

**NEWBURYPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
BUSINESS MEETING  
Monday, January 21, 2020**

**RAN Middle School Library**

**Meeting Convened at 6:32 PM**

**Vice Chair Bruce Menin Presided**

**Present:** Sheila Spalding, Steve Cole, Bruce Menin, David Hochheiser, Sean Reardon,  
and Brian Callahan

**Absent:** Mayor Donna Holaday

**CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

**Bruce Menin** called the Business Meeting of the Newburyport School Committee to order at 6:32 PM. Roll Call found all members present except Mayor Donna Holaday. All those in attendance stood for the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

**Bruce Menin** asked people to come forward to make a public comment:

- Jamie Gagnon, 17 Daniel Lucy Way: Regarding article 7 on tonight's agenda to reaffirm your vote from previous meeting (i.e. Val/Sal Proposal). He took part in the community process and thought it was a great community effort. He liked how it was led by students and the principal. Great leadership by the Superintendent and School Committee. He hopes you reaffirm the vote this evening when it comes to this agenda item.
- Julie Gagnon, 5 Tracy Street: Would like to reaffirm the Val/Sal to the keep it the top 2 GPA scores. Thinks the taskforce did a great job. They did a lot of work and they involved the students & community.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

**Warrants:**

On a motion by **Steve Cole** and seconded by **Sean Reardon** it was

**VOTED:** To approve, receive and forward to the City Auditor for payment the following warrant.  
**\$8,011.58**

**Motion Passed**

**Mayor Donna Holaday was absent for vote**

On a motion by **Steve Cole** and seconded by **Sean Reardon** it was

**VOTED:** To approve, receive and forward to the City Auditor to make payment and deduct the funds from the school's account.  
**\$32,884.27**

**Motion Passed**

**Mayor Donna Holaday absent for vote**

On a motion by **Steve Cole** and seconded by **Sean Reardon** it was

**VOTED:** To approve, receive and forward to the City Auditor for payment the following warrant.  
**\$579,810.37**

**Motion Passed**

**Mayor Donna Holaday absent for vote**

**MINUTES:**

**Sean Reardon** noted the meeting place on the December 16, 2019 minutes needs to be revised as the meeting was held at the Senior/Community Center.

On a motion by **Bruce Menin** and seconded by **Sean Reardon** it was

**VOTED:** To approve, receive and file the School Committee Business Meeting minutes of Monday, December 16, 2019 with noted changes.

**Motion Passed**

**Mayor Donna Holaday absent**

**STUDENT & STAFF RECOGNITION:**

**Superintendent Sean Gallagher** was honored to recognize the following people:

- Kristina Davis, recently retired Bresnahan Principal, was recognized for her 35 years of distinguished service to Newburyport Public Schools. Kristina was the Bresnahan principal for 15 years. In addition, she worked as a Special Education teacher (5-8) at the Nock, grade 6 classroom teacher, Library Coordinator, Curriculum & Special Education Coordinator, and at Central Office as the Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.
- Sophia Franco, grade 8, was nominated by the Nock staff to be the 2020 Ambassador to Project 351 for Newburyport. Project 351 is a state-wide leadership and service program where a student ambassador from each of the 351 cities and towns of Massachusetts work collaboratively to develop leadership skills and create positive change across the state. Sophia was selected because of her quiet leadership in areas in and outside the classroom. We are excited to see how she contributes to Project 351 and connects Newburyport to the service projects of the Project 351 program.

**BRANDING**

**Superintendent Sean Gallagher** provided a brief summary of the work completed for the high school branding project. He commended Kyle Hodsdon and the committee members for their hard work over the past two years and the details put into the final product.

**Kyle Hodsdon**, Athletic Director, presented the new high school style guide and thanked the committee members that worked on this branding project for the past two years. Kyle described who was on the committee, the goals of the committee, and work done over the past two years, such as historical research, the review process, presentations and final decision making process. The end result is NHS now has one primary logo (letter N), a secondary logo (clipper ship), a school seal, word marks for uniforms, a unique font designed just for Newburyport High School, and their own pantone colors.

**Brian Callahan** asked if the font file can be sent out for others to use (i.e. NYS). Answer = Yes, but that is something Sean Gallagher would have to decide as this is the Athletics font.

**David Hochheiser** asked if the style guide can be put online so people can see. Answer = Yes

**Bruce Menin** commented on Kyle's good work.

**Steve Cole** commented that an important feature was missing from the school seal, the symbol of the clipper. At the high school, everyone is under the ship that is at the top of the school. The seal is okay, but if there is any way to add the clipper ship, that would be impressive.

### **VALEDICTORIAN / SALUTATORIAN PROPOSAL (VAL/SAL):**

Summary of the Task Force proposal:

- Retain the former definitions of Valedictorian and Salutatorian as defined in the 2018-19 Clipper's Compass.
- Recognize the student Valedictorian / Salutatorian and the students with the top 5% highest GPAs at the Honors Celebration.
- Use the values of Academic Achievement, Leadership, Character, Service and Intellectual Curiosity to develop criteria for graduation speakers.

#### **Motion:**

On a motion by **Sean Reardon** and seconded by **David Hochheiser** it was

**VOTED:** To move the Val/Sal Proposal forward as is to vote.

#### **Motion Passed**

**Mayor Holaday absent**

#### **Discussion:**

**David Hochheiser** wants to reiterate a point he made last time – which this shouldn't be a competitive event. He prefers our system of honors and high honors that allows anyone that achieves that level of success to be recognized. He doesn't think one person's success is better than another person's success when it comes to being educated.

**David Hochheiser** reiterated that a few years ago we voted to not have a top 10 and now the actions to recognize the top 5% of students for the NorthShore event undoes this policy. He thinks there should be discussion at some point as to how that happened.

**David Hochheiser** thanked the school administration, students and community that were involved with this process.

**David Hochheiser** suggested if a change is being made to a current policy, we should fully understand the policy and what it was there for in the first place.

**Sheila Spalding** said she appreciates the process the students went through and thinks having a Val/Sal designation demotivates students in general. It leads to extrinsic motivation as opposed to intrinsic motivation. It would be nice if we stuck with the original vote.

**Bruce Menin** stated the original vote was to eliminate class rank; then it was realized the school handbook was never changed.

**Sheila Spalding** asked if there would still be a Val and Sal.

**Bruce Menin** said Yes. This proposal would have a Val and Sal.

**Brian Callahan** commented that a Val/Sal typically take AP classes; all subjects don't offer an AP class and as classes are weighted, by default some kids will never ever be a Val/Sal. Another discussion to have is to amend the policy as to how classes are weighted.

**David Hochheiser** suggested a separate discussion about prerequisites and restrictions for AP classes.

**Brian Callahan & David Hochheiser** asked if this information would go in the student handbook. Answer = Yes  
**David Hochheiser** asked if this is its own policy. Answer = No, the School Committee book is general policies.  
**Sean Gallagher** explained that the details of the proposed Val/Sal changes would be reflected in that section of the student handbook (Clipper's Compass). The handbook is approved by the School Committee.  
**Sean Reardon** commented he felt a lot better about this process because so many people were involved and thanked everybody involved.

**Motion:**

On a motion by **Sean Reardon** and seconded by **David Hochheiser** it was

**VOTED:** To approve the Val/Sal proposal.

**Motion Passed**

**Mayor Holaday absent**

**CUSTODIAN OVERTIME**

Request to increase custodian overtime hourly rate from \$40 to \$45 when working "use of facilities" types of events.

**Nancy Lysik** explained that currently custodians get a flat OT fee on "use of facilities" contracts (4 hours @ \$40 per hour). The average OT rate of the top 5 custodians is used to determine the OT fee, and now that average exceeds the flat fee rate on the agreements. The OT rate in the Building Use Agreement is old. We need to bring the fee up to match our contract so we can recoup enough money to cover the OT.

**Motion:**

On a motion by **Bruce Menin** and seconded by **David Hochheiser** it was

**VOTED:** To increase the flat fee for custodian overtime pay from \$40 to \$45 per hour for "use of facilities" events.

**Motion passed**

**Mayor Holaday absent**

**SCHOOL COMMITTEE GOALS PROCESS UPDATE**

Discussion took place on a range of potential goals:

**Bruce Menin** stated the School Committee wants to review the Superintendent evaluation and make any revisions or additions, such as setting up a file to gather evidence throughout the year, rather than just at the end.

**David Hochheiser** feels the process for the Superintendent's evaluation needs to be solidified. A good process is needed for subcommittee meetings, collecting evidence and knowing what to write.

**Bruce Menin** stated the School Committee has had conversations regarding the review, update and revision of the Strategic Plan. Should this be a School Committee goal?

**David Hochheiser** feels that is a Policy goal. A goal to figure out is how to make sure every 5 years we review the *purpose* of having a strategic plan, and the process by which we do it.

**Steve Cole** asked if there was a plan to review the Strategic Plan more frequently. He suggested it be reviewed every 6 months or yearly because things change.

**David Hochheiser** agrees that the School Committee needs to solidify the Strategic Plan review schedule.  
**Bruce Menin** stated a goal should be to have a policy pertaining to the ownership and centralization of policy files and white papers and to make sure we have copies of everything that is made individually and as a group.  
**David Hochheiser** feels we need to think about what people are doing with technology, where they are doing it and what happens with it (i.e. Policy documents). Are Policy word files at Central? Answer = Yes  
**Steve Cole** asked how new policies (such as attendance) figure into strategic planning. Answer: Attendance would fall under social/emotional work of that strategy.

**David Hochheiser** stated that there needs to be a budget goal.  
**David Hochheiser** suggested that the goals be put into a presentation.

### **STRATEGIC PLAN PROCESS**

**Sean Gallagher** said the first step is to identify which goals have been accomplished and which are in process. From there, instead of re-doing the whole plan, take the elements we are looking to enhance, for example technology, place-based education, internships etc.  
**Bruce Menin & David Hochheiser** asked if there was a software program for the strategic plan. Answer: Yes  
**Sean Gallaher** will review the plan and update the program. He will at least give an update on the action steps and strategies by the next School Committee meeting.  
**Bruce Menin** suggested this conversation be revisited after the update.

### **ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT ANGELA BIK'S REPORT:**

**Assistant Superintendent Angela Bik** reported on the following:  
**Angela Bik** provided an update on the exciting professional development activities that occurred throughout the district last week. Angela Bik reviewed Billie Donegan's schedule and the skills-based learning sessions completed with the staff. She also reviewed highlights of professional development workshops/activities from each school's PD agenda. The principals provided Angela with highlights that had the biggest impact on their teachers, which she shared with the School Committee.

**Angela Bik** shared pictures of a sensory floor that was created at the Bresnahan.  
**Bruce Menin** commented that he had the opportunity to speak with several teachers at the staff breakfast and was blown away by how excited they were to be learning, and how appreciative they are to the School Committee for supporting these types of trainings.

### **SUPERINTENDENT SEAN GALLAGHER'S REPORT:**

**Superintendent Gallagher** reported on the following:

#### **Dual Enrollment**

**Sean Gallagher** reviewed the details and benefits of the new partnership with Endicott College to bring an advanced studies dual enrollment program to the high school. A pilot program for students in grade 11 & 12 will begin this February. The student tuition will be covered by the NEF.  
**Sheila Spalding** asked if this will always be for just juniors and seniors. Answer: For now this particular program will be for juniors and seniors.  
**Bruce Menin** asked if the students are earning college credits and if NEF is funding the cost. Answer: Yes, students completing the course earn college credits and NEF is funding the tuition. Families pay only a \$25 registration fee and any costs for books/materials.  
**Angela Bik** stated other off-campus dual enrollment programs are offered at NHS, but this is the first program where the college professors actually come to the high school.

**InForce 911**

**Sean Gallagher** reviewed the details, benefits and program highlights of InForce 911 emergency response software that will be piloted this spring by the school, police and fire departments.

**Sheila Spalding** asked if chats were recorded, and are building administrators notified. Answer = Yes (instantly) to both.

**David Hochheiser** asked if there was an enhanced GPS. Answer = Yes

**David Hochheiser** asked if this was a City purchase. Answer = School is sharing the cost with the police dept.

**Renee Connolly, keynote speaker**

**Sean Gallagher** reviewed several highlights from both the biography and presentation of Renee Connolly of MilliporeSigma who was the keynote speaker last week for the staff. Sean said her presentation was amazing! He also shared some of the many positive emails he received from the faculty.

**Sheila Spalding** asked if the presentation was recorded. Answer = No

**SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

There were no reports at this time.

**ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING AGENDA**

**Motion:**

On a motion by **Steve Cole** and seconded by **Sean Reardon** it was

**VOTED:** To postpone the organizational meeting agenda until the next School Committee meeting.

**Motion Passed**

**Mayor Donna Holaday was absent for vote**

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

**Motion:**

On a motion by **Sean Reardon** and seconded by **Brian Callahan** it was

**VOTED:** To adjourn to Executive Session to discuss strategy with respect to Collective bargaining or litigation, and not to reconvene in Open Session at 8:15 PM.

**Roll Call Vote:**

<b>Sheila Spalding</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Steve Cole</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Bruce Menin</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>David Hochheiser</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Sean Reardon</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Brian Callahan</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Mayor Holaday</b>	<b>absent</b>