



Weymouth

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Weymouth School Committee

ZOOM Meeting

November 19, 2020

MEETING MINUTES

(approved 12/10/20)

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:

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

The Meeting Came to Order At 7:00 pm.

Chair Belmarsh led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Chair allowed a point of privilege from Mrs. Curran. Mrs. Curran apologized for the obscene gestures that happened during the last meeting and expressed her regret of not speaking up at the time. She suggested that Zoom rules be discussed in the policy sub committee .

Consent Agenda:

The Consent agenda included:

- Warrant 21-2021 in the amount of \$1,031,320.25 Dated November 23, 2020
- Regular Minutes 10/22/20, 10/29/20, 11/5/20

Motion by Mrs. Nardone to accept the consent agenda. Seconded by Dr. Sullivan. Roll Call vote. Passed unanimously.

Mrs. Curran advised that she will be at 111 Middle Street in the morning to look at the warrant.

Student Advisory

Katelyn & Caroline Horan shared that it's fun to be back in school and spoke about the fall sport season and virtual clubs. A suggestion was made that if cohorts are increased for the next phase that the senior population is kept together as much as possible.

Juliana_____ shared that her household is Covid positive and she has been attending remotely and emailing with teachers, some of whom are more responsive than others. She advised that class officers are meeting online and trying to make senior year the best it can be. Principal Strauss has been helpful.

The committee gave get well wishes and advised that Principal Strauss will look into communication.

Natalie McDonald inquired what a better plan would be if teachers are not returning to the building if hybrid continues.

The committee expressed their appreciation for sharing the updates and attending the meeting. It was suggested that a good place to start regarding cohorts would be at Parent Council.

Public Comment

- a. Review Zoom Meeting Rules and Public Comment Policy BED

The Mayor requested this item and the compressor station be placed on the agenda under new business. He also inquired as to why the Director of Emergency Management, The Fire and Police Chiefs presence at the meeting was not noted on the agenda.

The Chair explained that in drafting the agenda that items were placed where appropriate for efficiency. Ms. Belmarsh also apologized for the error of not including the department heads' names on the agenda.

The Mayor reiterated his disappointment and conveyed that he requested the department heads' presence at the meeting to address questions that were previously raised at the last meeting.

Mayor Hedlund expressed his concern and discontent for the vulgarities (mouthed words and gestures) he witnessed during the meeting on November 5, 2020. He emphasized that the behavior is inappropriate; children and high school students attend the meetings and the example being set for civic engagement is unacceptable.

The Mayor summarized part of The Chairs reply to a constituents email that he was cc'd on. Mayor Hedlund stated that regardless of passion and sensitivity of subject matter, vulgar behavior is unacceptable and that the moderator should've taken action. He advised that the same rules that apply for in person meetings should apply to zoom meetings.

He inquired about the role of the moderator and suggested a specific zoom meeting policy.

Chair Belmarsh advised that having additional zoom rules is absolutely appropriate and will refer to the policy BED to the policy sub committee. She reiterated before each public comment she reminds speakers to be professional and courteous. Ms. Belmarsh stated that disruptive and unprofessional behavior is never allowed. She shared that she does not condone the actions and brought attention to the fact that despite the shortcomings of virtual meetings, numerous people are now able attend meetings who could not if they were not virtual.

The Chair advised that the moderators are school committee members Dr. Sullivan and Sherlock-Shangraw, and brought attention to all the behind the scenes actions and that the screens they see aren't the same as the ones the viewers see. She also mentioned technical issues and the participation limitations of the zoom webinar.

Mrs. Nardone reiterated that vulgar behavior is not acceptable. She restated while school members are the moderators that they are also to be participating in the meeting.

The Mayor acknowledged that it is cumbersome for members to participate and moderate. He suggested viewers only turning on video when speaking and that decorum should be like a live meeting.

b. Public comment shall be in accordance with Policy BED

Chair Belmarsh reminded that to speak in public comment to put name and address in the chat and that comments be professional and courteous and kept to items on the agenda and no longer than 3 minutes.

-Peter Delano, 56 Thomas Road

Shared his thoughts on the compressor station stating that the evacuation plan should be a comprehensive Weymouth wide emergency response plan. He also brought light to the students who live in the area of the compressor station and are trying to get home in the event of an emergency. Stating that the current plans did not plan for an explosion. He urged residents to visit <https://www.nocompressor.com> and shared his support for all that FRRACS (Fore River Residents Against the Compressor Station) is doing.

-Josephine Burke, 265 Broad Street

As a 10 grade student shared her feelings of how great it was to be back in school, even though 1 day a week. Miss Burke suggested that other class officers of other grades be invited to speak at school committee. She also expressed that she had previously received an apology from the committee regarding eye rolling.

-Katie Owens, WHS

As a teacher expressed her thoughts on day 3 of hybrid in person and remote learning and the difficulties. She shared what a typical day is like for a student traveling between classes and cleaning desks. She applauded the students for acclimating and doing so well. Ms. Owens thanked the custodial staff and expressed her worry for their safety. She also advised that it is a community effort of supporting students so that they can succeed.

-Mary Kay White,

As a teacher in another district expressed her appreciation for the teachers and all that they are doing. She shared the difficulty in teaching with divided focus between in class and at home students and brought attention to class size. She inquired about iReady and appropriate learning environments and whether the results would be driving instruction.

Report of the Superintendent

The Superintendent reported on the following:

Staff and students are happy to be back in the buildings. All grade levels are attending in hybrid cohort fashion. The Superintendent thanked the teachers for all of their hard work and recognized how difficult and taxing dual teaching is for them.

Dr. Curtis-Whipple thanked a 'secret admirer' for the kind candy corn gift recognizing the 111 staff.

Hour of code week will take place December 7-11, 2020. Director of STEM, Teri Flemming will oversee the event and send information out to support staff.

Wednesday, November 25, 2020 will be ½ day for both students and staff. Students will be attending remotely.

The Superintendent wished the school community, students, families and staff a happy Thanksgiving and encouraged adherence to health and safety guidelines.

Collections for the Weymouth Food Pantry are appreciated and welcome. Students may bring donations to school.

Dr. Curtis-Whipple clarified that there is a large number of students who are together in the WHS auditorium due to limited staff. Students are being socially distant.

Collaboration between town health officials and South Shore Hospital is under way for a Covid testing site at WHS where rapid PCR tests will be administered. The hours of operation will be nights and weekends and be in a drive through manner. The Superintendent expressed her thanks and appreciation to South Shore Hospital.

New Business

a. Report of the Policy Sub Committee, 11/17/20 (action requested)

Mrs. Nardone gave a summary of the short meeting held on November 17. Policy JBAA was discussed and finalized. Remote learning and Covid updates were also talked over. A meeting will be added next month.

b. Policy JBAA: Sexual Harassment - Frist Reading

The policy was legally brought up to date with Title IX . It is a very long and detailed policy. Mrs. Curran requested that the policy be disseminated throughout the middle and high school parent councils. Online trainings has been administered; one by attorney Brunt.

After discussion, the policy was moved to a 2nd reading at the next meeting.

c. Report of the Budget Sub-Committee: 11/18/20 (action requested)

Dr. Sullivan gave a summary of the meeting of November 18, 2020. Topics included an athletics presentation outlining user and gate fees, and charging for a middle school athletic user fee. A FY22 budget update was also given where grant aid, covid FY22 concerns as well as updated procedures by Alyssa Bosse were discussed.

Motion by Mrs. Curran to accept the budget sub committee report. Seconded by Dr. Sullivan. Roll call vote. Passed unanimously.

d. FY20 Audit of the Student Activity Funds conducted by Town Auditor (Action Requested)

Motion Dr. Sullivan for Richard Swanson to conduct a FY20 audit of Student Activity Funds. Seconded by Mrs. Nardone. Roll call vote. Passed unanimously.

e. Capital Plan and Maintenance and Facilities Update: Assistant Superintendent Smith, Deputy Director of Central Maintenance John Barker

Assistant Superintendent Smith gave an overview of the capital requests for FY22 and reviewed their priority. Typically items/projects on the capital plan are valued at \$25K or more. Requests were submitted by administrators and department heads. The possibility of sharing costs with other town departments was discussed, particularly with respect to the Middle St. and Pleasant St. crosswalk as well as Abigail Adams items.

CTE Director Gamache was consulted in identifying needs so that the Career and Technical School remains competitive.

The Chair suggested that there be a Plan b if needs are not funded and that further discussion is needed for curriculum and technology to be included in the operating budget as they are priority items.

The total for high priority capital items is \$17,846,635 and for all WPS Capital improvement is \$23,016,635.

The Assistant Superintendent summarized the Superintendent's memo that will be sent to School Committee, and Chief of Staff Langill regarding FY22 Capital needs.

Assistant Superintendent Smith advised that John Barker, Deputy Director of Central Maintenance will soon be retiring and expressed his thanks and admiration for being able to work with Mr. Barker. Mike Pace will also be retiring December 4. The Assistant Superintendents and the Superintendent thanked him for his many years of service.

Mr. Barker gave an overview of the maintenance and facilities update. Topics mentioned were the numerous projects the maintenance and custodial staff has completed around the district including chair lifts, the Chapman project, the Adams renovation and the many long hours of work during Covid 19. A new security entrance was completed at WHS for door 13 (the gym door).

The transportation building at Wharf St. has been transformed. Special thanks was expressed to Robin Howard and her staff, Regina Callahan and Laurie Drew.

The maintenance and custodial staff have been very busy with inspecting, maintaining and installing filters, ionization units, air scrubbers, and plexiglass partitions while also distributing PPE.

Dr. Sherlock-Shangraw, The Chair and committee expressed their thanks and appreciation to all the maintenance and custodial staff for their hard work commitment.

f. Adams Renovation and Transportation Building Update (Town Measure 20 072 - Amend Measure 19 017), Chief of Staff Ted Langill, John MacLeod-CPO & Director of Asset Management, Assistant Superintendent Smith

Chief of Staff Langill was not able to attend.

Director of Asset Management and CPO, John MacLeod gave a summary of the modular classrooms (at Academy Ave, Murphy and Ralph Talbot primary schools), the Ralph Talbot Boilers, Transportation building, the Adams renovation and timeline as well as projected cost.

The proposed transportation building will house 34 passenger vans and be 64x165 feet long. The engineering company will be Beta and scheme 3, originally proposed by CDR Maguire. The proposed cost is \$979K.

Proposed work for Abigail Adams will include a ADA entrance and parking (Academy Ave), Kindergarten Suite, and a restroom retrofit.

An overview of the timeline was given. Closing Admas to students is proposed for Spring 2022 and is projected to open as a 9th primary school in the Fall of 2023.

Mayor Hedlund has committed to funding \$4.5M of the project cost. Future measure (19-017 and 20-072) amendments were discussed.

All questions asked by the committee were addressed.

OLD BUSINESS

a. MASC Resolution Report

Mrs. Nardone gave a summary of the MASC resolutions.

Special resolutions regarding procedural action:

Resolution 2-State funding for Covid-approved unanimously

Resolution 3-Anti racism-approved unanimously

Resolution 6-Retention of Medicaid-approved unanimously

Resolution 8-Membership of School Committee members on board of elementary and secondary education-approved unanimously

Resolution 9-Equity for LGBTQ students and staff-passed unanimously

Other resolutions:

Resolution 1-MCAS in high stakes-passed

Resolution 4-Lowering the voting age to 16 in municipal elections-passed

Resolution 5-Increased federal support and stimulus for public K-12 education-ammended and passed

Resolution 7-US Department of Education to direct public funding ro private schools-passed as proposed

Resolution 10-Monitoring student absence during a pandemic-table on a vote of 71-34

Mrs. Nardone will send notes of the meeting to the school committee members.

b. Return to School Plan

i. Review of updated metric

The Superintendent stated that there is misinformation regarding PPE quantities and clarified that there is plenty of PPE and ample staff to reach close contactsof COVID-19 cases to verify. Dr. Curtis-Whipple gave an overview of the updated return to school plan and reviewed phase 4. High School students are currently attending 1 day per week, depending on health and staffing it will be discussed at the December meeting if an extra day can be added. Weymouth Evening School is attending remotely.

Assistant Superintendent Smith reviewed the updated metric. He reiterated the members of the Return to School Advisory board, which meets Thursdays at 4, the Superintendent, Chair Belmarsh, Elaine Lane, John MacLeod, Dan McCormac, Julie Long, Councilor Hough and himself. Community Spread is in the yellow at 14.4 cases = 3.17%. Staffing is also in the yellow. Elaine Lane advised that there were 2 Covid positive cases in the past week. As a result of previous 14 positive cases, 70 individuals were quarantined and there have not been any positive cases from those individuals.

The Superintendent and Melanie Curtin reviewed the website dashboard, thanking Elaine Lane, Dennis Jones and Myra Jones for their hard work.

ii. Staffing update

Human Resources Director, Maryann Foley gave an overview of staffing and leaves of absence. It was reiterated that the district is paying not only for the leave of absence but for the staff to cover for that leave of absence. Director Foley reviewed the positions available throughout the district. Assistant Superintendent Smith advised that the potential based on current numbers is \$2.1M.

Dr. Curtis-Whipple thanked Robin Howard and the Transportation department for all of their hard work as it is a moving target and updates are made every day.

Mrs. Nardone requested the SC members be notified when/if a classroom is shut down.

Snow days and remote learning was discussed. If in the event of power outages, snow days may still happen-it would be a case by case basis but every effort would be made to have a remote day so that it is counted.

Community engagement with adhering to safety and health guidelines was discussed. The district can only enforce guidelines while on school property and during school.

PPE and reusable PPE was discussed at length. It was emphasised that there is more than enough PPE (reusable and disposable) if staff wish not to reuse disposable PPE.

Number of staff retirements and openings was discussed. Human Resources Director Foley may forward the exact number to the committee.

c. Review of Labor Foreman job description (action requested)

Motion by Mrs. Nardone to accept the job description of the Labor Foreman. Seconded by Dr. Sullivan. Roll Call vote. Passed unanimously

d. Policy JJJA Extracurricular Activities -second reading

Public comment was opened for this policy. There was none.

This policy is regarding Weymouth students attending private, charter or homeschooled being able to participate in extracurricular activities.

Mrs. Curran shared her feelings that she is not comfortable in changing the policy at this time during a pandemic.

The policy will move forward for a third reading.

e. Community Host Agreement between Weymouth and Algoquin Gas Transmission regarding North Weymouth Compressor Station

i. Review updated school evacuation plan RE: Johnson & Wessagusset

Dr. Curtis-Whipple thanked Chief Stark and Fuller as well as Emergency Management Director John Mulveyhill for attending the meeting.

Mayor Hedlund also thanked the committee for their involvement and work to enhance the response plan.

Teri Flemming who sees the safety committee shared what a collaborative effort it has been.

Mr. Mulveyhill advised that there have been several meetings where evacuation, shelter in place, and alternative response plans have been discussed. He stated that there are many factors and moving parts when considering what school and families affected would need to be evacuated; such as traffic and evacuation routes, road blocks, time and location of emergency, weather, transportation, communication. Mr. Mulveyhill emphasized the collaboration that is needed between all departments; EMS, fire, police, and the school department.

The Johnson school (JECC) would evacuate to Pingree and the Wessagusset School would evacuate to Adams.

There are many response plans based on scenarios; due to homeland security they can not be divulged. Mr. Mulveyhill conveyed that there many contingencies and that the collaboration with the safety committee has been great and that in the event of an emergency all efforts and hands on deck would be done for reunification of families of both the school and Weymouth community.

Planning is ongoing and never complete. Emergency Alert System and other communities such as Braintree and Quincy would be used. There are a lot of moving parts

Mrs. Nardone shared her pride in being part of the safety committee and the positive and informative collaboration.

Principal Bransfield, Fratolilo, and Perez as well as Transportation Director Robin Howard and Dennis Jones took part in the safety conversation.

Dr. Sullivan expressed his appreciation for the Chiefs attending as well as Director Mulveyhill. As the son of the former head of the Quincy Fire Academy voiced his thoughts on adding additional resources to the fire department, as well as specifying alternate routes and evacuation sites, and deployment of emergency services. He also reiterated the location of the compressor station in relation to the Johnson and Wessagusset schools

A mini table top has been created to help with planning evacuation routes. There will be subsequent meetings and tabletops.

Chief Stark and Fuller reassured the community and reiterated the great interdepartmental collaboration and expressed their thanks for being part of the safety committee. Hopes of opening fire station 2 were mentioned.

Dr. Sherlock-Shangraw thanked the Chair for adding the compressor station as an agenda item so that schools could be part of the conversation and inquired what the response time would be in the event of an emergency. Mr. Mulveyhill advised that it would be 30 minutes, however there are many factors that could decrease or increase the response time.

Every school evacuation plan will be evaluated and primary and secondary evacuation destinations will be looked at.

The committee thanked Mr. Mulveyhill and Chief Stark and Fuller for attending the meeting this evening. It was suggested that another 'emergency response' meeting be held.

ii. Review School Committee Letter RE: Review of School Safety/Health Measures (action requested)

Chair Belmarsh read into record the letter she drafted on behalf of the school committee regarding school health and safety measures and the Community Host Agreement between Weymouth and Algonquin Gas.

There were some suggested edits. The last sentence of the first paragraph will be deleted. The Mayor shared his thoughts that this section was misleading. He also reiterated that the town has spent over \$1.5M and fought with 22 lawsuits against the compressor station.

Motion by Dr. Sherlock-Shangraw to approve the letter as read with edits. Seconded by Mrs. Nardone. Roll call vote. Passed unanimously.

f. Superintendent Search

i. Interim Superintendent Search Committee

The Interim Search Committee consists of Chair Belmarsh, Dr. Sherlock-Shangraw, Ms. Palazzo, HR Director Foley, Special Education Administrator Alyson Bell, Assistant Superintendent Smith, Delrose Newman and Lori Hansen. There will be an executive session on November 25 to review applications. There are 7 applicants so far (both internal and external)

ii. Request Proposals for Permanent Superintendent Search (action requested)

Obtaining an experienced outside firm to help with the permanent Superintendent search was discussed. With everyone being stretched so thin it will be helpful. As services will be over \$10K, a contract is needed and quotes will need to be solicited as well

Motion by Dr. Sherlock-Shangraw to solicit quotes for the Permanent Superintendent search firm. Seconded by Mrs. Nardone. Roll call vote. Passed unanimously. Mayor Hedlund requested that the quotes are reviewed as a committee together.

Announcements:

Weymouth Market-December 2, 2020-NEW time-3:30pm-WHS Gold Cafeteria in a drive thru manner

Next School Committee Meeting:

Regular Meeting: Thursday, December 19, 2020 - 7:00pm

The Meeting adjourned at 11:16pm on the motion of Mrs. Nardone, seconded by Dr. Sullivan. Roll call vote - passed unanimously.

Documents Attached to These Minutes:

- FY22 Capital Plan
- Memo from the Superintendent RE: capital plan
- Maintenance and Facilities Update
- Adams Renovation and Transportation Building Update
- Updated Return to School
- WPS compressor Station Response Plan
- Letter from the School Committee RE: School Health & Safety Measures-Weymouth/Algonquin Gas

Respectfully Submitted,



John Sullivan
Secretary