

School Committee Minutes  
Virtual Meeting  
Monday, July 27, 2020

Members attending: Sharlene Cronin, SusanMary Redinger, Suzannne Allen, Shannon Molloy, Abby Besse, Maureen Babcock and Linda Dwight

Others in attendance Aziz Aghayev, Taylor Caroom, Brooke Caroom, Vivien Jamba, Felicia Jamba, Will Walling-Sotolongo, Scott Hoffman and Josh Myler.

SusanMary Redinger called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m.

Sharlene Cronin read the Vision Statement

SusanMary Redinger read a statement indicating that the meeting was being held remotely and the meeting was being held via video conferencing. Members in attendance were identified through a roll call process.

**Student Report:** Will Walling-Sotolongo reported that a lot of seniors are having their senior projects cancelled and Ms. Nilan has been helping students get new projects. The ACT and SAT test sites may be opening up in the near future. Graduation is being held Friday, July 31<sup>st</sup>.

**Public Comment:**

Nate Finch – Codman Hill Road- Re-entry Plan

Katharine Covino-Poutasse – 160 Depot Road – Re-entry Plan

Satish Mohkar- Brown Road - Re-entry Plan

Jen Manelle – Stow Road – Re-entry Plan

**School Re-entry Plan Discussion**

Dr. Dwight presented the Harvard Public Schools Re-entry Plan for the 2020-2021 school year. The re-entry plan is based on the culmination of months of meetings and collected feedback. At the request of the MA Commissioner of Education, three plans (in-person, hybrid and remote) were prepared and will be submitted to the state on July 31<sup>st</sup>. School Committee members and student representatives were given time to ask questions. The Committee will meet again on August 3<sup>rd</sup> to hear more information and vote to support a plan moving forward.

**Calendar Change; Vote**

Dr. Dwight shared with the Committee the news that DESE will be giving 10 additional days dedicated to teacher professional development. This will change the current calendar and student days from 180 to 170. The 10 additional days will be used for preparation before the start of school. Dr. Dwight's calendar recommendation has the school start date on September 8<sup>th</sup> with mid-day transition days through October 9<sup>th</sup> (Phase 1) followed by full days starting October 13<sup>th</sup> (Phase 2). In addition, the last day of school will be pushed back 5 days to June 17<sup>th</sup>.

Suzanne Allen made the motion and Abby Besse seconded to move to approve the calendar as presented by Dr. Dwight with the condition that we assess the date we change from phase 1 to phase 2 as we progress through the school year.

Allen (Aye), Besse (Aye), Cronin (Aye), Molloy (Aye), Redinger (Aye)

### **Custodial Staffing Recommendation; Vote**

Dr. Dwight asked the committee to approve an additional custodian with funds available in the staffing line due to other changes. This would be a one-year position to help with cleaning and to help maintain staffing needs when a custodian is absent. Dr. Dwight would like to begin to advertise for the position in order to hire someone to start by September 8<sup>th</sup>.

Suzanne Allen made a motion and Abby Besse seconded to move that we approve the addition of a custodian for the upcoming school year.

Allen (Aye), Besse (Aye), Cronin (Aye), Molloy (Aye), Redinger (Aye)

### **Teacher Unpaid or Reduced Assignment Leave Consideration; Vote**

Dr. Dwight asked the Committee to consider an unpaid COVID 19 related leave of absence for teachers. If a teacher would decide to reduce to a .2 position they would be available to help with remote learning. They would also have time to mentor the guest teacher that fills in for their class. If a teacher opted to take advantage of this they would need to indicate their request by August 15<sup>th</sup>. This would provide us with the time to find a guest teacher for the upcoming school year to fill the position. We believe that viable candidates will be available from recent graduates and others who have lost their position in surrounding districts due to budget cuts. This option would allow a teacher to retain their position and status in the district and take a leave due to the health of themselves or their families that may be at higher risk of infection.

With respect to School Committee Norms and to get clearer language on the proposal the Committee will wait until the next meeting to take a vote.

SusanMary Redinger made the motion and Suzanne Allen seconded to direct the Superintendent to work with the HTA on the language to bring back to a vote for a leave of absence or reduced teaching assignment agreement for the next meeting.

Allen (Aye), Besse (Aye), Cronin (Aye), Molloy (Aye), Redinger (Aye)

Shannon Molloy agreed to work with Dr. Dwight and the HTA to move this item forward.

### **Bromfield Furniture Consideration**

Dr. Dwight asked the Committee for permission to use the COVID grant money to purchase desks for the Bromfield School. The desks will add a lot of distancing flexibility in the classrooms. The Committee agreed that this is a good use of the funds.

### **Middle School Ramp Update; Vote**

SusanMary Redinger submitted a proposal from Abacus Architects with a revised scope of work to the middle school ramp that addresses the structural and safety deficits of the existing conditions at the lowest responsible cost. Abacus will prepare a revised schematic design that will include drawing and cost estimates that will be used for a new capital funding request at the Fall Special Town Meeting. The ramp could be built with the idea that additional work could be done at a later date. The cost of the design, \$8,210 would need to be paid from the Devens fund.

Shannon Molloy made the motion and Suzanne Allen seconded to approve the project as presented.

Allen (Aye), Besse (Aye), Cronin (Aye), Molloy (Aye), Redinger (Aye)

Suzanne Allen agreed to serve as the designated SC representative on NextDoor regarding the Re-Entry plan and will limit her posts to providing information, clarifications and corrections of inaccurate statements and will not engage in debate. Ms. Allen will work with Dr. Dwight as needed to ensure her posts are accurate and appropriate.

### **Agenda Items**

Re-entry Plan

Retreat

Goals

Superintendent Evaluation

Graduation Requirements

Policy Subcommittee – mask policy

School Improvement Plan – Fall

District Improvement Plan – Fall

### **Approval of Minutes**

With no objection, SusanMary Redinger approved the minutes of the July 13<sup>th</sup> meeting as amended.

Allen (Aye), Besse (Aye), Cronin (Aye), Molloy (Aye), Redinger (Aye)

### **Liaison/Subcommittee Reports**

*Suzanne Allen* – The policy subcommittee will meet Tuesday, August 4<sup>th</sup> to adopt a mask wearing policy and review other policies that may need to be added or amended due to current circumstances.

*Maureen Babcock* – reported that development of Vickburg Square will be tabled for the foreseeable future.

*Shannon Molloy* – Submitted the following warrants for review:

Warrant 20-28SCH - \$4,470,619.59

Warrant 21-02SCH - \$ 280,354.10

### **Public Commentary:**

Noyan Kinayman – Slough Road – Re-entry plan

Kerra Huchowski - Shaker Road - Re-entry plan

Jennifer Finch - Codman Hill Road - Re-entry plan  
Satish Mohkar - 102 Brown Road – Re-entry plan

**School Committee Commentary**

**SusanMary Redinger** – thanked the administration, teachers, and the re-entry committee for all of their hard work on the re-entry plan. So proud and appreciative of the school committee’s investment, commitment and engagement.

**Suzanne Allen** – thanked everyone for the behind the scene thankless stuff and so appreciative of everyone’s work.

**Sharlene Cronin** – I believe that this is the most consequential decision that we make. We are talking about the health and lives of our children. Our commitment in time matches the seriousness of the virus. Excited about helping to make the “how to” videos.

**Abby Besse** – fortunate we are included in the decision making and information sharing. Very appreciative for all the work. Important to have the student voice.

**Linda Dwight**– Thank you to the whole team. We are very fortunate to have all of the collaboration.

With no objection SusanMary Redinger called the meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Zadroga

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