



Weymouth

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Weymouth School Committee

ZOOM Meeting

December 10, 2020

MEETING MINUTES

(approved 1/7/21)

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

Members Absent: Mayor Hedlund

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

The Meeting Came to Order At 7:04pm.

Chair Belmarsh led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

A moment of silence was observed for the passing of Mr. Paul Milone. Condolences were expressed to his family and Weymouth Police Department.

Consent Agenda:

The Consent agenda included:

- Warrant 24-2021 in the amount of \$1,054,708.62 Dated December 14, 2020
- Regular Minutes: 11/19/20,
- Budget Sub Minutes: 10/14/20, 11/18/20

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

Student Advisory

Senior members Katelyn and Corline Horan, Lauren Crisileo, Julian Amendoler, Natlie MacDonal and Sophomore Josephine Burke gave an update on hybrid and remote learning, email communication with teachers, attendance, mid terms and possibly finals being optional.

A suggestion was made for an admissions college info session.

There is a new student clubs and organizations group that Mr. Galusha is heading.

A capstone meeting will be held 12/15 with Principal Strauss and Ms. Northrup to talk about challenges for students doing capstone projects during remote learning.

Ms. Dolan has created a new Instagram account: wildcats.say and Student advisory is considering a name change to attract student involvement.

The committee thanked the advisory members for attending the school committee meetings and confirmed that their voices are being heard.

Public Comment

In accordance with Policy BED

-Councilor Jane Hackett, 85 Heritage Lane

As a parent of an 8th and 10th grader and a school business administrator for Rockland PS expressed her gratitude and appreciation of staff commitment. After receiving numerous calls/emails from families, friends and employees she was compelled to do her investigation into hybrid and remote learning. Many staff were consulted; teachers, students, administrators, ESP's, cafeteria workers, etc and reiterated her gratefulness for the individual and collective work being done. Councilor Hackett reiterated all are doing their best for the kids.

-Rachel Dillon, 151 Forest Street

Expressed her feelings on getting high school students back in school more and requested that administrators acknowledge the unintended consequences of the hybrid plans ie) long term impacts to students and staffing.

-Erin Dodds, 421 Summer Street

Expressed her thoughts and feelings on depression and anxiety being another crisis to consider. She also inquired if there would be further discussion about closing Abigail Adams for the week.

-Lisa Dembowski, 80 Heather Lane

Expressed her disheartening feelings of placing the WEA over what is best for the kids. She also conveyed her support of increasing in person learning so students can get the education that they deserve. Ms. Dembowski also shared her concern of mental health and hope for improving remote learning

-Laura Danna, 26 Sandra Lane

Expressed her disagreement for increasing in person learning advising it should be done safely for students and staff. She also shared her concern for the surge especially with the upcoming holidays.

Report of the Superintendent

The Superintendent reported on the following:

Dr. Curtis-Whipple expressed her appreciation for the community members for sharing their comments and feelings during public comment.

A successful professional development day was held on December 7, 2020. It was a choice day for staff and the Superintendent thanked all for attending and those who presented and put together offerings.

Code week is happening throughout the district. The Superintendent gave kudo's to Teri Flemming and the STEAM specialists.

Superintendent Curtis-Whipple advised of some recent changes to the Department of Educations access to testing for MCAS. MCAS will still take place and be in person, to be held at a later time.

The Seach school will be offering a virtual paint night on December 16, 2020 at 6:30. More details are available by contacting the school.

The SEPAC meeting was held on December 9, 2020. New board members were elected. Danielle Graziano and Kim Ferreira are co-chairs, and Christine O'Hara is secretary. The next meeting will be held on January 5, 2021 and will talk about Special Education Basic Rights.

Superintendent Curtis-Whipple clarified that for Term 2 there will not be attendance fails. The intent of the absence letter is to inform of the absence. Parents are asked to reach out to Deans if families have questions or need support in this area.

Dr. Sherlock-Shangraw clarified that if students are attending remotely and doing the work then they should not be marked as absent.

Mrs. Curran shared her congratulations to the new board members of SEPAC and advised that the basic special education rights is a great meeting to attend.

New Business

a. Alternative Diploma - Melanie Curtin, Rebeca Paulhus, Margaret Verlicco

Superintendent Curtis-Whipple expressed her thanks and appreciation to the team and positivity of how big a move the pathways program is for the district.

Melanie Curtin expressed her thanks to the School Committee for their support regarding equity and inclusion and also thanked the high school team for their collaboration.

Ms. Curtin outlined the need for an additional diploma option emphasizing the goal is to keep students engaged and hopeful and gave an overview of drop out data collected since 2014.

The focus of the pathways models is for the most inclusive environment that supports mental health and utilizes a strengths based approach.

Dr. Verlicco commented on the severe impact anxiety can have on students and creative ways are used to implement intervention. Dr. Verlicco also expressed how successful Chard Street has been and reiterated that staff is well poised to develop relationships with students which is critical to implementing interventions. Discussion was had over provider waitlists.

Accept Collaborative will work with the district again in research and planning to investigate how to meet the needs of all students.

Ms. Curtin advised that students would be part of the Pathways Career Academy where concentration would be on focus skill building, community service, work based learning, and a capstone portfolio. 16 credits would need to be earned to gain a diploma.

The community expressed their thanks for the presentation and support for the program and suggested adding 'financial literacy' to the skills in the pathway. It was talked about to add the program to the program of studies for the first reading on January 7, 2021.

b. Primary School Improvement Plan: Primary Principals

Motion by Mrs. Nardone to table the Primary School Improvement Plan. Seconded by Dr. Sullivan. Roll call vote. Passed unanimously.

A request was made to move out of order d. Community host agreement (old business) and the chair advised that it is on the agenda only to review-no presentations will be made.

c. Report of the Policy Sub-Committee: 12/8/20 (action requested)

Mrs. Nardone summarized the meeting of December 8. Meeting minutes of 11/17/20 were approved and policies on this meeting's agenda were discussed as well as Zoom protocol policy and health issues in light of the compressor station.

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

d. Policy EBC-S: Covid Related Issues - First Reading

Mrs. Nardone gave a summary of the policy regarding covid related issues from MASC. Committee members were asked to review and bring questions to the second reading. A suggestion was made to strike out 'Covid 19' so that the policy could be used/referenced in the future if the need arose.

Policy EBC-S was moved to a second reading.

e. Policy IHBHE - Remote Learning - First Reading

Mrs. Nardone gave an overview of the remote learning policy specific to the district. Committee members were asked to review and bring questions to the second reading.

Policy IHBHE was moved to a second reading.

f. Policy IHBHE-E - Remote Learning Addendum - First Reading

Mrs. Nardone gave an overview of the addendum to remote learning which came about due to the pandemic.

Policy IHBHE-E was moved to a second reading.

OLD BUSINESS

a. Policy JBAA - Sexual Harassment - Second Reading

Mrs. Nardone gave a quick overview to the proposed changes to the policy.

Policy moved to third reading.

b. Policy JJJA - Extracurricular Activities - Third Reading (Action Requested)

Mrs. Nardone gave a summary of the policy JJJA regarding participating in extracurricular activities and Interscholastic Athletics.

Mrs. Curran expressed her opposition to the policy as written as students are not just in private or charter schools but learning remotely, in the home, and virtual.

Dr. Sullivan stated that language included consideration on a case by case basis with Superintendent approval.

Motion by Dr. Sullivan to approve policy JJJA. Seconded by Dr. Sherlock-Shangraw. Roll call vote. Motion passes 5-1. Mrs. Curran voted no.

c. Return to School Plan

i. Review of updated metric

Dr. Curtis-Whipple gave an overview of phase 4 emphasizing that the goal is to get kiddos back in school as social emotional well being and mental health is a true concern.

Assistant Superintendent Smith gave an overview of metrics. He welcomed Annmarie Devaney, new nurse to the team. Community spread is in the red at 34.7 cases/6.13%. Infrastructure and resources are also in the red. Public Health response capabilities, positive cases traced and positive case contracts traced has moved into yellow.

Elaine Lane gave an update of the school community cases. For assessment week of 12/10/20 there are 20 cases which place results still in the red. Ms. Lane reiterated the process of isolation and quarantine. She defined close contact as less than 6 feet for 10-15 minutes.

The committee thanked Ms. Lane for all of her work and guidance throughout the pandemic.

Dr. Curtis-Whipple gave overview of the stats of the WPS dashboard:

<https://www.weymouthschools.org/district/health-services/pages/covid-19>

Much discussion was had on the number of cases and numbers of spread not coming from in school but from the community or sports into the school.

It was reiterated that if a student or staff member is not feeling well to stay home.

ii. Staffing update

Leaves and additional staff coverage was discussed at length. FFCRA will be expiring on 12/30/20. The estimated cost of leaves and coverages on current HR numbers is \$1.9. Current actual amount is at a half million.

The Superintendent went over staffing and absence projections at Abigail Adams to clarify the reason for Adams being remote. 34 staff at Adams were out on December 10 due to various reasons. Dr. Curtis-Whipple emphasized all the planning, and strategies that are taking place behind the scenes that may have not been communicated out yet. She reiterated that the goal is to have groups of cohorts in January however trends will need to be considered as the health and safety of students and staff in first and foremost.

Dr. Sherlock-Shangraw inquired about the 'magic school bus' and it is up and running providing support for remote learners as well as tech support.

All questions asked by the committee were addressed.

d. Community Host Agreement between Weymouth and Algonquin Gas Transmission regarding North Weymouth Compressor Station

i. Review of joint meeting of the School Committee and Town Council.

A summary of the meeting was given. Present for the meeting were co-chairs, Chair Belmarsh and Councilor Haugh, Dr. Sherlock-Shangraw and Dr. Sullivan, Ms. Palazzo as well as Councilors DiFazio, Harrington, and Happel. Alice Arena; FRRACS (Friends of Fore River against the Compressor Station) <https://www.nocompressor.com/home>, Phil Lindregan; involved in previous town legal action against the compressor station, and Frank Singleton: Department of Health spoke on health and safety concerns, location of the compressor stations, emissions, and surrounding community collaboration.

There will be a meeting in a month to discuss next steps.

<https://www.nocompressor.com/home>

Dr. Curtis-Whipple advised that there are tabletop discussions of Wessagusset and JECC scheduled and at the safety committee meeting where Mr. Mulveyhill, and Fire and Police attended, scenarios were run through.

e. Chapman School Building Update, Adams Renovations and Transportation Building Update (Town Measure 20 072 - Amend Measure 19 0174)

Room numbers and usage have officially been assigned. Kudo's were given to Myra Jones, Teri Fleming and Mike Pace.

Mrs. Curran reminded of the request to name the performance center after Joyce McDonough.

f. Superintendent Search

i. Report of the Interim Superintendent Search Committee (Action requested)

The Interim Search Committee consisted of Chair Belmarsh, Dr. Sherlock-Shangraw, Ms. Palazzo, HR Director Foley, Special Education Administrator Alyson Bell, Assistant Superintendent Smith, Delrose Newman and Lori Hansen.

Ms. Palazzo read her report into the record detailing the 2 final well qualified candidates; Kathleen Smith and Dr. William Lupini.

Mrs. Curran requested that the report be placed on the blog.

Motion by Dr. Sherlock-Shagraw to accept the Interim search report. Seconded by Mrs. Nardone. Roll call vote. Passed unanimously.

ii. Review recommendations from Interim Superintendent Search Committee (Action Requested)

Chair Belmarsh outlined the next steps for the final interview process. Interviews will be held in a public forum on December 15, 2002. Interviews will be 1 hour each. The meeting will begin at 5:30 and the first interview will be at 6pm and the 2nd interview will be at 7:15pm. Deliberation and a vote will be done publicly that night for an interim Superintendent recommendation.

The committee thanked the chair for leading the sub committee.

Motion by Mrs. Nardone to move forward the 2 interim candidates. Seconded by Dr. Sullivan. Roll Call vote. Passed unanimously.

Interview questions and guide will be posted to the blog.

iii. Review Proposals from Search Firms for permanent Superintendent search (Action Requested)

Outside firms were solicited for quotes to aid in the permanent Superintendent search. MASC, Collins Center and NESDEC submitted quotes.

References and previous work with MASC was discussed. The committee favored the Collins center not only for price but value advertising and timeline of work. It was stated that free services from MASC can be used in conjunction with the Collins Center.

Hiring a firm vs hiring additional human resource staff was talked about.

Motion by Dr. Sherlock-Shangraw to go forward with the Collins Center for the full time Superintendent search. Seconded by Dr. Sullivan. Roll call vote. Passed unanimously.

Announcements:

Social emotional resource guide is available on the website:

<https://sites.google.com/weymouthps.org/selhomepage/home>

SEPAC-January 19, 2021-virtual, 6pm. Basic Rights presentation will begin at 6:30.

Interim Superintendent Interviews-December 15, 2020

Budget Sub Committee-December 16, 2020

Weymouth Market-January 6, 2021-NEW time-3:30pm-WHS Gold Cafeteria in a drive thru manner

Next School Committee Meeting:

Regular Meeting: Thursday, January 7, 2021 - 7:00pm

The Meeting adjourned at 10:04pm on the motion of Mrs. Nardone, seconded by Dr. Sullivan. Roll call vote - passed unanimously.

Documents Attached to These Minutes:

- Diploma option presentation
- Policy EBC-S, INBNE, IHBHE-E
- Policy JBAA, JJJA
- Return to School Update
- Interim Superintendent search committee report

Respectfully Submitted,



John Sullivan
Secretary