

School Committee Minutes
Virtual Meeting
April 12, 2021
6:15 p.m.

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

Absent: Maureen Babcock

Others in attendance Dr. Dwight, Igrid Nillson, Scott Hoffman, Robin Benoit, Nick Thornton, Taylor Caroom, Brooke Caroom, Robin Douglas

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

Suzanne Allen read the Vision Statement.

Public Commentary: None

Student Report:

Taylor Caroom reported on events that were held over the weekend which included a debate tournament and the drama department's virtual musical. People are excited for vacation. Everyone is looking forward to a break after easing into the first full week of in-person learning. *Robyn Douglas* – was introduced as the new middle school representative to the Student Advisory Council. Robin reported that the middle school held a virtual game night on Friday that went well; a lot of people turned out.

Superintendent Update - See Attached

Dr. Dwight explained that there is a need for maintenance on the baseball and softball fields for the spring season. In the past this was a joint effort between the booster clubs and Parks & Rec. This year, the costs are higher due to COVID related maintenance deference. North Turf has agreed to do the work during the next few weeks. The amount of funds needed overall is between \$25,000 - \$30,000. Parks & Rec can contribute \$7,500 and the booster club is willing to contribute some amount. The question is whether the School Committee will allocate the remaining funds. This is a one-time request as Parks & Rec is seeking more funding at the May town meeting to use for field maintenance.

Sharlene Cronin made the motion and Abby Besse seconded to move to approve an allocation of up to 25K to cover the expenses related to field maintenance.

VOTE: Allen (Aye), Besse (Aye), Cronin (Aye), Molloy (Aye), Redinger (Aye).

Bromfield Update (end of year activities)

Scott Hoffman acknowledged advisors, teachers and students who have gone above and beyond to accomplish many successful events. Mr. Hoffman gave an update on how the return of both

cohorts has been going and the plans for all students at Bromfield returning to full days after April break.

Robin Benoit reported that the window for Middle School MCAS is between May 10 and June 11th. Actual dates have not been determined yet. The test will be abbreviated for Grades 6 through 8. The 10th grade MCAS will be June 1st through 4th. Grade 11 students will be certified through course work but they can take the test between June 1st through 4th in order to qualify for scholarships through the Massachusetts university system. Remote students will need to come into the school to take the test. Elementary and Middle school students are allowed to take the test remotely.

There will not be any final exams this year. The final class for Seniors will be May 28th with Graduation scheduled for June 4th. The final day of school for the 2020/2021 school year is June 16th.

Seniors Events

- Enhanced Senior privileges
- May leave school if they have direct study or VHS class first or last period of the day
- If they have consecutive either direct studies or VHS classes at the beginning of the day or end of the day, they may come in two periods late or leave two periods early.
- Considering trying to have an outdoor space for seniors, if logistics, Covid protocols and their behavior merit it.
- April 16: Service Project Hours Due
- April 30: Service Project Video Presentation or Reflection Paper are due.
- May 14: Field Day: Staff vs Seniors in several events.
- May 28: Prom – working with the venue to try to make this work.
- June 2: Parade
- June 4: Graduation
- Considering a Senior Barbeque and/or Senior Breakfast

Year to Date Financial Review

SusanMary Redinger introduced Ingrid Nillson to her first School Committee meeting. Ingrid Nillson reported on the Quarter 3 fiscal FY21 budget. We are projecting a positive balance of \$316,552 at the end of FY21. This includes applying \$596,426 in circuit breaker funds to out of district special education tuition. Additionally, \$83,862 in state and federal Coronavirus Relief funds will offset the FY21 budget, bringing initial \$232,689 balance to \$316,552. This balance can reduce FY21 offsets from school revolving accounts to fund school expenses in FY22 and beyond. Ms. Nilsson will continue to track the FY21 budget closely, minimize spending, and work to leverage our financial situation to successfully to close FY21 and support the FY22 budget.

MUNIS Expenditure Request

Ingrid Nillson proposed an improvement to the Munis Accounting system. The current Munis system is a desk top application and she is proposing an iCloud application. This change would allow more access to the staff to track and manage their budgets. The quote for the entire town to upgrade would be \$5,216. Ms. Nilsson would like to work with Munis to determine a logical cost share with the town. Ingrid will bring back a final quote to the School Committee at a future meeting.

Planning Board Presentation on Ayer Road ATM article

Chris Ryan (Director of Community and Economic Development) and Justin Brown (Chair - Planning Board) – presented information on the proposed project to reconfigure the zoning on Ayer Road. It is hoped that the zoning change would bolster revenue for the town. The project would increase tax revenue and add students to the district. A Warrant article will be presented at the May town meeting and this is an opportunity to educate members and hopefully get support for this project.

Policy Review

Policy JH – Student Attendance – brought HPS into alignment with the MASC policy. SusanMary Redinger made the motion and Shannon Molloy seconded to approve the amendments to policy JH.

VOTE: Allen (Aye), Besse (Aye), Cronin (Aye), Molloy (Aye), Redinger (Aye).

Policy JICFB – Bullying Prevention – minor edits to pronouns and to align with MASC policy. SusanMary Redinger made the motion and Sharlene Cronin seconded to approve the amendments to Policy JIFCB.

VOTE: Allen (Aye), Besse (Aye), Cronin (Aye), Molloy (Aye), Redinger (Aye).

Policy JFAB – Foreign Exchange Students – not an MASC policy – reviewed by legal.

SusanMary Redinger and Shannon Molloy seconded the motion to approve Policy JFAB as amended.

VOTE: Allen (Aye), Besse (Aye), Cronin (Aye), Molloy (Aye), Redinger (Aye).

Last Day of School Approval

The School Committee voted to approve June 16th as the last day of school as presented.

Sharlene Cronin made the motion and Abby Besse seconded to approved June 16th as the last day of school as presented.

VOTE: VOTE: Allen (Aye), Besse (Aye), Cronin (Aye), Molloy (Aye), Redinger (Aye).

Grant Approval

Dr. Dwight presented for approval a gift from the Harvard PTO in the amount of \$1,438.55 to fund the purchase of masks for band students in grade 6-12 that play wind instruments.

Abby Besse made the motion and someone seconded to Move to approve the PTO grant for masks as presented.

VOTE: VOTE: Allen (Aye), Besse (Aye), Cronin (Aye), Molloy (Aye), Redinger (Aye).

Future Meeting Dates

Budget hearing – April 26th

Summer meeting Schedule - TBD

May meetings - May 10 and May 24

Agenda Items

HES – moving details

Consideration for trips for next year

FY22 Budget

Minutes

With no objection SusanMary Redinger approved the March 22nd meeting minutes as amended.

With no objection SusanMary Redinger approved the March 29th meeting minutes as amended.

School Committee Liaison

Suzanne Allen - reported that the Student Advisory Council met and now have a student representative from the middle school. At the meeting students talked about the return to school with both cohorts, lunches and the DEI event. It was excellent to hear from our student representatives.

Abby Besse – reported that the TBS School Council met and discussed the return to school 5 days per week. The administration is trouble shooting and hearing from parents and students.

Abby Besse – reported that Parks and Rec met and talked about fields maintenance and allocating money to get kids back on the field.

Sharlene Cronin – reported that she has seen photo of the HES school project and it is fabulous and exciting to see the finished gymnasium and classrooms as well as a preview of the landscaping. It is a culmination of so many years and so much hard work, it is so exciting.

Shannon Molloy – The COVID testing meeting was held. Liz Ruark gave a presentation that will be helpful in understanding our system and protocols here in Harvard. The video link will be available on the website.

Shannon Molloy reported that the state testing meeting was held. For homework they were asked to try to find out why people are not interested in participating in the testing and why. This information will help them to understand what people are thinking.

Shannon Molloy reported that DEI discussed the curriculum review tool that is under consideration, will start next year. It was shared with DEI that the form was shared with Littleton and Ayer Shirley. The next step is to get student input. A separate form will be available for parents and the alumni board on-line. It is the aim of DEI to get faculty and students together before the end of the year.

SusanMary Redinger – reported that the Bromfield House Committee voted 4 in favor of keeping the land and selling the house. This recommendation will be provided to the Board of Selectman at their April 20th meeting.

SusanMary Redinger reported that the School Building Committee met. The mural is up, the lights are up, the colors are awesome. Everything is getting cleaned and finalized. SusanMary Redinger will bring photos to the next meeting.

The town is looking for a School Committee representative to the Transportation Advisory Committee. If anyone would like to join they can let SusanMary Redinger know. The advisory will be aligning on town bike paths, mart lots etc. The committee was just recently formed. Suzanne Allen agreed to take the assignment.

Shannon Molloy – Warrant presented the following warrants for review:

W2118SCH - \$1,728,104.20

W2119SCH - \$226,316.26

W2120SCH - \$189,438.06

W2121SCH - \$1,309,287.80

Public Commentary

Kathleen Doherty – Watertown, MA – HTA Contract Negotiations

School Committee Commentary

SusanMary Redinger – HTA Contract Negotiations

Adjourn

At 8:35 p.m. SusanMary Redinger made the motion and Sharlene Cronin seconded that we adjourn into executive session pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 30A section 2 for the purposes to discuss strategy with respect to and in preparation for collective bargaining with Harvard Teachers' Association because an open discussion may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the Committee. We will not be returning to open session.

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