

**NEWBURYPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE
SCHOOL COMMITTEE BUSINESS MEETING
Wednesday, September 2, 2020
Senior/Community Center**

Meeting Convened at 6:32 PM

Mayor Donna Holaday / Bruce Menin Presided

Present: Brian Callahan, Mayor Donna Holaday, Bruce Menin, David Hochheiser, Sheila Spalding, Steve Cole

Absent: Sean Reardon

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Mayor Donna Holaday called the Business Meeting of the Newburyport School Committee to order at 6:32 PM. Roll Call found one member absent, **Sean Reardon**. All those present stood for the pledge of allegiance to the Flag.

At this point Vice-Chairman **Bruce Menin** assumed chairmanship of the Business Meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Warrants:

On a motion by **Steve Cole** and seconded by **Mayor Holaday** it was

VOTED: To approve, receive and forward to the City Auditor for payment the following warrant.
\$2,652.34

Motion Passed

Sean Reardon Absent for Vote

On a motion by **Steve Cole** and seconded by **Mayor Holaday** it was

VOTED: To approve, receive and forward to the City Auditor for payment the following warrant.
\$17,849.06

Motion Passed

Sean Reardon Absent for Vote

On a motion by **Steve Cole** and seconded by **Mayor Holaday** it was

VOTED: To approve, receive and forward to the City Auditor for payment the following warrant.
\$354,546.52

Motion Passed

Sean Reardon Absent for Vote

Minutes:

The minutes of Monday, August 17 were tabled until the next School Committee Business Meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT - via Zoom:

Sharif Zeid - He stated he was frustrated by the vote on the MOA - that these should have been made available to the public before the meeting.

Lynn Schow - She thanked the Committee for the opening of school.

Matthew Kane - He too stated he was frustrated by the secret ballot on the MOA. He also stated that we should get kids back to school 5 days a week.

Monica Studer - He stated that 70% of students want to be back in school. He asked the Committee to share data on unenrolled students.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Motion:

On a motion by **Steve Cole** and seconded by **Mayor Holaday** it was

VOTED: To adjourn the Business Meeting of the School Committee to Executive Session at 6:58 PM for the purpose of preparation for Negotiations, collective bargaining and legal matters. The Committee will be returning to the public meeting in an open session.

Roll Call Vote

David Hochheiser - Yes
Brian Callahan - Yes
Sheila Spalding - Yes
Mayor Holaday - Yes
Steve Cole - Yes
Bruce Menin - Yes

Motion Passed

Sean Reardon absent for vote

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION:

Mayor Holaday called the School Committee Business Meeting to order at 7:25 PM.

Bruce Menin explained that the School Committee was bound by rules of negotiations not to share these documents until they are approved. The teachers have ratified the MOA and conversations and negotiations have to do with safety. He stated he honestly thought that the challenges as they were made for a better opening plan and better communication. He summarized the MOA which is as follows:

Keep things exactly the way they are from K-8, such as they are. It is knowing that again this is a pandemic and that metrics are going to change and we may be able to start bringing kids back in sooner depending on metrics that is approved, but has flexibility built in. The plan for the High School is where there has been a change, and that change is, that we will be doing an orientation from September 15-18. Each class is coming in for one orientation, meeting teachers, doing safety protocols. We will be going remote from September 21 - October 2. During that period of time there will be four Clipper blocks for each class. Each class will have a Clipper Block at the school. There may be some other activities, sports and what not. On

October 5 the High School students will begin in person instruction and will be coming into the building two days a week, every other week, and that is pretty much the plan that was approved on the 17th. The only change is again, September 21 to October 2nd.

Motion:

On a motion by **Mayor Holaday** and seconded by **Brian Callahan** it was

VOTED: To approve the Newburyport Teachers Memorandum of Agreement as presented.

Mayor Holaday said she appreciated all the work that the teachers have put on the table to get us to this point having more challenges. She said we were able to work through some of the concerns and issues - we got there. She thanked the teachers, **Bruce Menin, Steve Cole, Sean Reardon** and **Superintendent Gallagher** for their efforts working through this really complicated situation to get our schools reopened. Teachers are back in the schools this week since March and from all reports really positive and energetic. People were pleased to be back. Our goal will be to move as quickly as possible to bring everyone back full time.

Roll Call Vote:

Steve Cole	- Yes
Bruce Menin	- Yes
Sheila Spalding	- Yes
Mayor Holaday	- Yes
Brian Callahan	- Yes
David Hochheiser	- Yes

Motion Passed

Sean Reardon absent for vote

NPS REOPENING SCHOOLS:

Superintendent Gallagher said things have been changing and are being flexible. He said he was pleased with the faculty. He spoke re: the following:

- Summer Guidance
- Flexibility Study
- Classroom Set Up examples
- Limiting movement of students in classrooms and throughout the building.
- He thanked the cafeteria workers who worked diligently to serve needy families.

The following district administrators were in attendance to provide an update/and or answer questions pertaining to the reopening of schools. Principal Andy Wulf (High School), Principal Lisa Furlong (Nock Middle School), Principal Tara Rossi (Molin Upper Elementary), Principal Tim Miller (Bresnahan - grades 1-3), Principal Amy Sullivan (Bresnahan - grades PK-K), Nancy Koch (Special Education), Pam Kealey (Food Service), Kyle Hodsdon (Athletics), and Steve Bergholm (Facilities). Each spoke as reopening pertained to their schools.

Pam Kealey - Food Service

Ms. Kealey thanked her workers for their diligence in providing food for needy families. They worked very hard. All food provided was put in individual containers. All food that will be served to school children will be put in individual containers to provide safety measures and speed up the delivery to children. She explained re: the individual schools where students will eat.

Sheila Spalding questioned children with food allergies. Cathy Riccio stated that parents can go online and the specifics for food allergies are explained. She urged parents to reach out with specific requests and these would be addressed.

Superintendent Gallagher clarified the 6-foot distance requirement. Students can eat 6 feet apart with masks off.

Superintendent Gallagher, upon introducing Steve Bergholm the Facilities Manager mentioned that Mr. Bergholm had the foresight to start purchasing cleaning supplies as of March 13. His crew have done a lot of work, moving furniture, cleaning, etc.

Steve Bergholm - Facilities

Steve Bergholm thanked his maintenance crews and custodians and acknowledged all the work that they did. Isolation suites have been set up, a sink has been added at Bresnahan and the Nock/Molin. Water fountains have been shut off, bottle fill stations have been installed, gallon jugs of sanitizer have been put in every classroom, signage has been hung in all schools, and all excess furniture has been moved out of rooms and stored on-site and off-site. A machine has been purchased and will be installed in the near future that will make it available to produce Hypochlorous Acid at a few cents a gallon a specific cleaning solution.

Mayor Holaday stated that additional monies have been received from the Care Act and the Esser Grant. \$800,000 to be distributed.

Superintendent Gallagher - Transportation

Superintendent Gallagher said a lot of work has been done since June. On July 22 new guidelines came out.

- Transportation (Core Health Safety Protocols)
- Masks
- Distance requirements
- Ventilation
- Seat assignments
- Transportation - Bus seating diagram
- Transportation - Bus seating capacity
- Transportation - NYS Walking / Bike

Mayor Holaday said she has met with Merrimack Valley Transit and starting in September an hourly circuit, starting at 7 AM and will run every hour until 7 PM to provide transportation around the city.

Brian Callahan asked for clarification. **Mayor Holaday** said there was a cost - Charlie cards can be purchased. Anyone one can use the bus service.

David Hochheiser suggested getting a letter out to parents.

Superintendent Gallagher said that they were in good shape as to school bus transportation.

All those families who requested service have been accommodated. Anyone who has paid money and has since changed their minds have been and will be refunded their money.

David Hochheiser asked how parents should go about getting a refund. Answer - contact the Superintendent's Office either by phone or email.

Cathy Riccio - Health Protocols

Cathy Riccio thanked administrators, custodians, maintenance personnel. She said we have incredible people who have been and are working very hard. She touched on the following:

- Staying Healthy - staying safe while returning to school, 2020.
- Deep Breath - begin with mindfulness
- Before coming into school ask yourself the 4 health questions - be aware.
- Stay home if you are sick
- Proper hand washing
- No touching face
- Ways to protect yourself
- Hand sanitizer - proper use
- Right way to wear a mask
- Frequently touched surfaces
- Hypochlorous Acid at 200 PPM
- What is Hypochlorous Acid - an excellent cleaner
- Staying safe throughout the day
- Check in with ourselves
- Stay Healthy - Be Safe

Brian Callahan questioned health protocol summary; metrics from Hybrid to Remote; are we talking with New Hampshire as well as surrounding districts? Answer - Dr. Jessica Su has provided in depth information - we are very fortunate to have her - and yes we are looking at surrounding areas. **Brian Callahan** asked do we have a metric - Answer - low number.

Learning Model Updates

NHS - Principal Andy Wulf

Principal Wulf thanked all concerned for their hard work. He stated they are going to keep everything synchronous for our students. There have been slight adjustments to schedules. Ten minutes have been added to the lunch schedule.

Rupert Nock - Principal Lisa Furlong

Principal Furlong reported on the following:

- Productive 3 days - in good shape
- Everyone is doing a similar thing in a grade appropriate way
- Getting at a team level

- Advisory block
- Outline schedule
- Robotics in 7th and 8th grade
- Wednesdays
Teaching in building 3-hour block - Three one hour blocks
Let them have some flexibility with that
Afternoon - independent time

Edward Molin Elementary School - Principal Tara Rossi

Principal Rossi reported on the following:

- Learning through remote experience - some struggled - some flourished
- Curriculum changes - new Literacy “My View” Program - contains writing component and an on-line component
- Challenge - supporting kids when they are at home - every classroom will have support for students
- Explores - new model - 23 day for teachers
- Policies and procedures – mind shift
- Teachers want kids back

David Hochheiser commented on the following:

- When in school - with teacher
- At home - a teacher working with different grades
- Not live streaming

F. T. Bresnahan Elementary School - Principal Tim Miller - 1 - 3

Principal Miller reported on the following:

- My View - in sync.
- Really productive meeting last few days
- Hybrid portion
Synchronous time - daily check in - at minutes
End of Day - 10 minutes - what’s coming
Wednesdays - more classroom time than any other day
Parents log in - end of day - preview coming week.

Brian Callahan asked what happens in the 2nd half of Wednesdays - Answer Independent Study and small group activity.

Special Education

Special Ed Team is working with all Principals - outstanding cooperation.

Mayor Holaday questioned IEP’s - how has that been going? Answer - Every parent will be contacted - contact information for every child - email - phone calls.

Steve Cole asked if there is a mechanism for students with plans - are they addressed? Answer - all students will be addressed - data ending March 12 - performance was base-line. Base-line data drives instruction. IEP’s will not be rewritten.

Remote Academy - Superintendent Gallagher

Superintendent Gallagher gave the numbers for Remote Academy:

- K - 13
- 1-3 - 36
- 4-5 - 25
- 6-8 - 43
- High School - 6
- 8 Staff involved in Remote Academy
- We are reaching out to families for needs, orientation
- Learning on a daily basis
- On-line and Off-line opportunities daily
- Check ins - advisory program
- Personalized schedules
- Social connections within the academy

Mayor Holaday asked if students can change back or forth? Answer - Yes

Sheila Spalding asked for an explanation of synchronous and asynchronous. Answer:

- Synchronous - live connection
- Asynchronous - more follow up work

Brian Callahan questioned self-screening. Cathy Riccio said it takes time to finalize - we will make a video. **Brian Callahan** asked when will a video be made? Answer - next week.

David Hochheiser asked re: Daily Health Self Screening. Answer:

- High School - built in check mark - responsible for own lives
- Pre K - 8 - same kind of link - nothing happened in last few days - takes 10 seconds

David Hochheiser asked how? Answer - Google - website - parents can go to

Athletic Director - Kyle Hodsdon

Kyle Hodsdon reported on the following:

- Provide safe atmosphere using guidelines
- EEA drove everything - worked with MIA
4 season model
Fall - September 18
Winter - December
Floating Season - February - March
Spring - April - July 3
- Cape Ann League - be consistent
- Not sure Re: spectators - waiting for guidelines
- Still working on facilities

Brian Callahan questioned Cross Country at Maudsley

Steve Cole asked what is happening with Field Hockey / Soccer? Answer - no face offs - benches are spread out. Soccer - different - no throwing - no kicks. Coaches are following guidelines. Golf - safest sport - transportation issues - up in air.

David Hochheiser questioned start up:

- Do you anticipate more weekends? Answer - Yes - every Saturday - some Sundays
- When will the calendar be available? Answer - nothing finalized as yet - will provide as soon as we can.
- Columbus day weekend? Answer - Yes

Bruce Menin asked what kind of contact have you had with athletes? Answer - coaches have been in contact - no teams have been selected as yet. Do you know who every person is? Answer - yes - website will have the information

Mayor Holaday questioned the YWCA. **Superintendent Gallagher** said he spoke with the Y. Cathy Riccio is connecting with them by phone.

SCHOOL CALENDAR:

Bruce Menin said we may be changing the calendar in the middle of the school year.

Superintendent Gallagher recommended taking all the early release days off for the first half of the year. We will re-evaluate in January - we do have 2 full days.

Mayor Holaday recommended that they vote from September to January.

Brian Callahan questioned - can we take Thursday, Friday cohort.

Superintendent Gallagher said he will bring it back to the Leadership.

It was decided to wait on a vote for the Calendar

WEBMASTER:

Superintendent Gallagher said he has hired a webmaster for the district - he will oversee everything.

Brian Callahan recommended changes to the Website.

Mayor Holaday recommended that they wait on the agenda item Resolution.

Motion:

On a motion by **Mayor Holaday** and seconded by **Brian Callahan** it was

VOTED: To hold the Agenda Item Resolution until the next School Committee Meeting.

Motion Passed

Sean Reardon absent for vote

Mayor Holaday said a letter was presented to **Superintendent Gallagher** today re: evaluation. The School Budget will be presented to the City Council tomorrow night.

ADJOURNMENT:

On a motion by **Sheila Spalding** and seconded by **Mayor Holaday** it was

VOTED: To adjourn the School Committee Business Meeting at 9:50 PM.

Motion Passed

Sean Reardon absent for vote