

**NEWBURYPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE
SCHOOL COMMITTEE BUSINESS MEETING**

Monday, June 15, 2020

Video Conference - Online

Meeting Convened at 6:32 PM

Mayor Donna Holaday / Bruce Menin Presided

Present: Brian Callahan, David Hochheiser, Bruce Menin, Mayor Donna Holaday,
Sheila Spalding, Sean Reardon

Absent: Steve Cole

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 6 members present, and 1 absent - Steve Cole. All those present pledged allegiance to the Flag.

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

CONSENT AGENDA:

Warrants:

On a motion by **Bruce Menin** and seconded by **Mayor Holaday** it was

VOTED: To approve, receive and forward to the City Auditor for payment the following warrant.
\$240,356.60.

Motion Passed

Steve Cole absent for vote

On a motion by **Bruce Menin** and seconded by **Brian Callahan** it was

VOTED: To approve, receive and forward to the City Auditor for payment the following warrant.
\$5,701.98

Motion Passed

Steve Cole absent for vote

On a motion by **Bruce Menin** 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.
\$951.50

Motion Passed

Steve Cole absent for vote

On a motion by **Sean Reardon** and seconded by **Mayor Holaday** it was

VOTED: To approve, receive and file the School Committee Online Business Meeting minutes of Monday, Monday, June 1, 2020 as amended.

Motion Passed

Steve Cole absent for vote

INTRODUCTION - MICHAEL EATMAN:

Superintendent of Schools Sean Gallagher introduced Michael Eatman. Mr. Eatman has provided yearlong professional development for the Extended Leadership Team and Newburyport High School staff around Cultural Competency. He will provide cultural competency training and consulting for the 2020-2021 academic year.

Mr. Eatman spoke regarding his job with the Newburyport School District. He said his job is to find out where we all are and build on that. He spoke about Cultural Competence, which consists of awareness, attitude, knowledge, skills and practices.

Assistant Superintendent of Schools Angela Bik spoke re: Mr. Eatman. She stated he has a real diversified background, is modest and has developed a framework. She spoke of his background and strategies. He has so much experience and we are lucky to have him.

Mayor Holaday said she appreciated the document and thanked those who developed it.

NHS STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT:

Superintendent Gallagher showed a Certificate of Appreciation that will be given to Peter D'Ambrosio for all his work with the School Committee. He stated Peter has been a leader with ADL and Essential Partners. Peter thanked the Committee and Superintendent for all their leadership and helpfulness to him and stated he was deeply appreciative of the award.

He then provided an update on various high school activities:

- May 22 - Lawn sign delivery - Superintendent Gallagher and the Mayor participated
- May 27 - Scholarship and Awards Ceremony aired on Local 9 - over \$400,000 was provided to students
- June 3 - Cap and Gown Pick Up Day - fun
- June 3 - Vespers Ceremony aired on local 9
- June 4 - Ivy Day Ceremony aired on local 9
- June 7 - Car Parade and Diploma Distribution by the Mayor and Superintendent Gallagher
- June 7 - Senior Sing Out Video
- June 17 - Wednesday - academic key pick-up for grades 9-11

Peter acknowledged this was his last meeting and thanked Superintendent Gallagher and Mayor Holaday.

CULTURAL COMPETENCY DISTRICT INITIATIVES DISCUSSION:

Superintendent Gallagher gave an overview of various district cultural competency initiatives. He spoke re: the monthly CCI meetings. All those involved are sharing and working together. They talk about local and state trends. Adjustment counselors attend as well, and follow up with students and families. NEMLEC is a big part of schools in Essex County - a partnership with agencies dealing with public safety, working in the community and schools in a preventative manner. They are part of the school community. He stated several instances where NEMLEC has come to the call in an instant to help us out.

Superintendent Gallagher gave an overview of the Cultural Competency Initiatives Overview Report which consisted of the following:

- Educator Professional Development
- School Culture Development
- Student Programming
- Professional Development
- School Culture
- Student Programming

Professional Development

- District Partnerships and Capacity Development
- Curriculum and Instruction Development
- Courses
- Workshops

School Culture

- Community-based Programming
- School PIS Programming

Student Programming

- Student Voice
- Essential Partners Dialogues

Clubs and Events

World of Difference Institute ADL Newburyport High School

World of Difference Institute ADL Nock Middle School

Sheila Spalding said this document is very helpful and asked if it could be posted on our website. She suggested a forum in the Fall, bringing in Essex Partners and students.

David Hochheiser said this boils down to boots on the ground. He asked what would we say to students when sometimes this doesn't translate to what happens in the classroom or hallways when they are interacting with others. They sometimes don't feel as open and safe as they want to be.

Superintendent Gallagher spoke re: changing school culture - students come forward to report things. We develop a safe school environment - eventually we will get there changing dynamics and working with Michael.

Bruce Menin said he wanted to talk about how we ended up with School Resource Officers. This came out of the idea of building a better school culture a number of years ago when the Youth Commission recommended that we involve police with the school community. He gave examples with how school resource officers interacted with students. The police were not brought in to police the schools, but to work with kids in providing a safe, secure environment and provide support building a better school culture.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Lori Byrnes She inquired about the process of joining the upcoming taskforce.

Superintendent Gallagher said they have outlined the reopening of schools. They have received many applications from parents who have volunteered for the taskforce. He said he is

expecting a draft by the end of the week for the Fall opening. He said there will be focus groups for parents at each school. When we start school in the Fall we want people to feel comfortable with having their students in schools. We have purchased PPE's and cleaning products.

Katrina Weigold She asked if there will be an opportunity for parents to participate.
Superintendent Gallagher said principals will be sending out surveys.

INTERNATIONAL FIELD TRIPS:

The proposed 2021 Greece and Australia field trips discussion is continued from the May 18th School Committee meeting.

Superintendent Gallagher said several districts (20) are not providing trips this school year. Aileen Maconi said she has talked with EF Tours and they have developed a cancel for any reason policy for parents to purchase insurance for. Worldstride already has this policy in effect. She updated the Committee re: tour company policies.

Brian Callahan said they should take a vote to allow this to happen - we should approve the trips as it has been explained.

David Hochheiser asked what do parents want from us?

Mayor Holaday said she thought there is a reason that 20 school districts have cancelled trips for next year. This has been a really tough one - we don't have a vaccine - it may be another year before this happens - she thought we should do something domestic instead. - this is really risky - she is concerned re: international travel.

Sean Reardon said as long as families know the risk going in he thinks we should go.

Superintendent Gallagher said his concern is if students are overseas and they or staff gets ill - having to utilize medical facilities there.

Aileen Maconi spoke re: tour companies promises if students get ill with COVID.

David Hochheiser asked what would happen if a chaperone quit.

Aileen Maconi spoke re: backups.

David Hochheiser asked if we were liable for that if we cannot provide a chaperone.

Superintendent Gallagher said he will get an opinion from legal counsel.

Aileen Maconi said we are covered around a liability insurance policy - she will check to see if that is covered.

Sean Reardon said this must have come up before.

Superintendent Gallagher said because of the pandemic we may want to get some legal advice on this.

Brian Callahan said should we have a vote on this.

Bruce Menin asked what percentage of kids have purchased cancellation insurance.

Aileen Maconi said she doesn't know but has had 3 parents ask her about it.

Brian Callahan asked if we would still be having this conversation if we had voted on this 6 months ago.

Aileen Maconi explained.

Andy Wulf said we could have come back.

Superintendent Gallagher said he has reached out to the lawyer - she will give us an opinion.

Brian Callahan said if we vote on this now it is the parents who are taking the risk. He does not want to stop this whole process just because something may happen in the future.

Aileen Maconi said the vast majority of students going on the trips are not seniors.

Bruce Menin said he was concerned with the pandemic - students could come home and put others around them at risk.

David Hochheiser said people are not taking this all that seriously anymore.

Mayor Holaday said this is a school sponsored event - if something goes down it will be the responsibility of the school - why did 20 school districts cancel - because airplanes are not the safest place to be in. Why can't we do a domestic trip this year.

Bruce Menin pointed out that there was an even number of Committee members present tonight - it may lead to a deadlock vote.

Motion:

On a motion by **David Hochheiser** and seconded by **Brian Callahan** it was

VOTED: To allow the proposed trips to go forward as scheduled.

Roll Call Vote:

David Hochheiser - Yes

Sean Reardon - Yes

Sheila Spalding - Yes

Brian Callahan - Yes

Mayor Holaday - No

Bruce Menin - No

Motion Passed - 4 Yes 2 No

Steve Cole absent for vote

MASC RESOLUTION ON COVID -19 EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT:

Bruce Menin said the City Council has asked if they could sign on to this Resolution.

Mayor Holaday said this is a wonderful resolution - trying to get information from DESC is challenging - this makes a lot of sense.

David Hochheiser said he is concerned with the level of equity.

Brian Callahan asked if something like this really works between schools and the State.

Motion:

On a motion by **Bruce Menin** and seconded by **Mayor Holaday** it was

VOTED: To add an amendment to the third paragraph of the Resolution to read as follows:

Whereas, the State will be providing reopening guidelines to Districts. We would request receipt of them no later than 45 Days prior to the opening of the schools for the 20-21 school year.

Motion Passed

Steve Cole absent for vote

Motion:

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

VOTED: To approve the (District) School Committee Resolution: Covid-19 State

Funding as amended.

Motion Passed

Steve Cole absent for vote

BUDGET UPDATE:

Mayor Holaday said the City Council approved the continuation of the budget. She encouraged the Committee to take a vote tonight.

Sean Gallagher said the only impact on the 3-month budget would be in September (staffing).

Nancy Lysik said we have added 2 foreign language teachers to the budget.

Motion:

On a motion by **Mayor Holaday** and seconded by **Sean Reardon** it was

VOTED: To hire two (2) Foreign Language teachers to be hired for the 2020 - 2021 School Year.

David Hochheiser said he was excited that we are bringing language forward - he is still nervous about the context of it. He wished it could have been worked out a little more clearly.

Motion Passed

Steve Cole absent for vote

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING CALENDAR 2020-2021 - Second Reading:

Motion:

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

VOTED: To approve the School Committee Calendar with amendments that May be made at the School Committee Retreat.

Mayor Holaday said to take out Inauguration in January.

Motion Passed

Steve Cole absent for vote

ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT ANGELA BIK'S REPORT:

Assistant Superintendent Angela Bik reported on the following:

- Professional Development with Billie Donegan - She has put together a template for teachers to work from - including some money from grant. Billie Donegan will work with teacher leaders. Technology workshops have been scheduled for teachers

Bruce Menin asked how does this work with integrating community members.

David Hochheiser asked is there any way to share with the public the changes we will be using. **Angela Bik** said this is a good idea.

SUPERINTENDENT SEAN GALLAGHER'S REPORT:

Superintendent Gallagher reported on the following:

- Retirement Parade for Tracey Hawke
- Fireman Citizenship Award delivery - will be delivering those to students

- Bresnahan - Goodbye Farewell Zoom - for each grade on Wednesday
- 3rd Grade Yearbook - Thursday 9 - 9:30
- 10 AM Start Thursday - Goodbye - Staff will line the streets - students and families will drive by - cars may be decorated
- 8th Grade Yearbook - 10:45 - 11:30 delivery
- Food Distribution - Thursday - 12 - 12:30 PM
- Remote Learning - High School - 90% - 8% didn't fully participate - approximate 60 students who focused on certain classes - 2% did not engage; Nock 90% - in touch with parents of others; Molin - Gr 4 - 96%; Gr 5 91% - in touch with parents of others; Bresnahan - Pre-K - 57%, K - 65%, Gr 1 - 80%, Gr 2 - 91%, Gr 3 - 94%; will be sending our survey
- Comm. Riley will be sending out draft by end of the week - final draft by mid-July
- Close School on the 18th - we will then be putting together the task force and focus groups

David Hochheiser asked if the State has put forth any guideline re: Captains practices?

Sean Gallagher said we should be getting guidelines - we have guidelines re: camps that will be going on.

Brian Callahan asked if the survey will be coming out from the Superintendent's Office.

Superintendent Gallagher explained.

SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Education - **Bruce Menin** said they met today - talked about July, August, September budget update. City has waived fees for use of fields this summer. Remote Learning and Planning.

Finance - will meet tomorrow morning

Policy - **David Hochheiser** said they met this past week - spoke re: fundraising policy and special meeting policy

Superintendent Evaluation - they have not met

ADJOURNMENT:

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

VOTED: To adjourn the June 15 On-line Business Meeting of the School Committee at 9:05 PM.

Motion Passed

Steve Cole absent for vote