



Weymouth

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Weymouth School Committee

[Virtual ZOOM Meeting](#)

April 30, 2020

MEETING MINUTES

Approved 5/14/20

Members In Attendance: Lisa Belmarsh, Chair; Tracey Nardone, Vice-Chair; John Sullivan, Secretary; Kathy Curran; Rebecca Sherlock-Shangraw; Carrie Palazzo, Mayor Robert Hedlund

Members Absent: None

Also Present: Jennifer Curtis-Whipple, Superintendent; Brian Smith, Assistant Superintendent; Robert Wargo, Assistant Superintendent.

The Meeting Came to Order At 7:00pm.

Dr. Sullivan went over directions of how public comment will be handled; using mute to cut down on feedback, waving hand in front of camera for online attendees and saying typing your name if attending via phone. The chat feature will be utilized to denote order of public comment with name and address.

The Chair led in the pledge of allegiance

A moment of silence was observed for Kathleen Trombao who passed away on April 19, 2020.

The Chair thanked attendees for participating in the virtual meeting. Chair Belmarsh reiterated instructions for muting and making public comment and gave an overview of the agenda stating that no decisions will be made or votes taken at this meeting and that is to review the gaps in the budget and potentially how they could be closed. The Chair advised that there will be opportunities for public comment; in the Public Comment section and after the budget presentation. Email submissions for public comment are welcomed as well.

Consent Agenda:

The consent agenda included:

- Warrant 45-2020 in the amount of \$910,209.68, Dated 5/4/20 presented with an assurance there is money to pay for these items.
- Regular Minutes 4/6/20, 4/9/20

Motion to accept the Consent Agenda by Mrs. Nardone, seconded by Dr. Sullivan. Roll Call vote.
Passed unanimously

Mrs. Curran made a request to see the warrant.

Public Comment

Please see attached.

Mrs. Curran stated that she is a member of the budget sub committee and had no knowledge of any meetings or google meet with potential closure and that the School Committee will have input tonight.

The chair advised that public comment is a period for comments only and School Committee members will not be able to engage in a back and forth but appreciate and thank the community for their comments. Chair Belmarsh advised that members are prohibited from deliberating outside of a meeting and that the budget was only received from the Mayor's office on Monday and the meeting this evening is to address potential changes.

Please see attached for public comments regarding potential closing of Nash Elementary School.

Patrick Shaeffer-64 Roberts Drive

Michelle Keller-90 Wampum Street

Ryan Russul-31 Ryder Road

Carmel McBride-18 Mary Rose Road

Christine O'Connor-82 Mill Street

Elizabeth Hayes-77 Hollis Street

Nicole Byrne-154 Pilgrim Road

Jennifer Somerville-91 Hollis Street

Paul Hogan-89 West Street

Andrea Moreland-SEPAC

Pauline & Geoff Dickson-20 Pond Street-hold till after presentation

Samantha Sheehan-51 Sandra Lane

Report of the Superintendent

Dr. Curtis-Whipple conceded her time so that the focus would be on the presentation and questions from families. The Superintendent shared buildings reported that everyone is doing the best they can with remote learning and doing a phenomenal job reaching out to families.

April 28, 2020 will be the last for senior students. A school messenger will be sent out on Friday, May 1, 2020.

New Business

The Chair reiterated that the meeting is a discussion and opportunity to hear details. The Chair read a statement into the record declaring that no one wants to be at this point to discuss potential cuts. That it is hard on everyone. Chair Belmarsh gave an overview of the year long budget process and timeline beginning in October. The Chair shared that due to COVID19 the budget was drastically reduced and reiterated that the cuts were not planned. Discussion between the Mayor and Superintendent have increased greatly in the last 3 weeks and the Superintendent and staff of 3 have re-done the budget at least 4 times due to coronavirus complications. WEA and other unions are working collaboratively with the school committee to find solutions. The potential Nash School closure is not necessary to fund free full day kindergarten in the fall of 2020. Sufficient tax revenue is not being received. The Mayor's budget presented on Monday, April 27, 2020 was \$2.2 Million less than what the School Committee requested on March 26, 2020. The Chair reiterated that no one wants to be here in a place where we have these difficult decisions to make. A new revised budget will need to be presented to the Town Council Budget Management Subcommittee on May 5, 2020. Discussions will be had to make the best educational decisions for the district, students, and staff that are economical and feasible which limits the impact to all the progress made over the last 3 - 4 years. Decisions can't be made on potential aid that might be received.

a. Review Town of Weymouth 2021 Budget Submission Impact on Weymouth Schools FY21 Budget Proposal

Dr. Curtis-Whipple shared that the last few days have been very difficult and that the last thing that she would ever want to do would be to close a school and that she is heartbroken and emphatically stated that no decisions have been made. Discussions and notification were had with Nash staff and families. The Superintendent further stated that will move forward with a plan for what is best for the kids, community, staff and families. Dr. Curtis-Whipple declared that the information in the media from members of town council is inaccurate as they were without conversation with the School Department and Committee for validity. The Superintendent shared her hopes that the presentation will clear up any miscommunication or information.

Assistant Superintendent Smith expressed his thanks to the Superintendent for her leadership and the tremendous amount of work done in a short amount of time by Assistant Superintendent Wargo, Maryann Bryan, Human Resource Director Foley, Alyssa Bosse and for the collaboration with the town and human resources, town finance and procurement. Mr. Smith gave an overview of the timeline and presentation explaining expenses incurred during COVID 19 for PPE and sanitizing and emphasized the school committee commitment for continuity of pay. One time savings on utilities, substitutes was also mentioned. Presentation topics included COVID 19 budget impacts-both state and federal, budget drivers, factors and recommendations.

The Superintendent gave an overview of compliance needs. Advising that items in blue/gray are positions that are helpful in moving the district forward and that items in yellow are a compliance need and have to be funded due to mandates totalling \$706,992.

The total proposed pre COVID budget was \$76,119,856, a 3.5% increase over FY20. The Mayor's budget is \$74,392,872 which is a \$1.7 million shortfall which when added to the chromebook initiative (contract lease) of \$493,300 makes for a \$2.2million budget gap. This amount does not include 4 bargaining unit contracts that are expiring this year. Mr. Smith explained that revolving accounts may only be used specifically for what the lines are earmarked for ie. Transportation can only be used for transportation, food service only food service, kindergarten only for kindergarten.

The Superintendent stated that there is a non union salary freeze. Non union employees consist of administrative assistants, secretaries, central office staff, etc. Dr. Curtis-Whipple explained that in looking at the Nash School, some classes only have 12 pupils and that will have to look at the entire district and how to handle social distancing will have to be looked at closely and reiterated that no final decisions have been made. The Superintendent advised that 392 families have already enrolled in full day kindergarten and thanked the community for the massive support when it was originally proposed. Deadlines (contractually detailed) to notify staff of their placement have to be made by the end May. Decisions have to be made.

Assistant Superintendent Smith stated that the amount of federal/state funding coming in is unknown and plans have to be made for what we know we have now.

Dr. Curtis Whipple stated that the community deserves to have all school buildings remain open with full staff. Social distancing an entire school district and transportation allowances was mentioned. The Superintendent reiterated the benefits of full day kindergarten. Non compliance inclusion needs will not be able to be funded.

The Chair advised that school committee members will have an opportunity for comments before public comment is re-opened.

Dr. Sherlock Shangraw pointed out all that the Superintendent has endured, in particular the attacks on her character. She also stated that name calling, especially by people elected by the town is unacceptable. She shared that closing the Nash school is not a viable option. The \$8 million plus stabilization budget wasn't. Student safety is paramount. Town Council Budget management committee is May 5 at 6pm and encouraged community members to attend. Dr. Sherlock Shangraw thanked the Superintendent and assistants for presentation and the hours of work

Dr. Sullivan reiterated that no one wants to shut down a school and we are trying to find a way out.

Mrs. Curran inquired if the IT leases could be paid at a later date. She also brought up that she had no knowledge of the Nash google meet.

b. School Handbooks - First Reading

i. Primary - Kathy Guilfooy & Richard Branson

ii. Middle - Matt Meehan & Rebecca Paulhus

iii. High School - Rebecca Paulhus, Karen Monahan, Karen Bonner

Motion by Mrs. Nardone to table the first reading of handbooks of Primary, Middle and High School. Seconded by Dr. Sullivan. Roll Call vote. Passed unanimously.

c. Change to School Calendar for 2020-2021 School Year - action requested

An additional day off for the rescheduled marathon will be added September 14, 2020 since it has been declared a state holiday. The last day of school will be extended by 1 day.

Motion by Mrs. Nardone to accept the change to the school calendar for 2020-2021. Seconded by Dr. Sullivan. Roll Call vote. Passed unanimously.

d. Ratification of Collective Bargaining Agreement with WEA Employees - action requested

Ms. Sherlock-Shangraw outlined that the timeline of the evaluation process was altered due to building closure.

Motion by Mrs. Nardone to accept the ratification of Collective Bargaining Agreement with WEA. Seconded by Dr. Sullivan. Roll call vote. Passed unanimously.

e. Waive requirement of Unified Arts for Seniors to graduate - action requested

Mr. Wargo explained that 17 senior WHS students will not be able to graduate without fulfilling 1½ credits of unified arts. It would've been scheduled for the 4th term, however since there will not be a 4th term the administration requests the Committee waive the requirement.

Mrs. Curran verified that Capstone was credit/no credit.

Motion by Mrs. Nardone to waive the requirement of Unified Arts for seniors to graduate. Seconded by Dr. Sullivan. Roll Call vote. Passed unanimously.

Old Business

a. Chapman School Building Update

i. Status of project

The project remains on time and on budget. Crews are using the fact that the school is no longer being used to get a head start on work such as the removal of asbestos containing materials.

ii. Move out timelines

Teachers will be contacted with times they may enter the building to pack their belongings. They will be screened for body temperature before they enter. Student possessions will be available for rolling pickup in the coming days. Instructions will be sent by email.

Announcements:

School Committee Meeting-Thursday, May 14, 2020 – 7:00pm - Virtually

The Meeting adjourned at 11:05pm on the motion of Tracey Nardone, seconded by Dr. Sullivan.
Roll call vote - passed unanimously.

Documents Attached to These Minutes:

- Statement from School Committee

Respectfully Submitted,



John Sullivan
Secretary