

Dr. Sippel provided a brief closing statement.

Mayor Christenson called for a recess at 7:34 p.m. The meeting resumed at 7:36 p.m.

2. Superintendent Search Process

Mayor Christenson posed the question to the School Committee members if they wanted to take some time to consider and return for another meeting on the following week to deliberate.

The comments from School Committee members included that some of them could use more time to consider whereas others indicated that they have already been presented with enough information to make a decision.

Comments were also made that next week is rather busy with year-end activities at MHS and that with many Superintendent searches happening at the same time, we had already lost one finalist to another district.

In response to Mr. McCarthy's question, Ms. Rose-Zeiberg said that although there were opportunities for the community to interact and pose questions to the candidates, it might not be the same as hearing the actual formal interviews that just took place.

Mayor Christenson said that he was leaning toward Mr. Teixeira, followed closely by Dr. Sippel. Mayor Christenson provided further reasons for considering Mr. Teixeira. Mr. Bernard said that he was leaning towards Dr. Sippel although he was initially leaning towards Mr. Teixeira. Mr. Bernard provided examples of what he heard from Dr. Sippel that made an impression with him.

Ms. Hortie said that she was also initially thinking of Mr. Teixeira but was just concerned that he has not had the experience of being a Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent. Ms. Hortie added that if Mr. Teixeira was selected, he needs to be provided with some support.

Mr. Gray asked if the first finalist who gains a majority of the votes would get the position and Mayor Christenson confirmed.

Ms. Spadafora mentioned that she is also concerned about Mr. Teixeira's lack of experience as a Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent and did not know how much support can be given to someone new to the role in a district this large.

Mayor Christenson voiced his hesitancy about having someone from outside Malden as opposed to someone familiar with Malden. Mayor Christenson said that this familiarity might give the candidate a distinctive advantage even if the experience might not be there.

Ms. Rose-Zeiberg said that she keeps going back and forth between Dr. Sippel and Mr. Teixeira. Ms. Rose-Zeiberg added that Mr. Teixeira's lack of experience is a concern. Ms. Rose-Zeiberg continued that even with someone who is familiar with the district, the person still has to be the right person for the job.

Ms. Macklin said that at the beginning of the meeting, she felt that Mr. Teixeira was the front runner but was totally impressed with Dr. Sippel's interview. Ms. Macklin continued that she was concerned that if a decision was not made tonight, there might not be an opportunity to have Dr. Sippel lead the district.

Mayor Christenson asked the School Committee members for any nominations.

Mr. Drummey nominated Mr. Teixeira as Superintendent of the Malden Public Schools and it was seconded by Mr. Gray. Mr. Bernard nominated Dr. Sippel as Superintendent of the Malden Public Schools and it was seconded by Ms. Spadafora.

Mayor Christenson opened the matter for discussion.

Ms. Spadafora commented about what impressed her about Mr. Teixeira and Dr. Sippel but said that she could see Dr. Sippel hitting the ground running.

Ms. Hortie said that Mr. Teixeira only applied for the Malden Superintendent position whereas the other candidates had applied to other places as well.

A roll call vote was taken by the School Committee to appoint the next Superintendent:

Mr. Drummey voted for Mr. Teixeira

Mr. McCarthy voted for Mr. Teixeira

Ms. Spadafora voted for Dr. Sippel

Ms. Macklin voted for Dr. Sippel

Ms. Hortie voted for Dr. Sippel

Mr. Gray voted for Mr. Teixeira

Mr. Bernard voted for Dr. Sippel

Ms. Rose-Zeiberg voted for Dr. Sippel

Mayor Christenson voted for Mr. Teixeira

There were 5 votes in favor for Dr. Timothy Sippel and 4 votes in favor for Mr. Paul Teixeira.

Executive Session

Ms. Spadafora made a motion to enter into Executive Session at 8:10 p.m. Mr. McCarthy seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Mr. Drummey voted YES

Mr. McCarthy voted YES

Ms. Spadafora voted YES

Ms. Macklin voted YES

Ms. Hortie voted YES

Mr. Gray voted YES

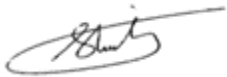
Mr. Bernard voted YES
Ms. Rose-Zeiberg voted YES
Mayor Christenson voted YES
Motion passed unanimously.

The committee reconvened to the Regular Session at 8:45 p.m.

Adjournment

Mr. Drummey made a motion to adjourn at 8:46 p.m. Mr. Bernard seconded and it was so VOTED.
Motion passed unanimously.

I certify that a notice of this meeting was filed with the Clerk of the City of Malden in the manner provided under Chapter 39, Section 23A of the General Laws.



Shirley Dorai, Clerk